

## Views from VanDeWalle

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### 4-H Reaches Youth With Two New Live Video Programs

Recently, Nebraska Extension staff led hundreds of youth in a kitchen science experiment focused on chemical reactions — the kind with vinegar and baking soda that is a staple at elementary school science fairs. For the inaugural program on March 17<sup>th</sup>, youth from more than 200 locations across Nebraska and four other states engaged in science out of their own homes.

This was the first in a series of live videos that Nebraska 4-H plans to stream each Tuesday and Thursday at 2 p.m. Central Time for as long as schools remain closed to slow the spread of COVID-19. The series, called Living Room Learning, aims to provide fun, engaging, educational activities that families can complete together with supplies they probably already have on hand, said Kathleen Lodl, associate dean of Nebraska Extension.

For families across Nebraska and throughout the United States, where they are now is at home, and in many cases, parents are trying to balance their own work obligations with their children's learning. Nebraska 4-H has a strong history of interacting with youth in ways that build life skills such as communication and leadership, while also educating them in content areas including STEM, healthy living and entrepreneurship. In addition, 4-H extension educators across the state already have relationships with 4-H clubs, schools and parents.

Youth who took part in the livestream were able to see the other participants and use a chat box to discuss the project and share other information, such as where they were from. The young learners seemed to love seeing other participants in their homes across the state and beyond. Living Room Learning is geared toward third- through fifth-graders, though younger and older kids can participate, too.

Nebraska 4-H has also launched the Boredom Buster Challenge, a live video series geared toward middle schoolers and focused on entrepreneurship. Like Living Room Learning, the Boredom Buster Challenge encourages participants to take advantage of the opportunities for interaction offered through the livestream as they learn about the fundamentals of entrepreneurship and challenge themselves to think of alternative uses for common household items, among other activities. The Boredom Buster Challenge will take place at 2 p.m. Central Time on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Forthcoming Living Room Learning livestreams will focus on healthy living, STEM and citizenship, among other topics. One activity will guide youth in making marbled paper, which they'll turn into a card to send to someone in their community. As 4-H leaders plan activities, they ensure that the four "H's" — head, heart, hands and health — are represented, and that each lesson fosters creative thinking and independence.

For a schedule of upcoming Living Room Learning activities and past livestreams, visit <https://4h.unl.edu/living-room-learning>. For a schedule and past videos of the Boredom Buster Challenge, visit <https://4h.unl.edu/boredom-buster-challenge>.

*Source: Cara Pesek, IANR Media*

### Spotting COVID-19 Misinformation

Recently, the University of Nebraska at Omaha's Social Media Lab for Research & Engagement within the College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media released ten tips for spotting COVID-10 misinformation which I've decided to share this week. The authors, Jeremy Harris Lipschultz, Ph.D., and Adam Tyma, Ph.D. shared ten tips to help you be better informed reader of online media. The tips are as follows:

1. Check the source of the social media post: Do you know and trust it as a source of truthful and reliable information?
2. Only trust experts. Now is not the time to trust this pundit or that pundit, this media celebrity or that YouTuber. If it's not coming from the CDC or WHO (or, locally, UNMC), walk away.
3. Check the date: Is this a recent story, or from a long time ago?
4. Does the message seem credible to you? Is it consistent with other stories? Does it fit with your experiences?
5. Who shared the post in your newsfeed? Do you know the person? Have they always shared reliable information?
6. If there is a photograph, does it look real, or could it be doctored?
7. If there is a video, does it show any possible signs of being edited?
8. More broadly, is the language in the post boring/objective or is it exciting/subjective? Often, the way the post is written is meant to get you to click without thinking because it might align with your own beliefs.
9. A good test: right click the link or image to see what the actual URL is. If it does not come from the place that it claims to come from (look for weird letters at the end like .ru, .cn, or others that just seem off), don't go to it. A URL that ends with .com, .org, .net, or .gov are typically more trustworthy.
10. Take this time to slow down and reflect on what you know. There is no need to rush to judgment.