



**Cornell Cooperative Extension** | Schoharie and Otsego Counties

In Partnership with  
Schoharie Central School

# Parent Handbook

4-H Afterschool Program Coordinator  
Susan Salisbury  
518-234-4303 x122 or [sms248@cornell.edu](mailto:sms248@cornell.edu)

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Dear Families,

Thank you for your interest in the Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie and Otsego Counties 4-H Afterschool Program. The program is licensed by New York State Office of Children and Family Services and operates under the department's rules and regulations.

The program was established by Cornell Cooperative Extension to demonstrate positive youth development in an afterschool environment. We utilize the expertise gained from over 100 years of 4-H youth development to deliver a fun, safe, and educational program for children and youth.

The program offers a safe environment for youth between the end of the school day and the dinner hour, the time which research has shown is most problematic for children. Equally important, the program provides opportunities for hands on learning---the 4-H model---in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and in public speaking and leadership, and provides a well-balanced offering of homework helper, physical activities, and cooperative games.

This handbook describes the program objectives and establishes the expectations of enrolled children and youth and their parents or guardians. Other helpful program information is included. Please review the handbook carefully as it explains many of program procedures. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us.

We look forward to working with you and your children!

Susan Salisbury  
Afterschool Program Coordinator  
sms248@cornell.edu | 518-234-4303 x122

Liz Callahan  
Executive Director  
eac283@cornell.edu | 518-234-4303 x116

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### **Planned Days of Operation**

The 4-H Afterschool Program follows your child's School's calendar, operating Monday through Friday from dismissal **until 5:30 PM**. There will be NO program when school is not in session, including half days, vacations, snow days, holidays, summer recess, and days that school has either a planned or emergency early dismissal.

### **Admission**

Participation in the program is based on a first-come, first-served availability. A waiting list is established when enrollment is at capacity. All paperwork in the enrollment packet must be completed prior to start as required by state regulation. Please be sure to complete all forms requested in the enrollment packet including the completed up-to-date immunization record signed or stamped by the child's physician.

### **Monthly Program Cost**

**The monthly cost for the 2023-2024 school year is \$275.00 per child.**

The payment must be received prior to the first day your child attends. Thereafter, tuition **is due by the first day of each month**. When withdrawing your child from the program, a written two-week notice is required. If no notice is given, you will be required to pay tuition for the additional month.

Tuition is based on enrollment NOT attendance. Total full school days per the school calendar as well as estimated unplanned closings are included in the fee determination. Full payment is required even if the child is not in attendance, regardless of absences or closings.

No credit will be given for illness, vacation, program closing due to an emergency situation, or inclement weather. The program reserves the right to close for weather or safety related reasons.

**Parents/Custodians are responsible for the full monthly cost**, including the balance of subsidized enrollments. Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate dismissal from the program and initiation of any necessary collection efforts.

A \$10 late pick-up fee will be imposed for the first 5 minutes past 5:30 PM, then \$1.00 per minute thereafter. If we have not heard from you and the child(ren) are not picked up by 6:30 PM local authorities will be called.

**Payments can be given to Susan Salisbury at program or may be dropped off or mailed to:**

ATTN: ASP  
CCE Schoharie & Otsego Co  
173 South Grand St, Ste 1  
Cobelskill, NY 12043

### **Education Plan**

Our goals are to enhance a child's desire to learn, to provide experiences for all aspects of the child's development, and to provide an environment that is relaxed and enjoyable. The program offers a broad range of interesting, age-appropriate activities that integrate school days with less formal learning activities. The program will also include 4-H projects, indoor/outdoor recreation, arts, crafts, and games, and a nutritious snack. In addition, cultural exposure, computer literacy, conflict resolution, and community service will be part of the education plan to provide enrichment and instill life-long skills.

### **Homework Helper**

It is your child's responsibility to go to the homework room with completed assignment journals and their homework. As staff members we are not allowed to go through book bags to see if they have homework or to allow them to go back to their classrooms or lockers. As staff we can assist children but we do not correct homework. Please read the Pledge responsibilities and sign with your child.

### **Outdoor Activity**

Fresh air and exercise are important to good health! Weather permitting, children are expected to go outside during recreation. All children must have appropriate clothing for weather conditions.

### **Nutrition**

The schools prepare the snacks that we provide the children at program. **Please alert the staff concerning any special dietary needs or food allergies.**

### **Attendance**

If your child/children will not be attending program on a specific day, please call 518-234-4303 to let us know, also send a note to school with your child/children informing the school of your arrangement for the day. In the event of ANY changes, the Program Coordinator and school need to be informed.

Children who leave school due to illness during the day or are home ill, are considered absent and are not allowed to return to the program that day.

Children who leave school for an appointment during the day and do not return back to school before the end of the day are considered absent and are not allowed to return to the program that day.

### **Emergency Closing**

In the event of an emergency closing, families will be informed by the program's notification system and your child will follow the emergency dismissal on file with the school and/or program. **It is your responsibility to keep that information up to date with the school.**

### **Personal Toys & Electronics Devices**

For the safety and well being of all the children in our program, we ask that your children leave all toys, electronic games, and devices at home. Many educational materials and activities are available throughout the time your children are at the program. We are not responsible for personal items or toys from home that get lost or broken.

### **Health & Illness Policy**

The 4-H Afterschool Program will communicate with you about any health issues that are noted while your child is at Program. As a courtesy to all children and staff, please keep the staff informed about any health issues your child may have. In order to protect the health and well-being of all children and staff, the following health procedures and policies will be followed.

We cannot admit a child who has any contagious illnesses or symptoms, including but not limited to:

- ♦ A fever over 101 degrees
- ♦ Vomiting
- ♦ Diarrhea occurring more than twice
- ♦ Open sores & mouth sores
- ♦ Unexplained or communicable rashes
- ♦ Severe mucus drainage
- ♦ Conjunctivitis (a.k.a. pink eye)

If your child becomes ill with any of the above while at the program, we will notify you and the child must be picked up within one hour of contact. The program reserves the right to require a child to be picked up immediately for suspected contagion. You will be notified should your child be exposed to a contagious illness.

**Your child must be symptom and medication free for 24 hours before returning.**

We reserve the right to request a physician's statement prior to readmitting a child to the program.

**4-H Afterschool Program does not administer medication to any child.** We do not dispense any over-the-counter or prescription medication. Medication should be dispensed by the school nurse prior to the child attending.

### **Discipline / Behavior Policy**

Discipline is always in a manner which protects your child's dignity and wellbeing. Discipline will not be embarrassing or abusive, physical punishment will never be allowed. Discipline will be consistent and fair. The staff will use positive reinforcement and re-direction techniques. First the child will be redirected verbally. If the behavior continues, the child may be placed in a safe place separate from the group but still in the room. If behavior escalates, cannot be controlled, or becomes violent towards others, the Site Lead will be involved and may contact parents to get involved in the process. This may include the request for the child to be picked up for the day. Behavioral issues that cannot be resolved may result in dismissal from the program.

### **Dismissal Policy**

Security is very important; children must be signed out daily. Please inform the program if someone other than you will be picking up your child. You will be asked to provide names of those individuals who are approved to pick-up your child in the application procedure. 4-H Afterschool Program reserves the right to refuse to release a child to a person who appears physically, emotionally, or mentally unable to provide adequate care for the child as judged by the staff member responsible for the child. We will not be able to release a child to an adult who appears intoxicated. In the event that this situation should arise, staff will release the child to an authorized individual on the child's emergency contact list who appears able to provide appropriate care for the child.

### **Accidents and Emergency Procedures**

Safety is an important part of our jobs. We believe it to be our top priority to keep your children safe each day. Although we have many procedures in place to prevent accidents, sometimes accidents are unavoidable. In the event your child has a minor injury such as a bump, scrape, bite, etc. we reserve the right to treat your child with the proper First Aid Care and will contact you to inform you. We will also fill out an accident/incident report that will need to be signed by you or the person picking up your child that day.

In the event that your child requires emergency medical treatment, program staff will call 911 immediately. If your child requires emergency ambulance transportation, the ambulance drivers will transport your child to the closest local hospital at their discretion and depending on the speed with which your child must be treated. Decisions as to the necessity of emergency medical treatment will be made by the Program Coordinator or Site Lead. Parents or legal guardians of the child will be notified as soon as possible. Parents/Guardians are responsible for all medical expenses related to the child's injury including any medical transportation. It is the parent or legal guardian's responsibility to provide insurance information to medical personnel. Our employees are not responsible in any form for medical or transportation expenses.

### **Safety Drills**

**Natural Disaster Plan** In the event of a natural disaster (e.g. tornado, threatening winds, etc.), the children will be moved to an inside room or area of the program in accordance with the approved emergency action plan. A weather radio will be maintained at all times for updates on threatening conditions, as well as flashlights, first aid kits, and other necessary items. In the event the situation requires evacuation, an evacuation plan is posted in all classrooms. Parents will be notified as soon as possible. The Office of Family and Children Services will be informed in the event of an actual disaster, and an incident report will be filed within 24 hours.

The program will also follow a schedule of safety drills, such as monthly fire drills, severe weather drills, lockdown drills, and shelter in place drills, throughout the year to maintain preparedness for any emergency.



## **Children's Rights**

Staff is responsible for ensuring that children have:

- ♦ A safe and reliable environment, free from hazards,
- ♦ Use of all the equipment and space on an equal basis and are able to find equipment in functioning condition,
- ♦ Their ideas and feelings respected,
- ♦ Discipline that is fair, equal, and respectful of them,
- ♦ The opportunity to express their anger, frustration, disappointment, joy, etc. in an appropriate manner,
- ♦ Activities that allow participants to express their creative ability, as they explore and discover, while developing to their fullest potential,
- ♦ An environment that offers a variety of choices: physical, gross motor, quiet, indoor, outdoor, active and passive areas, creative, dramatic play, and exploring,
- ♦ A right to voice their opinion on the rules and have input on activities offered,
- ♦ Staff members that care about them, enjoy being with them, and help them grow,
- ♦ And, are treated with care, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

## **Children's Responsibilities**

Children need to be responsible to:

- ♦ Follow all rules and regulations listed in the school's Student Handbook,
- ♦ Learn consequences for their own actions,
- ♦ Display character development traits: caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility,
- ♦ Respect the rules that are established,
- ♦ Control their anger so that their actions do not harm anyone,
- ♦ Not willfully damage equipment or property in the building or others' personal property,
- ♦ Share equipment and facilities with all children in the program,
- ♦ Remain with a staff member at all times and notify staff if they need to go elsewhere,
- ♦ Be on time, and with their belongings,
- ♦ Dress appropriately for indoor and outdoor activities,
- ♦ Return materials and equipment to the place they found them before they start a new activity or go home,
- ♦ Participate in and complete an activity to which they have committed themselves,
- ♦ Stay in a designated, supervised program area, unless otherwise directed by staff.

## **Parental Assistance**

We encourage you to participate in program activities. Family nights are a terrific way for parents to actively participate in the program. We provide "Family Nights" during the program year. We encourage all families enrolled in the program to participate in at least one family night each school year.



## **Personnel**

Particular care is taken to select staff who are caring and responsive to the students, and who enjoy the satisfaction of providing “excellence” in afterschool programming.

Every employee is professionally screened (including child abuse registry, affidavit of good moral character, references, and employment history) before hiring and is well supervised on the job. All employees are oriented to abide by New York State Rules and Regulations, fulfill the program’s expectations, and strive for excellence. In addition we make it a priority to remain informed about current child development and education research and trends in order to most effectively serve your child’s needs. Our result therefore, is a level of afterschool care your child deserves and parents can expect. We will not discuss other student’s progress behavior, or accidents with anyone other than the appropriate parties.

## **How is 4-H Incorporated in the Afterschool Program?**

4-H is a youth organization that represents a number of different interests. 4-H is an opportunity for youth and volunteer adults to have fun together while “learning by doing.” 4-H clubs allow youth to learn new things, explore new areas, go new places, and meet new people.

A 4-H club is an organized group of five or more youth. The members elect their own officers and operate a democracy in action. The clubs meet at least once a week. Through the 4-H club, youth receive instruction in educational projects, have fun together, and conduct business meetings.

In the program, the students are surveyed on their interests in clubs. Clubs are then designed around the interests of youth. All of the youth who are interested in a certain club are encouraged to meet and design their club with the help of an Activity Leader. All clubs follow the 4-H experiential “learn by doing” philosophy with hands on learning projects and activities.

Our program gives youth the opportunity to build on what they have learned during the school day, explore new interests, develop relationships with caring adults and assist youth to acquire the life skills necessary to meet the challenges of adolescence and adulthood. All students should join at least one afterschool program club.

## **The Cornell Cooperative Extension Mission Statement**

Cornell Cooperative Extension puts knowledge to work in pursuit of economic vitality, ecological sustainability and social well-being. We bring local experience and research based solutions together, helping New York State families and communities thrive in our rapidly changing world.

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