

# Youth Learn Life Skills through WI Tour

Youth development is a process of mental, physical, social and emotional growth during which young people prepare to live a productive and satisfying life within the customs and regulations of their society. Life skills are abilities individuals can learn that will help them to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life.

In August of 2016 St. Croix County took 29 youth on an out of county adventure called the WI Tour. But before the fun could begin, a volunteer group of youth and adult leaders spent six months planning the trip. This planning included everything from logistics to educational activities. The three day two night experience designed for youth 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade had the following objectives:

- Increase knowledge and understanding of Wisconsin history and culture.
- Build awareness of state problems / concerns.
- Further develop skills in leadership and personal expression of values.
- Increase awareness of self in relationship to others.
- Share what was learned with others in your club and county.



In addition, the committee added the addition of high school aged youth counselors. The counselor's role included: assisting with the mandatory orientation, planning and teaching bus activities, leading and monitoring the youth during the trip, and serving as a good role model. In addition the counselors each had a 20 -30 minutes teachable moment where they were the teacher / tour guide.

All youth participated in a daily reflection where they could express their thoughts, achievements, concerns, and questions.



Here is what a few participants said at the end of the trip:

- "I can do anything I put my mind to"*
- "I discovered how brave I am"*
- "That I can make friends really easily"*
- "I learned that I have a lot of confidence"*
- "I love adventures and I have some strength that I didn't know I about"*
- "I have good friend making skills"*
- "That stuff can be hard"*
- "I like to help people"*
- "I can accomplish my fears in a team"*
- "I should try new things more often"*



“One of my favorite memories in 4-H happened just this last summer during the Wisconsin Tour trip. There was a young girl who was afraid to go down the zip-line. As she faced her fears, everyone met her with congratulatory hugs; I saw a group of teenagers become true 4-Hers and the greatest of friends.

It was at this moment when I realized I was watching 4-H change lives the same way it changed mine. I will forever be grateful for that experience and all that 4-H provided. I now have a dream to pursue, a best friend, and a confident self. 4-H really has been my life.”

~ A WI Tour Counselor



### *Life Skills Learned of the WI Tour*

#### *Thinking*

- Critical Thinking
- Problem Solving
- Decision Making

#### *Living*

- Personal Safety
- Healthy Lifestyle Choices

#### *Being*

- Self-Discipline

#### *Working*

- Self-Motivation
- Teamwork

#### *Giving*

- Contribution to Group Effort
- Responsible Citizenship
- Leadership

#### *Caring*

- Sharing
- Concern for Others

#### *Relating*

- Accepting Differences
- Social Skills
- Cooperation

#### *Managing*

- Goal Setting