FAQs – Frequently Asked Questions

**FAQs* from Youth:**

**Q** - Why can't my 4-H shooting sports class count towards my Hunter's Education certificate? They seem to cover the same thing….

**A** - The Indiana Hunter Education is not only recognized by the state of Indiana but also throughout North America and Mexico. Certain guidelines on what is taught must be followed exactly for the Hunter Education certificate to be valid in all states and Mexico. Although Hunter Education and 4-H Shooting Sports have the same goals of teaching youth safety and responsibilities in handling sporting arms, they fall under different jurisdictions and requirements of completion.

**Q** - I have not been able to attend the Hunter Education classes when they are offered in my county. Can I take it in another county?

**A** - Yes. Hunter Education is offered in every county in Indiana some time through the year and you can take it wherever it works best for you. A Hunter Education certificate is valid throughout the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. See the IDNR website (http://www.in.gov/dnr/lawenfor/hunter-edu.htm) for class choices. (Note that many counties require their youth to have completed this class before they enroll in their 4-H Shooting Sports program.)

**FAQs* from Adults:**

**Q** - I have NRA certification. Do I need to attend the 4-H SSE workshop to become a certified 4-H Shooting Sports Education Leader?

**A** - Yes. The only way to get your name added to our list of certified leaders is to attend our workshop. Other certifications do not focus on youth and vary in the content that they provide. We are required to cover specific discipline information, Risk Management, and how to teach youth to provide 4-H shooting sports education certification.

**Q** - Can 2nd graders shoot with the 4-H members if their parent (or grandparent) is present?

**A** - No. The liability insurance granted from Purdue to certified instructors applies ONLY to instructors working with 4-H youth. Do not jeopardize your program by allowing non 4-H members to shoot.

**Q** - What are the guidelines/rules in terms of the number of students that can be in a discipline per instructor?

**A** - There are no specific guidelines with respect to #kids/instructor. This will vary with age, ability, and discipline. We discuss this issue at our training workshops so discipline instructors should have a good understanding of how to judge. Try to enlist parents as assistants to help on the range or work with non-shooting aspects so you can work with smaller numbers of youth on the range. Although you might have a lot of kids signed up for a discipline you probably would not have more than 4-5 shoot at the line at any one time unless you have some parents watching the other end of the shooting line (then you might have 6-8 kids).
**FAQs* from Adults (continued)**

**Q** - Do you have any recommendations for third graders that are enrolled in shooting sports? I am concerned about the maturity level of third graders. Are they ready for shooting sports? Are we required to let them participate in our program?

**A** - You are not required to start the shooting sports program at 3rd grade, if your county shooting sports instructor team feels that the size and maturity level required for their program is higher than is normally found in third graders. The overall safety of the youth and adult instructors must be the paramount consideration. On the other hand, if the younger 4-H members are ready and interested now they may loose interest if you exclude them. Furthermore, they will not be able to complete 10 years in Shooting Sports if they don't start in the third grade. We recommend that you consider the Hunting/Wildlife discipline as an introductory class for your younger participants (3rd & 4th graders). This discipline offers a great way of introducing kids to the outdoors and the wildlife in Indiana. Hunting does not need to be the focus of this training. And, the cost of this program is very low.

**Q** - I received certification 15 years ago and have been active in our county program since that time (with just a few years off). My county team suggested that I attend a certification workshop but is difficult for me to get the time off work. Am I required to attend a certification workshop?

**A** - State guidelines do not require you to attend another certification workshop, although if county guidelines require an updated certification they would take precedence. Since you have continued to be involved, the hands-on experience that you have gained by working with youth over the years of your leadership is of great value, assuming that you have worked to improve your teaching techniques and learn from the youth. Many experienced instructors report, however, that they always learn something new at the workshops and really enjoy the synergy that is created when a number of shooting sports enthusiasts get together for the weekend to talk about teaching the sport that they enjoy to youth. Furthermore, the state instructors continue to receive additional training, so our certification workshops have changed a lot since you were originally certified. I am sure that you would learn some new teaching techniques.

**Q** - This summer we had a 4-Her in our shooting sports program with special needs. I was worried about my ability to help this boy since I have no training in this area. Must I accept this youth into our classes?

**A** - You must include Special Needs Youth to the best of your ability. It is important to talk with the parents to determine what needs the youth has, how they can best be addressed, and if extra help is required. It can be both appropriate and reasonable in some “Special Needs” cases to ask the parent or guardian to be present and involved with their child at shooting sessions to help with mobility challenges or to provide an extra set of eyes, if closer observation is required. We want to include all youth while continuing to maintain the highest standards of safety. The book, *Teaching Shooting Sports to persons with disabilities* (ISBN 0-916682-66-8) may be helpful in making accessories to help SSE youth with mobility challenges.

**Q** - Can 4-H members use their own equipment?

**A** - Yes, It is ok for kids to use their own equipment in all the disciplines but we ask that the instructors inspect the firearm or archery equipment at each meeting. We also recommend that all firearms (club and individually owned) are checked by a gunsmith each year.