



SPARKING an Impact  
in Indiana 4-H



# Introductions

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## Agenda Outline

- ▣ Starting a SPARK Club
- ▣ Examples of successful SPARK Clubs across the three Mission Areas of 4-H
- ▣ YOUR TURN:
  - SPARK Club planning form and brainstorming



What is a SPARK Club?





# BIG CONCEPT

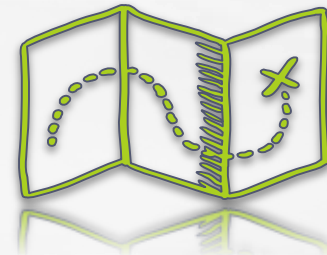
4-H SPARK Clubs were designed to create learning experiences and new opportunities with positive adult role models.



## Starting a SPARK Club

1. Identify the needs of youth that you would like to serve.

A need is the gap between “what currently is” and “what should be.”





## What makes a SPARK Club?

### **Audience**

Youth currently in  
grades 3-12

### **“Out of the box”**

#### **Interests**

SPARK Clubs are  
intended to capture  
attention of youth with  
single focus interests

### **Time**

Minimum of 6 hours  
with flexibility for  
volunteers and youth



## What makes a SPARK Club?

### **Culminating Activity**

The culminating activity showcases to families and community members what youth have accomplished.

### **Financial**

Must be a minimum of \$15 (State 4-H Program fee) but could be more based on needs of club.

### **Volunteer-led**

Recruit and utilize short-term volunteers that have a passion for the SPARK Club topic.



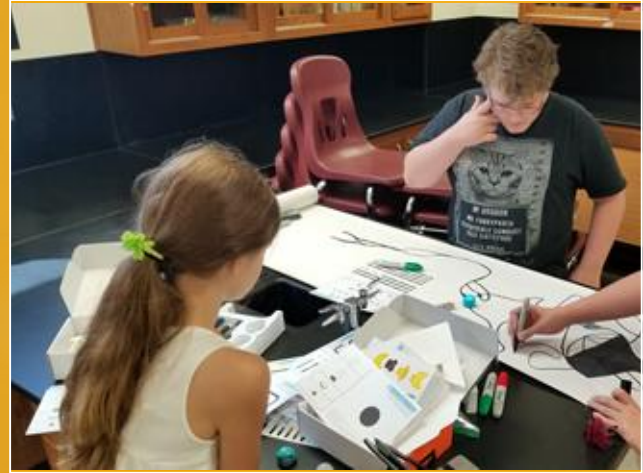


Science



## Makerspace

- ▣ Kits provided in many counties across the state





## Makerspace (Montgomery)



- ▣ Teaches youth skills related to robotics, coding, programming, and engineering.
- ▣ Partner with local Junior High as part of afterschool program.
- ▣ Led by 2 volunteers
- ▣ 11 youth total
  - 9 brand new 4-H members



## Robotics Club (Montgomery)



- ▣ Using hands-on learning, youth explore topics such as coding, engineering, and physics.
- ▣ Led by 2 volunteers
- ▣ Showcase at fair
- ▣ 39 youth total
  - 16 brand new 4-H members

# Robotics Club (Whitley)



- ▣ Using hands-on learning, youth explore topics such as coding, engineering, and physics.
- ▣ LEGO Mindstorm EV3 & VEX
- ▣ Led by 1 adult volunteer & 1 teen teacher
- ▣ 23 youth total
  - 8 brand new 4-H members



## Creators & Explorers Club (Whitley)



- ▣ Using hands-on learning, youth explore topics such as food science, chemistry, & circuits
- ▣ Led by 3 “teens as teachers” youth
- ▣ For 3rd grade youth
- ▣ 22 youth total
  - 18 brand new 4-H members



## RC Car Club (Whitley)



- ▣ Youth learn how RC cars are assembled. Experience changing out motors, tires, suspensions, etc.
- ▣ Led by 2 adult volunteers
- ▣ 20 youth total
  - 8 brand new 4-H members



## Environmental Science (Gibson)

- Curriculum developed for 3rd-5th grade students.
- Participants explore the environment by learning about soils, the water cycle, tree identification. The experience culminates into the concept of an ecosystem. The final activity is having members design an ecosystem that is beneficial to wildlife as well as humans.





# Healthy Living



## Garden to Grill (Montgomery)

- Taught youth about horticulture, entomology, weather and climate science, plant science, and food prep and cooking skills.
- Taught by Extension office team
- Focus on grades 3-6
- 19 youth total
  - 1 new 4-H member





# Chef university (Montgomery)

- ▣ Youth learn about the science behind cooking and preparing dishes.
- ▣ Volunteer to help teach youth safe knife and food preparation skills.
- ▣ *Chopped* contest
- ▣ 48 youth total
  - 42 brand new 4-H members





## Jr. Chef Academy (Whitley)

- ▣ Youth learn about food prep, meal planning, & cooking tools
- ▣ Adult volunteer led
- ▣ *Youth cook a meal for their parent(s) as final project*
- ▣ 14 youth total
  - 7 brand new 4-H members



## Community Garden (LaPorte)

- ▣ Youth explore the water molecule, soil layers, composting recipe, solar energy, photosynthesis, and weekly garden harvesting
- ▣ Taught in partnership with Boys & Girls Club and Unity Community Foundation
- ▣ 12 youth total
  - 12 brand new 4-H members







## Connect the Dots (LaPorte)

- ▣ Designed for Youth in Elementary Remedial Afterschool program.
- ▣ Youth participated in three consecutive Spark Clubs: Makerspace, Healthy Habits, Natural Resources, followed by capstone experience called Connect the Dots.
- ▣ Connect the Dots provided youth the opportunity to plan and develop a park utilizing information learned.
- ▣ Taught by 4-H Educator with support by teacher's aides.
- ▣ 32 youth participated
  - 30 new 4-H members





# Civic Engagement



## Career Exploration (Gibson)

- ▣ Designed for 7th-12th graders
- ▣ Youth are provided in-person, hands-on experiences with potential careers in the community.
- ▣ Experiences included:
  - Veterinary hospital
  - Police department
  - Gibson General Hospital
  - Deaconess Women's Hospital
  - Toyota Manufacturing
  - Vincennes University







## BE the E Entrepreneurship (LaPorte)

- ▣ Youth in grades 7-12 interested in owning their own business.
- ▣ BE the E Entrepreneurship National Curriculum
- ▣ Guest Entrepreneurs and a visit to their businesses.
  - Restaurant
  - Farm
  - Bakery
  - Farmer's Market Vendor





## Keys to Success



1. Collaborate with community partners.
2. Collaborate through school programs.
3. Communication about the WHOLE 4-H learning experience.
4. It's all in the details!
  - a. Promotion
  - b. Supplies
5. Empower and equip volunteers for success.



It's Your Turn!





# SPARK Club Planning Document

## Keep in mind:

- No idea is a bad idea!
- What does the intended youth audience *need*?
- What skills or resources can you contribute?
- Who are your community partners?
- What is your SPARK Club goal(s)?

**PURDUE** UNIVERSITY  
PURDUE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE  
College of Agriculture

**SPARK Club Planning Document**

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade Level(s): \_\_\_\_\_

How many sessions will you offer? \_\_\_\_\_

How long will each session last? \_\_\_\_\_

Plan your sessions. What will you **teach** at each SPARK Club session?

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Culminating Activity: \_\_\_\_\_

How will you help promote this SPARK Club opportunity in the community? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

 Indiana's 4-H Youth Development Program

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717-444-4433 • Fax: 717-444-3288 • [www.purdue.edu/4h/](http://www.purdue.edu/4h/)  
Purdue University, Indiana Counties and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating  
An equal opportunity/affirmative action university



- Indiana 4-H Volunteer page  
<https://extension.purdue.edu/4h/Pages/volunteer.aspx>
- Local schools, libraries, other youth-serving organizations
- Community Foundations (grant opportunities)

## Resources

These resources will help you get started in SPARKing an impact in your community!



Thanks!

Any questions?

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