



PREVENTING 4-H MEMBER INJURIES AND ILLNESSES

General Injury and Illness Preventative Measures

- **Preparations-** Prior to initiating an activity or event, always provide 4-H members clear and thorough instruction about known and potential activity or event hazards. Describe all mandatory safety precautions, such as the use of machine guards or safety equipment and review procedures that incorporate safe practices. Demonstrations, illustrations, and instructor modeling of safety precautions and safe practices are effective teaching tools.
- **Cleanliness-** Inform 4-H members that hand-washing reduces disease transmission. Remind 4-H members to always wash their hands with soap and water before preparing foods or eating and after using the restroom, completing a project activity or task, and especially after handling animals.
- **PPE-** Always instruct 4-H members about the need for personal protective equipment (PPE) and assure they wear the proper PPE for the type of activity or task to be performed. Common types of PPE include eye and hearing protection, helmets, dust masks, elbow and knee pads, wet suits, sunscreen, insect repellent, hats with brims, gloves, boots, long sleeve shirts, and long pants.
- **Machinery/appliances-** Use of equipment, machinery, or appliances requires instruction about topics such as pre-use inspections, flammability of fuels, heated surfaces and objects, electrical shocks, de-energizing components, and pinch, shear, and cutting points.
- **Sharp objects-** Inform 4-H members about the hazards associated with using sharp tools or instruments such as knives, scissors, and saws. Cutting should take place in directions away from the body or appendages.
- **Competitive Sports-** Competitive sporting activities should be preceded by a period of calisthenics or warm ups and followed by a period of cool down.
- **Outdoor Adventures-** Before participating in outdoor adventures, 4-H members should be instructed about hazards associated with traversing steep and uneven terrain, violent weather, heat and cold stress, sunblock, proper campfire control, toxic plants, and unwanted interactions with animals, including insects. Outdoor activities and events on or adjacent to water require instruction about water hazards and the use of approved personal flotation devices (i.e. life vests or preservers).
- **Animal Activities-** As part of animal handling, 4-H members require instruction about safe practices such as approaching animals within their field of vision, transmission of bacterial infections through the fecal-oral route, proper animal diets, and humane treatment of animals. Also, 4-H members should always use a helmet when riding a horse.
- **Respect-** When interacting in group activities or events, 4-H members should be made aware to show respect towards each other and to work cooperatively together to achieve safe practices and common goals.

