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**FLX 4-H Learning Launchpad Presents “Japanese Children’s Day”
Online Learning Platform will hold series of Japanese cultural workshops & activities in May**

In celebration of Japanese Children's Day, and the NYS 4-H International Exchange, the FLX 4-H Learning Launchpad will host a series of Japanese cultural workshops & activities in May. The Launchpad will be kicking off the celebration with a “Japanese Children's Day” workshop held on May 1st at 6 p.m., highlighting the cultural background of the holiday, and guiding families through fun, hands on activities they can do together at home. Attendees at the May 1st workshop can follow along with making an “onigiri” rice ball, and creating a Japanese “kendama” game using materials commonly found at home. Following the workshop, FLX Learning Launchpad will premiere videos related to Japanese culture on May 5th, May 14th, and May 21st, at 10 a.m. on the FLX 4-H Learning Launchpad Facebook page, and on the FLX 4-H Learning Launchpad YouTube channel.

Children's Day, held on May 5th, is a Japanese national holiday in celebration of children's health and growth, and to honor their individual strengths. Monroe County 4-H Educator Jessica Reid, who lived in Japan for 8 ½ years as an English teacher, will be presenting the workshop and activities. Reid felt a strong connection between the traditional Japanese holiday and the goals of the 4-H Positive Youth Development program. “4-H is a program that challenges young people to find their spark, their individual strengths, and encourage them to follow that spark and grow as individuals. I think that the meaning behind Children's Day in Japan, to celebrate the growth and individual strengths of children, goes hand-in-hand with those beliefs.”

Typically, New York State 4-H will host a delegation of Japanese youth and their chaperones each summer, participating in the national States' 4-H International Exchange Program. Delegates would stay with host families throughout New York State. New York State youth are also able to apply for outbound 4-H Exchange programs in Japan and other countries as well. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all of the States' 4-H International Exchange programs scheduled over the summer have been canceled. Another goal of the Japanese cultural workshop series being offered is to provide an opportunity for families in the region to experience Japanese culture in spite of the closures, and to build interest for next year's program.

Families can register for the May 1st workshop at <http://monroe.cce.cornell.edu/events>. Registration via Zoom is required. FLX 4-H Learning Launchpad activities can be found on the 'FLX Learning Launchpad' Facebook page, and on Youtube by searching for 'FLX 4-H Learning

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Launchpad'. More information on the NYS 4-H Exchange Program can be found at <https://nys4-h.org/international-exchange>.

The Monroe County 4-H Program is offered through Cornell Cooperative Extension to the youth of Monroe County. 4-H is a worldwide youth development program open to all youth ages 5 to 19, who want to have fun, learn new skills, and explore the world. In return, youth who participate in 4-H find a supportive environment and opportunities for hands-on or "experiential" learning about things that interest them. Learn more at <http://monroe.cce.cornell.edu/4-h-youth-development>.



"Koinobori" windsocks fly in Japan to celebrate Children's Day. Youth will learn how to make their own "koinobori" windsock in one of the activities planned by FLX 4-H Learning Launchpad. (Photo: Jessica Reid)

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