

November 6, 2014

Our 4-H motto is “to make the best, better!” While we recognize our success, we also constantly strive to improve our program and services. In delivering quality, experiential learning programs to young people, Rutgers Cooperative Extension faculty and staff have the privilege of working closely with thousands of volunteers each year. Thank you for the gift of your time and talent. Together, we are growing great kids in the garden state!

Everyone appreciates the importance of protecting young people from harm. Rutgers University recently adopted a Protection of Minors policy that mandates criminal background checks and youth protection training for all employees and volunteers supervising minors in Rutgers programs, including the Rutgers Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development programs. Strengthening our screening process provides protection to our members as well as parents, volunteers, and employees in the New Jersey 4-H program.

Effective fall 2014, the 4-H volunteer appointment process includes a criminal background check and a required training focused on working with minors. Similar youth protection policies are in place in other youth development programs.

We are prepared to dedicate both time and resources to implement this important new policy. I'd like to thank the Cumberland County 4-H Advisory Committee for their recent commitment to set aside funds to cover the cost of background checks for our county 4-H volunteers. The enclosed information sheet outlines the training and background check requirements as well as the steps in which to complete these requirements.

The 4-H volunteer appointment process has been designed to protect the young people served by the New Jersey 4-H program as well as volunteers, employees and Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Thank you for your continued dedication to the New Jersey 4-H program. Volunteers are truly the heart of 4-H!

Sincerely,

Julie Karavan
County 4-H Agent
Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cumberland County