

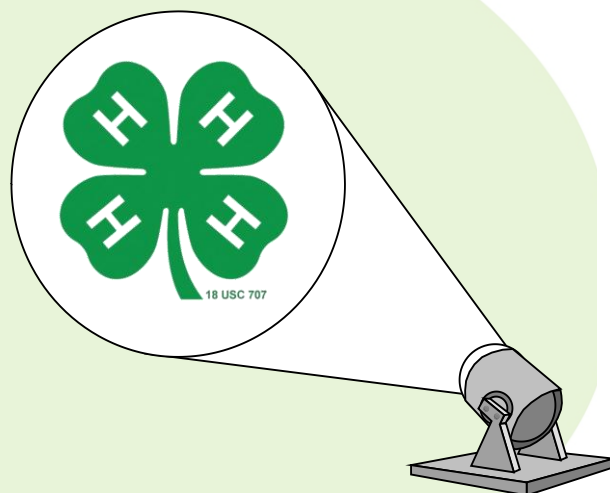
Berrien County 4-H Spotlight

Upcoming MSU Extension Office Closures

The Berrien County MSU Extension Office will be closed on the following days. Please arrange for any pickup or drop offs prior to these dates.

February 4 - Closed 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

February 16 - Presidents Day Holiday



Volume 27 Issue 8

February – March 2026

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CONTACT US

**Berrien County MSU
Extension Office**
1737 Hillandale Road
Benton Harbor, MI 49022

Office Hours:
Monday through Thursday
8:00 a.m. – Noon
1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Phone:
269-927-5674

Fax:
269-944-4128

Email:
msue.berrien@county.msu.edu

Website:
http://msue.anr.msu.edu/county/berrien/berrien_county_4_h

COUNTY NEWS AND EVENTS



Earn prizes with the Michigan 4-H Cash Composition Contest

Did you know youth are being targeted by scams too? That's this year's theme for the 2026 Michigan 4-H Cash Composition Contest! Michigan youth ages 9–19 are invited to participate through writing an essay on this year's question.

Top entries receive a \$100 gift card, thanks to contest sponsor, Extra Credit Union. MSU Extension will host two webinars to help with fraud awareness and essay writing. Essays are due by March 1. For contest details and essay submission information, visit: www.canr.msu.edu/4-h-money-smarts/money-smart-kids-contest.



4-H Yearly Enrollment – Now Open!

4-H Online is now open for 4-H new year enrollments! Login today to submit your annual enrollment.

2025 – 2026 deadlines are as follows:

- January 1 – Returning Member Re-enrollment deadline
- June 1 – New Member deadline

Paper accommodations available upon request to the Berrien County MSU Extension Office at 269-927-5674 or can be found online at:

https://www.canr.msu.edu/berrien/berrien_county_4_h/enrollment

Enrollment forms must be on file by the deadline dates listed above to be eligible for project complete, awards, scholarships, etc.



4-H Enrollment Swag Drawing

The first 4-H enrollment drawing for 4-H swag has been completed. Winners were selected at random and are listed below. Winners will be notified for prize distribution.

Samuel L. - Blue Ribbon Bandits
Jeremy W. - Backyard Renegades
Zoey B. - South Lakers
Addison C. - Redbud Country Goat
Nolan B. - Blue Ribbon Bandits
Lia L. - Blue Ribbon Bandits
Lucy L. - Outsiders / Town and Country

Macy S. - Double Bridle
Wesley L. - Blue Ribbon Bandits
Eric F. - Countrysiders
Brayden L. - Galien Chanters
Cooper G. - South Lakers
Maddox B. - Four Flags
Athena Z. - South Lakers

Rowena P. - Blue Ribbon Bandits
Charleston F. - Town and Country
Noah M. - Town and Country
Vayda Z. - Double Bridle
Abygayl J. - Blue Ribbon Bandits
Henry L. - Straight Shooters

If you have not registered for the 2025 – 2026 program year, do so by January 1, 2026, to be entered in our last and final door prize enrollment drawing for the year! Registration can be done through 4-H Online or via paper for both new and returning.



COUNTY NEWS AND EVENTS



Dates: April 25-26, 2026 (optional early arrival April 24th after 4:00pm)

Location: Camp Newaygo (5333 S. Centerline Road, Newaygo, MI 49337).

Details: Choose your adventure:

- **Project Wild Certification** – Become certified to teach using Michigan DNR's Project Wild curriculum.
- **Outdoor Skills** – Learn hands-on techniques for hiking, outdoor cooking, fire-building, shelter-making, and more!

See the registration link for full course details. There will also be opportunities for participants of both courses to learn from each other, share ideas, and practice skills.

Audience: 4-H Volunteers

Cost: \$150 includes 1-2 nights lodging, meals, and all course materials.

Registration: <https://events.anr.msu.edu/4HOutdoorEd2026/>

Berrien County 4-H Scholarship Program

Application submission is now available for the 2026 Berrien County 4-H Scholarship program. The program includes the Joseph & Evelyn Cerny Memorial Scholarship, Berrien County 4-H Alumni Scholarship and the Berrien County 4-H Equine Educational Scholarship. Open to youth

For application, requirements and submission details can be found online at: https://www.canr.msu.edu/berrien/berrien_county_4_h/scholarshipsawards/scholarships

Deadline to submit is May 15, 2026. No late submissions accepted.

Interviews are scheduled for June 11, 2026.



4-H Spring Livestock Workshop



This one-day workshop will be on Saturday, March 7, 2026, on MSU's main campus in East Lansing. It is designed for 4-H youth and volunteers in beef, sheep, goats, and swine project areas. Youth will learn about different aspects of their livestock projects throughout a variety of breakout sessions.

Session topics could include intro to your species project, animal evaluation, marketing your livestock project, reproduction, nutrition, and more!

The 2026 Michigan 4-H Livestock Workshop is open to youth ages 12-19 (as of Jan. 1, 2026) and active Gold-Level 4-H volunteers. Space will be limited to 100 people: 85 youth and 15 volunteers.

For more registration and session details can be found online: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-spring-livestock-workshop-2026>

For questions reach out to State 4-H Livestock Educator, Autumn Converse at conver20@msu.edu



COUNTY NEWS AND EVENTS



**Open your
Home and Heart
to a Japanese
Youth this
Summer 2026!**

Contact: Jan Brinn
brinn@msu.edu



Host a Japanese youth in Summer 2026 through the States' 4-H International!

Invite an international youth into your home for three and a half weeks and share an American experience. Expand your family's cultural understanding, learn about new foods and customs, and possibly learn a new language while sharing your own. Your children will build lifelong friendships and gain new perspectives on their country, too!

2026 Online Applications to host can be found at: <https://www.states4hexchange.org/apply/host/>

For more information on 4-H International Exchange Programs go to: www.states4hexchange.org

Michigan 4-H Day with the Detroit Tigers



DATE CHANGE!!! → Join Michigan 4-H and MSU Extension for a fun day at Comerica Park to watch the Detroit Tigers take place on April 12!

This event will be held on Sunday, April 12, at 1:40 p.m. when the Tigers take on Miami Marlins. Michigan 4-H will be honored as the Group Charity of the Game and members of the 4-H and MSU Extension community will enjoy a discounted ticket to the game. Tickets purchased through the Michigan 4-H link will include:

- Access to a pre-game, on-field opportunity for youth (a lap around the warning track of Comerica Park before the game).
- A portion of each ticket sale donated to Michigan 4-H.

Additionally, ticket holders can purchase a co-branded Michigan 4-H and Detroit Tigers bucket hat with each ticket purchase through the link, while supplies last. To purchase tickets, visit <https://www.gofevo.com/event/Michigan4H26>. Tickets already purchased have automatically been transferred from the May 3 date to the new April 12th.

What is the Berrien County 4-H Foundation

What is the Berrien County 4-H Foundation, Inc.?

We are a 501(c)3 corporation organized to promote and advance 4-H activities in Berrien County.

Our Mission: Berrien County 4-H Foundation Inc. supports 4-H youth through dedicated and sustained program funding.

Our Vision: To grow, to support, and to mentor our future leaders by promoting the 4-H's (head, heart, hands, health) for all Berrien County Youth.

We have been carrying out this mission and vision since 1968 and love to support the 4-H youth in Berrien County! Would you like to help? Tax deductible donations can be sent to:

Berrien County 4-H Foundation
1737 Hillandale Rd
Benton Harbor MI 49022-9630



MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY | Extension



Michigan 4-H Horse Program
presents the annual

WINTER WEBINAR SERIES

January 13: The many benefits of Horse Judging, Hippology, and Horse Bowl!
January 27: The Basics of Biosecurity with Dr. Christine Skelly
February 10: Wintertime training and show season prep with Taylor Fabus
February 24: Back to the Basics of the 4-H Horse and Pony Project with Dr. Karen Waite-Warner
March 10: Being an Equine Veterinarian with Dr. Amy Connolly
March 24: Michigan 4-H Proud Equestrian Program update with Jermo Reese

Register now!
<https://msu.zoom.us/joining/register/-41SZ4IMQvuFQ9i05f20kg>

Beyond Ready Any Questions? Email David at lindsa75@msu.edu MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Extension

2026 MICHIGAN 4-H YOUTH HORSE PROGRAM

EVENTS SCHEDULE

January 30-February 1: Equine Connection Weekend
March 14: Equine Communications Contest
March 20-22: Norma Agnew Memorial 4-H Fuzzy Horse Show
April 11: Michigan 4-H/FFA State Horse Judging Contest
April 12: Michigan 4-H State Hippology Contest
June 24-27: Michigan 4-H Exploration Days
August 13-16: Michigan 4-H State Horse Show

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Extension
 MORE INFO: [email: lindsa75@msu.edu](mailto:lindsa75@msu.edu)

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY Extension

2026 ADULTING 101

- FRAUD FIGHTERS - JANUARY 21 AT 6:30 PM
- INFORMED RENTER - FEBRUARY 19 AT 5:00 PM
- SLEEP WELLNESS - MARCH 4 AT 5:30 PM
- EAT SMART: HEALTHY MEALS ON A BUDGET - APRIL 13 AT 5:00 PM
- COOKING WITH CONFIDENCE - MAY 18 AT 6:30 PM
- AI AND YOU: SMART, SAFE & SAVVY - JUNE 11 AT 6:00 PM
- THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK - JULY 8 AT 6:00 PM
- ROADMAP TO A SMART USED CAR PURCHASE - AUGUST 12 AT 5:00 PM
- ARE YOU READY? - SEPTEMBER 23 AT 5:00 PM
- MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKIT - OCTOBER 7 AT 6:00 PM
- REALITIES OF ANIMAL CARE - NOVEMBER 12 AT 7:00 PM

*ALL TIMES LISTED ARE EASTERN STANDARD TIME

FREE ON ZOOM

MI 4-H DAIRY CONFERENCE

COWS ON CAMPUS

Session Topics Include:
 -Tour of the new MSU Dairy Cattle Teaching & Research Center
 -Tour of the MSU Meat Lab
 -Nutrition Workshop
 -Dairy Judging
 -Dissections
 & More!

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
 FEBRUARY 27TH-MARCH 1ST, 2026
 OPEN TO ANY MI 4-H YOUTH AGES 12-19

Registration is now OPEN!

Beyond Ready

Capitol Experience

COMING SOON

MARCH 15-17TH, 2026

Cost \$365
 Scholarships may be available through your local 4-H office!

Register for Michigan 4-H Capitol Experience!

At Michigan 4-H Capitol Experience, teens learn how to change the world for the better through engagement in Michigan's state government and public policy process. The program is scheduled for March 15-17, in Lansing.

The three-day event, open to high-school-aged youth, includes tours of the Michigan Capitol, interactions with state legislators, meetings with state agency staff, lobbyists and state-level experts and learning how policy is made. During the program, youth work in small teams to draft legislation on: agriculture; civil rights and youth advocacy; crime and law enforcement; education and teacher retention; environment and natural resources; health; and jobs, the economy and infrastructure.

The cost to attend is \$365, which includes lodging at the Okemos Conference Center. Please contact your local 4-H program coordinator to inquire about local funding opportunities. To learn more and/or find the link to register, visit www.canr.msu.edu/4_h_capitol_experience/.





Dates: **March 1:** US registration opens
April 1 - June 1: Pen pal program runs with weekly emails

Age: Participants must be between the ages of 9 – 18 as of April 1, 2026.

Frequency: participants will be expected to send one email/letter weekly for the duration (approximately 10 emails/letters). There will be weekly discussion topics to help get the conversation going, but these are only suggestions.

Regular Email Schedule Between Participants: For example, international students send emails to their U.S. partners every Monday, and U.S. students reply every Friday.

Cost: \$10 USD that can be paid online only.

Registration deadline: Friday, March 20, 2026, or when all spots are filled.

Registration opening soon. Reach out to the Berrien County MSUE Office.

National 4-H Conference



April 10-15 **Arlington, VA**

For youth ages 15-19 who are currently enrolled in 4-H

Registration: <https://MI-National4HConference.4honline.com>

Changemakers ages 15-19, want to strengthen your leadership skills, learn how to advocate for 4-H and other causes you care about, and experience our nation's capital all at once? National 4-H Conference is now open for registrations!

Join us April 10-15, 2026 to learn more about the federal government and its agencies, and how to use your voice to impact change at every level!

Cost is \$100.00 after county scholarships are applied.

More information is available on our website at:
<https://www.canr.msu.edu/national-4-h-conference/>

The registration link is: <https://MI-National4HConference.4honline.com>

Michigan 4-H

SPARK & SHARE SUMMIT

Bavarian Inn Lodge and Conference Center
Frankenmuth, MI

March 7, 2026
10:00am

\$75 per person
Includes Lunch

Session Topics:

- Ag in the Classroom
- Garden Inspired Art
- Running Livestock Shows

- Learn to Lincot
- Scratch Coding
- Self Publishing

- Animal Nutrition Basics
- Big Dreams and Future Careers
- Making Yarn on a Drop Spindle

...And More!

REGISTER NOW <https://events.anr.msu.edu/SparkShare2026/>

Registration closes February 9th.

Ask your County 4-H Program Coordinator about availability of conference scholarships.

Join us for a day full of fun, exploring, learning, and sharing.

Berrien County 4-H Horse Leaders

Versatility Scholarship Event

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

Sunday,
August 16, 2026

3:00 PM EST

Berrien County Youth Fair
Equine Complex

Registration deadline is July 15th,
2026

Open to Berrien County 4-H
Horse and Pony project
members who have completed
the eight (8) grade no later than
July 15, 2026.

Maximum years of participation
can not exceed five.

Participants must complete two
(2) hours of volunteer service
related to the horse and pony
project.

Register online using the QR
code.



**MICHIGAN STATE
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4-H Mark of Excellence

Michigan 4-H State Awards Program

Grab your pen! Spark your imagination!
Dive into the world of 4-H! Twist and turn your way through your 4-H memories, as you capture your adventure and discoveries!



Beyond Ready

Eligibility:

- Be a current 4-H member between the ages of 10 and 11 as of January 1, 2026. Enrollment in previous years not required.
- Individuals may only be selected for this award once.
- Each county can select up to two (2) winners to receive the Mark of Excellence Award each year.

Submission Details:

- Contestants are asked to create either a video or a journal reflection focusing around the theme of “4-H Beyond Ready”
- Entries should be legible, readable or easily viewable.
- Video submissions must be no more than 2 minutes in length. Videos should be in mp4 format or provide a YouTube Channel link.
- Journal reflections must be 500 words or less and can be hand-written or typed.
- Submission can be either video OR a journal reflection.
- Must include first name and county.

Award:

- Selected winners will receive a certificate and medal.

Learn more at:

https://www.canr.msu.edu/4_h_scholarships_and_recognition_program/4-h-awards-and-recognition-program/youth-recognition

Submissions may be posted on the Michigan 4-H section of the MSU Extension website and promoted digitally in newsletters and social media.

Deadlines:

- Submit to your local 4-H Office by May 1, 2026 for judging.
- Selected winners will be notified by May 15, 2026 of their achievement from their local 4-H Office.

Questions:

- Contact your local County 4-H Office

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MICHIGAN STATE
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4-H EXPLORATION DAYS

Join 1,000 youth from across Michigan on MSU's campus to explore YOUR future! Live like a college student and learn about future careers at 4-H Exploration Days. This three-day pre-college program is designed to help you explore careers, build skills and envision your future. Choose from more than 100 fun learning sessions on a variety of topics that are led by MSU faculty, 4-H staff and volunteers, and other experts! You'll stay in and eat at MSU residence halls, attend sessions in buildings throughout campus, and of course have fun at free-time activities across the university!



June 24 – 26, 2026
Michigan State University

A county delegation orientation is
schedule for:

When: May 19, 2026
6:30 pm—7:30 pm
Where: Virtual via Zoom

Zoom details will be sent once
registered for the event. Orientation
will cover what to pack, emergency
procedures, expectations, free time
activities, and more!

What does 4-H Exploration Days cost?

The cost for the 2026 event is \$220, which includes two nights' lodging in a residence hall, meals, learning sessions, an event T-shirt and free-time activities. Berrien County 4-H Members are eligible for scholarships to go towards the event costs in the amount of \$170.00 equaling a camp fee of \$50.00 due at time of registration.

Who should attend?

All young people ages 12 to 19 are invited to join the fun! You don't need to be a 4-H member to attend. Adults who would like to serve as event chaperones should contact their county 4-H program coordinator.

How do I register?

The 2026 event registration website (<https://bit.ly/2GRhuwv>) will open registrations on March 12, 2026, at 7:00 PM EST. You can also contact your county 4-H program coordinator in your local MSU Extension office for details. Registration will open in March 2026. You'll want to register early – sessions fill up fast and are assigned on a first-come, first-served basis!

Questions:

Kelly Stelter

4-H Program Coordinator

grandtke@msu.edu, 269-927-5674 ext. 4015



Beyond
Ready



Michigan 4-H State Awards Program



A State 4-H Award is the highest honor
bestowed on Michigan 4-H youth!

- Recognition event: June 24, 2026
MSU Campus (East Lansing) during
4-H Exploration Days
- Applications accepted: March 1-April 1
Submit application:
<https://events.anr.msu.edu/StateAwards26>
- Start early!! Find Information and
applications: <https://tinyurl.com/46afjtc8>
- Win cash prizes (\$100-500) & 4-H
Exploration Days scholarships (\$50)

This program provides members an opportunity to tell their 4-H story while learning valuable skills everyone needs as they enter adulthood. This hands-on experience not only recognizes outstanding achievements, but ensures youth are Beyond Ready for life!

- ✓ Setting goals & persevering
- ✓ Completing an application
- ✓ Creating a resume
- ✓ Writing a cover letter
- ✓ Interviewing
- ✓ Networking
- ✓ Reflecting and communicating
- ✓ Being recognized & modeling sportsmanship



MSU EXTENSION



MICHIGAN STATE
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Extension



STATE NEWS AND EVENTS



Participate in the World Food Prize Michigan Youth Institute

As millions across the globe deal with food insecurity, the World Food Prize Michigan Youth Institute (WFP MIYI) offers young people an opportunity to be part of the solution. Held May 7 in East Lansing, or by participating from anywhere else using Zoom video/web conference technology, the event seeks to inspire and prepare the next generation of global leaders to end world hunger.

To participate, youth should be in grades 7-12 and register by the March 15 deadline. As part of the registration process, youth are required to prepare a three- to five-page research paper about a developing country and one of 22 key factors that affect food security. At the event, youth present and discuss their papers with other attendees and research and industry experts.

The top performing students at the WFP MIYI will be selected to attend the World Food Prize Global Youth Institute in Des Moines, Iowa, in October. For more information, visit <https://www.canr.msu.edu/wfpmyi/>. Registration opens February 1 and closes March 15.

Tickets now available for Michigan 4-H Day at the Breslin

Join MSU Extension and Michigan 4-H on March 1 for the 20th celebration of Michigan 4-H Day at the Breslin! This fun family event will be held at the Jack Breslin Student Events Center as the MSU Women's Basketball team takes on the Ohio State Buckeyes!

Those interested in attending can purchase tickets at a price of \$7.50 plus fees. This is a discounted rate available to the Michigan 4-H and MSU Extension communities; complimentary tickets are no longer available due to the rising popularity of college sports. MSU Extension and Michigan 4-H youth, volunteers, partners, stakeholders, alumni, staff and their families are all encouraged to attend.

Tickets can be purchased through a two-step process. First, guests should register at <https://events.anr.msu.edu/4HBreslin2026/>. Within one week, registrants will receive a custom purchase link to the email provided in registration. Attendees must then use this custom link to purchase tickets for the event. Additional ticketing information is available on the registration website. Registration will close on February 17.

Tip-off for the game is scheduled for 12 p.m. Gates to the Breslin will open at 10:30 a.m., with a variety of pre-game activities hosted by MSU Extension professionals around the concourse. Participants are encouraged to show their pride and wear green and white 4-H or MSU Extension apparel. Families for whom cost is a barrier should contact their local 4-H program coordinator.



Show your 4-H pride wherever you go!

Did you know you can make a difference for 4-H every time you hit the road? By purchasing the Michigan 4-H specialty license plate, you're not only showing your 4-H spirit—you're helping fund programs that empower young people across the state. A portion of each plate sale and renewal benefits Michigan 4-H, supporting hands-on learning experiences that help Michigan youth become beyond ready for the future.

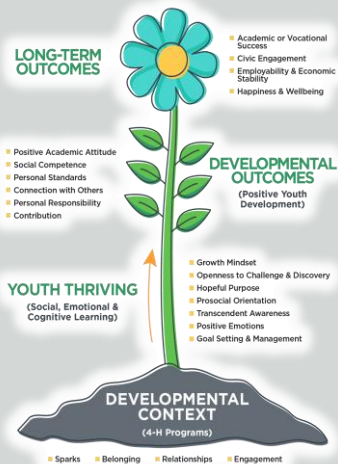
Whether you're a current member, alumni, volunteer, or simply a proud supporter, this is an easy way to give back and keep 4-H growing strong. Ordering is simple through the Michigan Secretary of State.



STATE NEWS AND EVENTS



4-H Thriving Model of Positive Youth Development



Building a sense of belonging in our 4-H program has been a long-standing tradition. What does this look like?

It may be a project leader, club leader, or event organizer welcoming you to each meeting or event. It may look like a “roll call” or “ice breaker” at the beginning of a meeting.

The initial welcome allows people to know that they have been seen in the room. So, the next time someone asks you a roll call question of “What’s your favorite cheese?”, know that there is a reason.

We want to get to know you. We want to hear your voice. We want the ability to start building relationships by finding likenesses among us.

Contact your local 4-H staff for more information.
#BeyondReady

February 10: 4-H Wild Spartans

Online

In this month’s session, take a walk through the woods on the wild side with “Walking a Path of Conservation.” Ask questions through a live Q&A. This free virtual series is for youth ages 12-19.
www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-wild-spartans-february

February 11: Michigan 4-H Volunteer Webinar Series: Building Belonging – Teambuilding Strategies for Stronger 4-H Experiences

Online

Teambuilding isn’t just an activity—it’s a pathway to deeper belonging and higher engagement in 4-H. This webinar will show volunteers how simple team-building practices can help youth feel included, communicate effectively, work together, and grow their leadership skills.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/michigan-4-h-volunteer-webinar-building-belonging-teambuilding-strategies-for-stronger-4-h-experiences

February 11: Avoiding Money Mishaps

Online

This webinar will focus on how youth can protect themselves from fraud, scams, identity theft and predatory lending.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/avoiding-money-mishaps-feb11

February 11: 4-H Chef Tasty Dog Treats

Lenawee MSU Extension Demo Kitchen, Adrian

Youth ages 5-11 will prepare delicious treats to bake at home for your dog. Ages 5-7 need adult helper. Registration deadline is February 7.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-chef-tasty-dog-treats

February 19 –March 26: Online Guiding Principles for Highly Successful Parenting Webinar Series

Online

Guiding Principles is a FREE online course for parents of toddlers to teens to learn strategies for helping children, parents and families be successful.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/guiding-principles-for-highly-successful-parenting-webinar-series-february-2026

February 19: Ace the Interview: Skill Building and Practice for Teens

Washtenaw County MSU Extension Office, Ann Arbor

This free workshop will help youth (ages 12-19) confidently handle interview experiences with tips and hands-on practice. Any teen is welcome to attend! Registration deadline is February 17.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/ace-the-interview-skill-building-and-practice-for-teens



Berrien County MSU Extension
1737 Hillandale Road
Benton Harbor, MI 49022



4-H Spotlight

Berrien County 4-H Youth Development



Facebook – “Berrien County 4-H Youth Development”

Instagram - @realberriencounty4-H

