



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

This clover safe note is intended primarily for 4-H volunteers and staff

#29 FIELD TRIP SAFETY

Field trips are an important element of the University of California 4-H YDP. Insuring that field trips are rewarding, educational, productive, enjoyable, successful, and safe experiences requires careful and thorough planning on the part of all participating 4-H staff, volunteers, and members. This Clover Safe note provides information that may be used to address field trip safety issues.



Photograph Courtesy of Elkus Youth Ranch

4-H Staff and Volunteer Field Trip Safety Responsibilities

- Prior to a field trip, assure all 4-H members have completed and turned in required medical and permission forms to the 4-H volunteer leader or staff. Copies of the forms shall be taken on the trip.
- It is a prudent and recommended practice to visit unfamiliar field trip destinations before the trip to evaluate whether any potential hazards or security issues are present.
- If potential hazards or security issues are present at the field trip destination, then 4-H staff and volunteers should identify mitigation actions such as informing attendees of the hazard, security, and safety concerns, requiring personal protective equipment (PPE), pre-trip training for attendees, or if concerns are serious, changing the field trip destination or canceling the field trip.
- Assure adequate supervision is present during field trip travel and activities. A ratio of one adult to 6 - 8 attendees is a typical practice. With younger attendees the ratio should be decreased.
- If the field trip includes an overnight stay, assure there are an adequate number of chaperones of the appropriate gender.
- Formulate a field trip emergency plan that includes directions to the trip destination and closest emergency care facility. Dial 911 to contact emergency responders.
- Validate that an emergency cell phone, medical treatment forms from parents or guardians, first aid kit, and other emergency supplies for adverse weather conditions such as reflectors, shovels, and blankets are being brought on the field trip.
- Develop and distribute a trip itinerary that includes a schedule and reminders about what personal items to bring such as medications, PPE, money, food, and water.

4-H Member Field Trip Safety Responsibilities

- Wear PPE appropriate to the field trip weather conditions: jackets or windbreakers during cool weather, and light clothing, sunscreen, sun glasses, and a hat during warm weather. Wear closed-toed shoes.
- Always wear seat belts if they are available in the transportation vehicle.
- Follow transportation vehicle rules and do not distract the driver.
- Stay with your field trip group and volunteer or staff leader. Do not wander off on your own.
- Be alert for hazards and aware of your surroundings at all times, whether on a field trip to a rural or urban area.
- Do not take a ride from or talk to a stranger. If you are not comfortable with the actions of a stranger or other person, immediately contact the field trip leader.
- Always protect your purse or wallet from theft.
- Follow the volunteer or staff leader's instructions during the field trip.
- If you notice that a member of your field trip group is missing, immediately notify your project leader, parent, or guardian.
- When traveling to show an animal, make sure your animal is properly fed and watered.
- Remember when you are on a field trip you may interact with the public and therefore, your conduct should represent the high standards maintained by California YDP members.