Bicycling is a long-term project where children can experience mastery fairly quickly. Learning the parts of a bicycle, bike safety, how to ride a bike, and finally planning a bike trip show progressive steps in learning. Documenting this progression allows endorsers and inspection teams to see what happens beyond the period of time children are at the center.

While designed for children and younger youth, teens will particularly enjoy Bicycle Adventures if they have input to how the project is taught.

If the end goal is a bike trip, start with short rides to get the youth into condition for the long ride. Before each ride take some time to cover the Bicycle Adventures topics: bicycle safety, riding safely, bike repair etc. Provide some ideas for the long bike trip, and get the youth’s input. They can help plan the route as well.

Ideas! Ideas! Ideas!
- Take a field trip to a local bicycle shop to learn about the different types and purposes of bicycles.
- Participate as a group in a local charity ride.
- Invite cycling enthusiasts or those who have participated in recognized bicycle events, or a fitness expert to talk about the health benefits of cycling.

Opportunities for Youth Leadership and Development and Cross-age Teaching

Bicycling is a great way for youth to take charge! As they become proficient in a skill they can share that skill with other youth. Older children and youth can work with local police and community members to plan a bike rodeo that teaches younger children how to ride safely. They can also teach specific skills such as using a bike that is the right size or fixing a flat tire. The project members learn communication, demonstration, and critical thinking skills while helping others.

Summary
It’s not necessary to be an expert cyclist to teach 4-H Bicycle Adventures. All that’s needed is an interest in the subject! Read through the materials, try out the activities and talk with children and youth to see what they would like to do. Encourage members to share what they learn with others. By talking about what they have learned, 4-H members will extend their cycling skills and develop their ability to think critically about their experiences.

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Using 4-H Projects to Enhance School-Age & Youth Programs
**Project Goals**

4-H Bicycle Adventures helps children and youth of all skill levels learn safe cycling practices, how to repair and maintain bicycles, and how to plan and participate in cycling activities and events. The Youth and Helper’s Guides provide information on topics and then give activity ideas to practice specific skills.

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**Four Fun Activities**

1. **Football players, firefighters, scientists and ballet dancers all wear some type of protective gear to help prevent injuries. Using an egg and bubble wrap, Bicycling for Fun, Body Protection, pages 6-7, explores how protective clothing works and why it should be worn.**

2. **Signs are everywhere. But are they really noticed? In Bicycling for Fun, Sign Language, pages 26-27, children and youth learn about traffic signs and what they mean. Then they participate in a scavenger hunt to see how many signs can be found in the neighborhood.**

3. **Oh no, a flat tire! Knowing how to repair one gives a new level of confidence and independence. Wheels in Motion, Patch It, pages 10-11, provides step-by-step directions on how to patch a tire tube and fix a flat.**

4. **Riding at night and in inclement weather creates special circumstances for bikers. Wheels in Motion, Dark and Stormy Riding, pages 28-29, provides tips and ideas to ride safer in less than ideal conditions.**

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**Experiential Learning**

Experiential Learning engages children and youth while they learn, share, and grow through their 4-H experiences. With an adult as the coach, the first step is “doing” or exploring. Next, youth share what they did and discuss the experience with their peers. After they’ve identified the skills and knowledge gained, help them determine how to apply these to other situations in their lives. Questions to enhance Experiential Learning might include:

What might happen if the appropriate safety equipment is not worn?

How will knowing the names and functions of bike parts help when buying or maintaining a bike?

What causes a tire to go flat?

Why is it hard to stop quickly when going fast?

What are some reasons why the shortest route may not be the best route?

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**Life Skills**

“Skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life” are identified as Life Skills (Hendricks, 1996). Every activity in Bicycle Adventures focuses on a particular life skills such as communication, leading, learning critical thinking, record keeping and planning.

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**Related 4-H Projects**

**Bicycling For Fun – Bicycle 1** is for grades 3-5. Youth discover the joy of riding a bicycle: why helmets are worn; how to check tires, brakes and chains; and ways to control a bike when starting and stopping.

**Wheels in Motion – Bicycle 2** is designed for youth in grades 6-8. Youth gather information on purchasing, learn how to maintain and keep a bicycle in good working condition, discover safe riding practices, read maps; and plan bike routes.

**Bicycle Helper’s Guide** includes activities for group learning that may be used at any time during the series. Groups will organize group rides, practice bicycle skills, and play fun games.

**Integrating Technology**

Looking for a new bicycle? Visit manufacturer’s websites to compare brands and models. Use the Internet to identify day trip destinations, determine the best routes, and check out the terrain by viewing webcams available on some websites.

**Bicycling For Fun, Sign Language, pages 6-7,** provides suggestions for working for community support.

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**Community Service/Service Learning Opportunities**

- Work with local law enforcement to map existing bicycle routes and identify locations for additional lanes and paths.
- Research local safety guidelines for bicycles and create awareness of these guidelines through posters or banners.
- Organize a CYS Services family bicycle trip to a local park or other point of interest.