



Cornell University

**Cornell Cooperative Extension
Monroe County**

2449 Saint Paul Blvd
Rochester, NY 14617
p. 585.753.2550 f. 585.753.2560
e. monroe@cornell.edu
monroe.cce.cornell.edu

For Immediate Release:

April 10, 2020

For more information, contact:

Susan Coyle
585.753.2567
smc226@cornell.edu

**FLX 4-H Learning Launchpad: A Virtual Learning Experience
New York State Finger Lakes 4-H District Offers Opportunities for Online Learning**

Have you ever thought about trying bird watching, kitchen scrap gardening, or making a calm jar with your families? Learn these and more by visiting FLX 4-H Learning Launchpad, an online learning platform. Join 4-H educators and volunteers daily to learn about exciting topics and activities youth and families can do at home.

In New York State, 4-H is part of Cornell Cooperative Extension, connecting youth to research-based information through Cornell University. The mission of the New York State 4-H Youth Development program is to connect youth to hands-on learning opportunities that help them grow into competent, caring, contributing members of society. Today, more than ever before, that means providing learning opportunities to youth in our communities only now in a virtual environment.

Ontario County 4-H Educator, Sarah Bagley, came up with the idea for FLX 4-H Learning Launchpad soon after school closings and in-person 4-H activity suspensions due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The FLX 4-H Learning Launchpad is being "launched" amid the COVID-19 outbreak to offer the high quality 4-H experience that our families value in a safe online environment.

"When faced with the reality of having to switch 4-H programming completely online, I knew that there was strength in numbers," Bagley said. "Collaborating as a district instead of focusing just on programming for individual counties allowed us to expand our program offerings and deliver content more frequently. My colleagues throughout the district bring a variety of talents and abilities to the virtual environment, and we have enjoyed connecting with our communities in this new way."

The objectives of the Launchpad are to maintain a sense of connection with 4-H families across the nine county Finger Lakes Region, connect research-based resources with new audiences, and complement at home learning. New information and activities are posted daily at 10 am and additional content is added frequently throughout the week. One ongoing activity is a video series on observing chicken eggs develop in an incubator. Wayne County 4-H Team Leader, Jessica Spence, guides us through the incredible process of chickens changing from eggs to chicks. The whole process takes just about three weeks!

Building Strong and Vibrant New York Communities

Cornell Cooperative Extension is an employer and educator recognized for valuing AA/EEO, Protected Veterans, and Individuals with Disabilities and provides equal program and employment opportunities.

The Launchpad also recently challenged our audience to spread cheer by painting their windows with encouraging scenes. Wayne County 4-H Educator, Amy Pyra, recorded a short video with her children demonstrating how to create cheerful window paintings using rainbow and tractor designs.

Launchpad activities are offered in a variety of formats including live videos, webinars, and worksheets. Activities are on a wide range of topics. Monroe County 4-H Educator, Jessica Reid has produced two videos for the FLX Learning Launchpad, one on creating a wildlife journal observing nature in your backyard and the other on kitchen scrap gardening.

Reid shares her inspiration for topic choice. "With most of us limited to our own homes and backyards, I wanted to inspire youth to look for signs of nature in the world just outside their door, and to try thinking outside the box with ways they can be resourceful with objects in their home that may otherwise go to waste, such as kitchen scraps," Reid said. "I think this is a great time for children to explore that there is so much wonder and discovery to be found right at home."

To access FLX 4-H Learning Launchpad activities, search for it on Facebook and follow the Launchpad page. Also, visit the webpage at <http://monroe.cce.cornell.edu/4-h-youth-development/flx-4-h-learning-launchpad> to find links to each activity.

4-H is a worldwide youth development program open to all youth aged 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 <https://nys4-h.org/>.



<###>