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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Workshop Creates Dolls for Seriously Ill Children

Youngsters Learn to Make Ryan's Buddies Which Will Be Give to Children at Albany Medical Center

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County's 4-H Youth Development Program is hosting a community service of opportunity for youth who would like to help seriously ill children at the Children's Hospital at Albany Medical Center. On Saturday, October 16, 2004, former 4-H leader and expert sewer, Kay Peischel, will lead a workshop where youngsters can make **Ryan's Buddies**. Ryan's Buddies are dolls given to seriously ill children at the Children's Hospital at Albany Medical Center through the American Sewing Guild. Children do not have to be expert sewers to participate in the workshop, but they do need to be in at least 5th grade. There will be opportunities to trace patterns, cut fabric, turn and stuff the dolls, and hand-sew. Participants can choose from a morning session from 9:15 am to 11:30 am; or the afternoon session from 12 noon to 2:30 p.m. The **Ryan's Buddies Workshops** are free. Pre-registration before October 8, 2004 is required.

Seriously ill children use their "buddies" to help express their emotions as they undergo medical tests and procedures, which are often scary for young children. Each child's doll becomes a source of comfort for them during their time at the hospital and when they go home. The doll is very helpful to doctors and nurses as well, because it can be used to explain what is going to happen to the child during medical procedures.

Ryan's buddies come without hair and clothes, allowing the child to express various feelings and better understand the medical stages through out their treatment. Providing these dolls is an important and caring way for the community to assist children and families going through a very difficult time.

For more information about the workshop or to register please Debbie Neis, Ulster County 4-H Community Educator, 845-340-3990.

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