

For Immediate Release

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### **4-H PetPALS Brings Youth and Adults Together!**

What happens when a young person, his or her pet, and a senior adult interact? The powerful bond between the 4-H member and pet transfer to the senior adult, communication begins, and a relationship forms. This is what the 4-H PetPALS project is all about.

4-H PetPALS, (PALS standing for People and Animals Linking Successfully), is an intergenerational 4-H project linking youth and their pets with senior adults. 4-H PetPALS utilizes the natural bond between young people and animals to promote positive youth development. Master 4-H volunteer leaders teach youth the skills needed to interact with residents in healthcare facilities, such as assisted living facilities and nursing homes, enhancing intergenerational relationships. Young people learn about the physical changes associated with aging, as well as medical conditions they may encounter while visiting. Applying the power of the human-animal bond, youth learn to select, socialize, and train their pets to participate as youth-pet teams in animal-assisted activities.

4-H PetPALS allows young people to be models for residents in healthcare facilities and the community at-large regarding the significance of human-companion animal interactions and the importance of intergenerational relationships. Youth apply the lessons and activities taught in this 10-step experientially based leader-directed curriculum to expand their capacities to develop leadership and citizenship skills in an intergenerational environment.

For more information about the 4-H program or the 4-H PetPALS project, please contact the **[County Name]** County OSU Extension Office at **[Office Phone Number]**.

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