

## ATHENS COUNTY 4-H PetPALS

### What is it?

**According to Ohio 4-H,** PetPALS is where “4-H Volunteers teach youth the skills needed to interact with residents in healthcare facilities, like assisted living and nursing home facilities, enhancing intergenerational relationships. Youth learn about the physical challenges associated with aging, as well as medical conditions they may encounter while visiting. They learn to communicate with residents, and gain an understanding of their rich histories, while becoming more compassionate and caring.

Young people learn to train and prepare their pets so they can participate in animal-assisted activities as a team. Youth learn about animal behavior, animal handling techniques and proper pet care. They gain a greater appreciation for their pet and form a stronger human-animal bond.”

### Where do we go?

Athens County PetPALS goes to Kimes Nursing Home every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month from 3-5 pm.

### How often is it?

**Training:** Will be scheduled around participants  
**Regular Meetings:** Once a month, at Kimes, going to libraries a couple times

### How do I get involved?

#### ***From Ohio 4-H: How to Involve and Enroll Youth***

The youth curriculum is designed as ten steps, to be taught and experienced in a minimum of ten meetings. The youth must have a suitable animal. Ownership of said animal is not required, however the youth must be associated with the animal long enough to form a bond.

A young person must:

1. Be at least age 8 and enrolled in the third grade as of January 1 of the current year, and not over 18 years old. 4-H eligibility ends December 31 of the year in which an individual attains the age of 19.
2. Either own a pet or have access to a pet:
  - Establishing the human-animal bond and forming that youth-pet team are very important in this project and the basis for successful completion.
  - Youth must have contact with the pet over a long enough time period to establish a positive bonding relationship with that animal.
  - Dogs and cats must be at least one year old prior to the first visit to the healthcare facility.
  - Rabbits, guinea pigs, and chinchillas must be at least six months old prior to the first visit to the healthcare facility,
3. Enroll in a 4-H club with a Master 4-H PetPALS Volunteer Leader.
4. Successfully complete the activities in the 4-H PetPALS curriculum.
5. Make a commitment to visit healthcare facilities upon completion of curriculum.

### Any questions? Please call:

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