

Ohio 4-H Clubs

advisors handbook

New Family Handbook

Dear 4-H Family:

We would like to welcome you to our county 4-H program. 4-H can provide an exciting, fun, interesting and rewarding experience for you and your children. But your help is needed.

Parents/guardians of 4-H members play a major role in their 4-H experience and program success. You can help your child grow by sharing your interest and support. Remember, we get out what we put in to what we do.

4-H needs your help and assistance. You have an opportunity to benefit along with your child. Find out more about 4-H, so you can help your child "MAKE THE BEST BETTER" through 4-H.

"A Look at 4-H"



1. WHAT IS 4-H?

- Volunteer led, educational program that supplements the teaching of home, school and work.
- An informal program for all youth who are at least 8 years old and in the 3rd grade, to 18 years of age on January 1.
- An arena that allows youth learn while having fun with their friends and family.

WHAT IS THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF 4-H?

The 4-H philosophy is to strengthen youth's mental, physical, moral, and social development therefore helping develop more desirable citizens and leaders. The development of boys and girls occurs through participation in projects, events, and various educational and competitive activities.

WHY DO YOUTH ENJOY 4-H?

Your child shares five inner desires with all youth.

1. TO BELONG
2. TO ACHIEVE
3. TO BECOME INDEPENDENT
4. TO EXPERIENCE NEW THINGS
5. TO HAVE AFFECTION

Learn by doing projects, activities and events contribute to meeting these needs. Decision-making, responsibility, achievement and recognition further help make 4-H satisfying.

WHY AND WHEN DID 4-H ORIGINATE?

4-H work, as we know it, began in 1902 as a means of reaching parents with improved farm and home practices. It was based upon the assumption that if new ideas were instilled in the minds of the youngsters they would in turn convince their parents to try these innovations.

Over 100 years later, 4-H continues to teach members skills to improve their lives and their families. Nearly 200 project choices allow members to engage in learning new skills and knowledge to apply to their daily lives at home, school and work.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ADMINISTERING THE 4-H PROGRAM?

The Ohio State Extension System is a cooperative understanding by the United States Department of Agriculture, Ohio State University and county commissioners.

OSU Extension delivers up-to-date information from the classroom and laboratory to Ohioans, and brings back to the university those problems that require careful study and research.

County Extension programs provide instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture, natural resources, family and consumer sciences, 4-H and youth development, and community economic development to ALL persons within the county.

2. WHAT IS A 4-H CLUB?

4-H is about helping youth develop into competent, caring and contributing members of society. The Ohio 4-H Youth Development Program believes that this best occurs when there is a **group** of youth working and learning together. We value democratic decision-making, the use of committees, election of officers, group relationship building, and group activities. The Ohio 4-H program requires clubs to have at least three members under the direction of one or more 4-H volunteers.

The Ohio 4-H program believes that it is important that young people have the opportunity to participate in a variety of "hands-on" activities. Each activity builds upon the knowledge and skills of the previous experience. Club Officers and the advisors plan the club's 4-H experiential learning opportunities.

Clubs may organize within a neighborhood, a school, a church, or social unit, **community club** or around a project or interest area, **project club**. The size of the club should be suitable to members' age, available meeting place and leadership. Clubs may meet monthly, bi-monthly, for several months out of the year or for a series of several weeks depending upon the membership's interest.

MOTTO - "TO MAKE THE BEST BETTER"



EMBLEM - The 4-H emblem is the four-leaf clover with the letter "H" on each leaf, standing for head, heart, hands, and health.

COLORS - The 4-H colors are green and white. Green symbolizes nature's most common color and represents life, springtime and youth. White symbolizes purity.

PLEDGE

I pledge

My head to clearer thinking,
My heart to greater loyalty,
My hands to larger service, and
My health to better living,
For my club, my community,
my country, and my world.

4-H YEAR

4-H enrollment deadline varies within Ohio counties. Clubs must reorganize by their county's established enrollment deadline. Members may join a 4-H club at anytime, but most counties have county enrollment deadlines connected to fair participation. Make sure you know and understand your county's current enrollment policies.

AGE FOR MEMBERSHIP

4-H membership for a 4-H club is open to all youth who are at least 5 years old and in Kindergarten and have not passed their 19th birthday by January 1st of the current year. Members must be at least 8 years old and in 3rd grade as of January 1st of the current year to enroll with a 4-H project. 4-H Cloverbuds are members that are at least 5 years old and in Kindergarten until age 8 and in 3rd grade as of January 1st of the current year.

LEADERSHIP

Adults serve as club advisors and volunteers. There are three types:

1. Organizational Organizes meeting location, enrollment, club program, and serves as the club's contact with the County Extension office.
2. Project Provides direction and support for member's project work.
3. Activity Coordinates club-wide activities outside of the project area.

3. PROJECTS

4-H club members must enroll in at least one project annually. There are nearly 200 projects from which to choose. We expect members to complete the projects in which they enroll.

The 4-H project is the "gateway" to a member's 4-H program involvement. From our standpoint, it might be better to turn the description around to say that the project is the "gateway" to the boy or girl.

Projects are the basis for various educational 4-H experiences. Carrying out a project will help the member "LEARN TO DO BY DOING" as well as learn "WHY" things happen the way they do.

WHY PROJECTS?

The project is a tool to teach life skills as well as subject related skills. Project work is important in developing boys and girls to their maximum potential. We view project work

as a "MEANS TO AN END" and not the "end in itself". Project goals should focus on developing blue ribbon boys and girls not champion projects. Worry less about what the "finished rocket" looks like and more about what the member learns from building the rocket not just about engineering, but about his or herself.

WHAT ARE PROJECTS?

Projects are real-life experiences that help 4-H'ers learn to make sound decisions. Projects put the hands and minds to work. 4-H projects take on a wide variety of interests and activities that attract boys and girls regardless of their place of residence, economic status, race, etc.

WHAT SHOULD PROJECTS DO FOR THE 4-H'ERS?

Projects are important. Working with projects can produce satisfaction such as:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A feeling of accomplishment | <input type="checkbox"/> Challenge abilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attention | <input type="checkbox"/> Excelling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prestige | <input type="checkbox"/> Pride of ownership |

4-H projects enable members to:

1. Experience ownership;
2. Achieve satisfaction;
3. Enhance family and community ties;
4. Learn skills, increase knowledge, develop positive attitudes, make meaningful decisions, assume responsibility and experience healthy competition;
5. Provide positive leisure time activities; and
6. Explore career opportunities.

WHAT ARE SOME GUIDES TO SELECTING PROJECTS?

You and your child should understand project expectations before enrolling. Younger members should select one or two projects while older members may choose several and more challenging projects to complete.



Use these factors to help our child select a project:

1. Meets needs and interests. Sometimes members need to try a project before really discovering whether it will meet their needs and interests.
2. Meets age and skill level, but is still challenging.
3. Time constraints – Member, family commitments as well as time required to complete the project successfully.
4. Meets family needs and situations. – Cost, space, equipment and other materials can be managed and supported by the family.
5. Responsibility Level – Daily responsibility (caring for animals, plants) versus responsibility for managing time to complete a more static project.
6. Adult Help – Are you relying on club advisors or are you as the parent willing to serve as the primary adult helper.

HOW CAN YOU WORK TOWARDS PROJECT COMPLETION?

Participation in the following activities and events will help your child successfully complete the project.

1. Attending Project meetings (in the local club)
2. Giving demonstrations/talks at club meetings.
3. Going on tours to visit projects of members
4. Working on the project at home (with a parent/guardian, as a family).
5. Exhibiting project at shows, fairs, etc.
6. Participating in county workshops, clinics and camps (project or topic focus)

6. Keeping records and documentation of project work.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND PROJECT INFORMATION?

The Ohio 4-H Family Guide lists all current 4-H projects with a brief description and suggested age and skill levels. Obtain a copy at the beginning of the 4-H year from your club advisor, at the Extension Office or on-line at <http://www.ohio4h.org>. Purchase your project book(s) from the County Extension Office year round.



Each county sets 4-H project completion requirements. Check with your 4-H club advisor or the County Extension Office for current project completion requirements. You can find State 4-H project requirements for participation at the Ohio State Fair at <http://www.ohio4h.org>.

4. COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

Members may choose to complete the project at the club or county level. Club advisors may evaluate the member's project and request 4-H Certificate of Achievement awards for club completion. Many members select to complete projects at the county level participating in a county project interview judging and sometimes in combination with a skillathon depending upon the project. Club and county completion should reflect how well the member has met county project requirements and club participation expectations.

5. 4-H CLUB MEETINGS

PURPOSES OF 4-H CLUB MEETINGS

4-H Club meetings help members:

- 1) acquire new information;
- 2) learn creative use of leisure time;
- 3) develop social skills; and
- 4) acquire desirable leadership and citizenship traits.

Members learn and practice decision-making skills by serving as officers, making group decisions and planning club activities. Club advisors expect members to attend the majority of club meetings and to contact them when they are unable to attend. We encourage a parent/guardian to attend meetings with members when possible. The 4-H club experience can be a great "Family Affair"

HOW OFTEN DO CLUBS MEET?

Clubs should provide sequential learning experiences over an extended period. Each county determines the minimum number of club meetings. Individual clubs determine when and how often they will meet within county requirements. Some clubs meet year round while others choose to meet a few months of the year. The goal is to establish meetings to meet the membership needs while helping members to have a successful club and project experience.

WHAT IS A CLUB MEETING LIKE?

Club meetings include business, education and social/recreation time. A club meeting will last one to two hours with time divided between the three areas.

WHAT IS THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM?

The club's educational program should be of general interest to the entire membership. 4-H teaches learning by doing. Great club educational programs utilize techniques that include

as many of the five senses as possible. Encourage members to give talks and demonstrations. Invite outside speakers to present programs.

DEMONSTRATIONS

Demonstrations are "show and tell" type presentations where the 4-H'er shares a learning experience. The 4-H'er will use actual articles to show the steps necessary to reach a finished product. Most demonstrations consist of three parts: 1) introduction explains the purpose of the demonstration; 2) body outlines subject step-by-step; and 3) summary reviews important points and gives opportunity for questions.

ILLUSTRATED TALKS

Illustrated talks differ from demonstrations in that they tell how rather than show how. Charts, models, and other visuals are important for illustrated talks.

BUSINESS SESSION

Keep the business portion of the meeting short and snappy. It should reflect a small democracy in action.

RECREATION SESSION

Club recreation is a fun time for all members. Please make sure your recreation choices are age appropriate and vary from challenges, group singing, relays, guessing games, table games to singing games.

REFRESHMENTS

Many clubs choose to serve refreshments at meetings, although they are not essential. Members may host meetings and refreshment responsibilities. Members and their parents can learn together to select simple, nutritious, and inexpensive refreshments.

6. FAMILY'S RESPONSIBILITY

RESPONSIBILITIES OF 4-H MEMBER

Explain member and parent expectations to your 4-H club families. Remind families that 4-H objectives help members meet personal goals and acquire essential life skills through learning by doing. 4-H provides many opportunities to develop skills and interest while striving to obtain awards, scholarships and participate in trips and workshop. Your family's responsibility is to help your member take advantage of the 4-H opportunities.

Major 4-H member responsibilities:

- Complete 4-H enrollment process and submit to your club's organizational advisor.
- Select a 4-H project with the help of your parent/guardian.
- Acquire your 4-H project book(s), read and do the activities.
- Attend and participate in 4-H club meetings and activities.
- Attend and participate in county, regional, and state activities, workshops, and programs when possible.
- Help plan and support 4-H club activities - community service, fund-raising, etc.
- Read the 4-H mail that comes to your home. Share information with your parent/guardian.
- Keep a current and up-to-date 4-H calendar of meetings and activities.
- Ask parents to remind you of upcoming events and due dates.
- Ask your parent/guardian/adult helper to assist you with your project experiences.
- Serve as an officer of the club or on a committee when asked.
- Take an active part in the 4-H club meeting.
- Participate in a mock project judging or skillathon at the club level to prepare for county judging.

- Share a hobby, skill or interest during a meeting or workshop.
- Inform parents about 4-H club meetings, projects, and activities.
- Model appropriate behavior at all club, county, regional and state 4-H events.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

Parental interest and encouragement influence member participation and satisfaction. Your involvement increases a successful 4-H experience for your child.

Major Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

- Assist child in selecting a 4-H project he or she can do and will enjoy.
- Read the project book with your child. You will find ways you can help!
- Serve as a "4-H Project Home Helper". Do not do the work, guide and assist.
- Attend 4-H club meetings and activities with your child as often as possible.
- Read the 4-H mail that comes to your home and take action on the information.
- Encourage your child's attendance and transport to and from 4-H meetings and activities.
- Offer to assist the club advisor(s) with tasks. Provide refreshments, host a club meeting, help with a phone or e-mail tree, etc.
- Share a hobby, skill, or interest at a club meeting.
- Help your child keep records to complete projects as well as maintain a 4-H record to apply for achievement and award opportunities.

Adapted from materials created by the late Steve Joseph, OSU Extension, Medina County 4-H Youth Development Extension Educator by Ken Lafontaine, OSU Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Hardin County and Patty House, OSU Extension, 4-H Youth Development, Clark County.