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# NEW YORK STATE 4-H Club Leader Handbook

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**Cornell Cooperative Extension**



Bronfenbrenner Center  
for Translational Research



## How to Use This Book

This handbook summarizes the information you learned during your volunteer orientation session and presents both background and practical information about the 4-H Youth Development Program, 4-H club activities and special events. You may use it as a self-training manual, a reference book or a resource to help you and your members to plan a well-balanced 4-H club program. Here are some suggestions to get you started:

- ◆ To understand the 4-H purpose and mission, read Section 1 - “What is 4-H?” When you have questions or suggestions from members or parents about your club’s programming, refer to this section to determine whether their suggestions are compatible with the 4-H purpose and mission.
- ◆ Before you conduct an organizational meeting with parents, read Sections 2 through 4 to guide your decision-making about organizing and planning your club program.
- ◆ Section 5 will help you guide your members in their selection of projects. This information should also be shared with project leaders.
- ◆ Refer to Section 6 when you receive information about upcoming 4-H events and activities. Also read the information about community service and service learning activities before your members select their service activities for the year.
- ◆ Section 7 will help you understand the unique aspects of working with teens. As your club members mature, be sure you encourage your members to get more involved with planning their educational opportunities in 4-H.
- ◆ Section 8 will help you understand Cornell Cooperative Extension and its relationship with Cornell Cooperative Extension Volunteers.
- ◆ Appendix: “Policies and Procedures” will help you understand the recommendations, requirements and restrictions that apply to your activities as a 4-H Leader.

# New York State 4-H Club Leader Handbook

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On behalf of the Club Notebook committee members, contributors, editors and supporters, along with the New York State 4-H Youth Development Office, I present the “New York State 4-H Club Management Notebook for Staff,” the “New York State 4-H Club Leader Handbook” and the “New York State 4-H Cloverbud Leader Handbook.” This is dedicated to the staff and volunteers in the Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development program, who make the 4-H Club Program with their own blood, sweat, and yes, sometimes tears. May these documents offer direction, consistency and inspiration.

Thanks to all who have contributed!

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# Section 1: What is 4-H?

4-H is the youth component of the nationwide Cooperative Extension System that promotes the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of school-age youth.

But this simplistic definition does not begin to capture the richness or complexity of the 4-H Youth Development Program. As a 4-H leader, you are involved in what is probably the best known aspect of 4-H, the 4-H Club Program. With community support and a high degree of parental involvement, the 4-H club brings adults and youth together in settings and activities that are ideally suited to foster positive youth development in a comprehensive manner. Cooperative Extension also supports 4-H programs in a variety of other settings including camps, school-age childcare facilities, schools, and community youth organizations of many kinds.

All 4-H programs are based on youth development principles established through research at land grant universities within the Cooperative Extension System and by other institutions. New York State's 4-H programs are designed to accomplish this mission: *Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development creates supportive learning environments in which diverse youth and adults reach their fullest potential as capable, competent and caring citizens.*

## Youth Development Principles

The purposes and practices of 4-H Youth Development are based on 30 years of research about the transition from young person to adult. Our focus is on one question: **What does it take to assist young people to become healthy, problem-solving, constructive adults?**

**Research shows that young people on an effective developmental path must:**

- Find a valued place in a constructive group.
- Learn how to form close, durable human relationships.
- Earn a sense of worth as a person.
- Achieve a reliable basis for making informed choices.
- Express constructive curiosity and exploratory behavior.
- Find ways of being useful to others.
- Believe in a promising future with real opportunities.
- Cultivate the inquiring and problem-solving habits of the mind necessary for life-long learning and adaptability.
- Learn to respect democratic values and responsible citizenship.
- Build a healthy lifestyle.



*From the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1995: Great Transitions: Preparing Adolescents for a New Century. Concluding report of the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York.*

## What makes 4-H Different?

Many youth organizations strive to promote positive youth development, but 4-H does it in a unique way. In addition to the Cooperative Extension System that supports 4-H through research and tax dollars, it is the combination of methods, relationships and environments that create the 4-H experience. These essential elements are described below. It is easy to see how these elements relate to the youth development principles stated above.

1. **A positive relationship with a caring adult** - A caring adult acts as an advisor, guide and mentor. The adult helps set boundaries and expectations for young people. The adult could be called supporter, friend, and advocate. [The 4-H leader]
2. **A safe environment - physically and emotionally** - Youth should not fear physical or emotional harm while participating in a 4-H experience, whether from the learning environment itself, adults, other participants or spectators. [The 4-H Club and other 4-H program settings]
3. **Opportunity for mastery** - Mastery is the building of knowledge, skills and attitudes and then using those skills. The level of mastery depends on the developmental ability of the child or youth. [Sequential 4-H project work]
4. **Opportunity to value and practice service for others** - Finding one's self begins with losing yourself in the service of others. Service is a way for members to gain exposure to the larger community, indeed the world itself. [4-H community service activities]
5. **Opportunity for self-determination** - Believing that you have impact over life's events rather than passively submitting to the will and whims of others is self-determination. Youth must exercise a sense of influence over their lives, exercising their potential to become self-directing, autonomous adults. [The 4-H business meeting run by club officers, project selection and carry through]
6. **An inclusive environment (encouraging, affirming, belonging)** - An inclusive environment is one that creates a sense of belonging and encourages and supports its members. Healthy groups celebrate the success of all members - taking pride in the collective efforts of all. [The 4-H "family" at the club level, county level and beyond]
7. **Opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future** - The ability to see yourself in the future is to harness hope and optimism, to shape life choices and to facilitate the transition into participating in the future. [The 4-H experiential learning model emphasizes future application - do, reflect, apply. See pages 5-1 and 5-2.]
8. **Engagement in learning** - An engaged youth is one who is mindful of the subject area and builds relationships and connections in order to develop understanding. Through self-reflection, youth have the ability to learn from experience. The engaged learner has a higher degree of self-motivation and an inexhaustible capacity to create. [The 4-H experiential learning model emphasizes reflection - do, reflect, apply. See pages 5-1 and 5-2.]

As you work with your members, their parents, and other volunteers to plan and carry out your club's program, make sure all these elements are included. An easy way to do that is to keep the four H's in mind:

**Head** - 4-H members pledge their heads to clearer thinking because the ability to think, plan and reason enables them to achieve *independence* of thought and action. They are far less influenced by peer pressure when they have confidence in their ability to think things through. That assuredness also enables them to lead others in positive ways.

- \* Are your members gaining knowledge and understanding? (engagement in learning, mastery)
- \* Are they planning and making decisions? (self-determination)

**Heart** - 4-H members pledge their hearts to greater loyalty because feeling connected to others in a group creates a sense of physical and emotional safety. The warm feeling of *belonging* frees them to relate comfortably with others, test their ideas without fear of ridicule, cooperate and help others.

- \* Do your members think of their leaders and one another as friends they can look to for support? (positive relationships with adults, inclusive environment, emotionally safe environment)
- \* Do all the adults who cooperate in the leadership of your club know and follow youth protection guidelines? (physically safe environment)

**Hands** - 4-H members pledge their hands to larger service because they need to feel that their lives have meaning and purpose. Using skills they have learned to help others meets that need, while developing a spirit of *generosity*. The desire to help one's neighbor lies at the very core of citizenship.

- \* Have your members developed skills they can apply? (mastery, opportunity for service)
- \* Are they involved in community service activities? (opportunity to value and practice service)

**Health** - 4-H members pledge their health to better living because their ability to achieve their goals and enjoy their lives depends on having healthy minds and bodies. Successes achieved through 4-H project work build a sense of *mastery* that in turn nurtures a positive self- concept, the prime ingredient of emotional health. When we think we can, we try, and eventually we do succeed.

- \* Have your members developed "can-do" attitudes? (see themselves as active participants in the future)
- \* Does your club program promote healthy lifestyles? (mastery of physical skills and content of related projects such as nutrition)

# Does Participation in a 4-H Club *Really* Make a Difference?

## New York 4-H Club Study [1]

Results from this two-year study show that young people who participate in 4-H clubs do better in school, are more motivated to help others, are developing skills in leadership, public speaking, self-esteem, communication and planning and are making lasting friendships.

Member responses to the question “What do you feel you have gained from being a 4-H club member?” provided a wealth of rich data:

- A strong majority of club members felt they had gained skills that would support them throughout their lives. The majority of club youth reported multiple gains in terms of public speaking, problem solving, goal setting, leadership skills, self-confidence and “real-world” experience from hands-on projects.

***“4-H experiences such as public presentations and educational projects have given me an edge in school. And my experiences with 4-H community service projects have encouraged my desire to help other people as well as my feelings of self-fulfillment.”***

***-- 4-H Member***

- Many youth reported that 4-H club membership had improved their school performance, their ability to make lasting friendships and their desire to make a difference in their communities.

- Most adults who participated in the study believed that the success of 4-H club members was closely related to active participation in public demonstrations, community service projects and county and state fairs. Others believed that the relationships developed in 4-H clubs and long-term membership were the keys to positive outcomes for youth.

## Comparing 4-H'ers with non-4-H Youth:

The strongest test of the role of 4-H in the lives of youth is to compare 4-H'ers to children who are not members of 4-H. Past studies have shown:

- Participation in 4-H has a positive influence on children's perceptions of their competence, coping and life skills (study of 666 Ohio public school children). [2]
- 4-H'ers rate themselves higher than non-4-H peers on working with groups, understanding self, communicating, making decisions and leadership (study of over 300 4-H club members and over 500 non-4-H school children in Texas). [3]

Sources:

[1] Mead, June, Hirschl, Thomas, Rodriguez, Eunice, and Goggin, Steve. (1999). Understanding the Difference 4-H Clubs Make in the Lives of New York Youth: How 4-H Contributes to Positive Youth Development.

[2] Miller, Jeffrey P. and Blannie E. Bowen. 1993. "Competency, Coping, and Contributory Life Skills Development of Early Adolescents." Journal of Agricultural Education. Spring: 68-76.

[3] Boyd, Barry L., Don R. Herring, and Gary E. Briers. 1992. "Developing Life Skills in Youth: How 4-H'ers Perceive their Leadership." Journal of Extension. Winter:16-18.

## Section 2: Basic Facts about 4-H Clubs

### The 4-H Club - What is it?

A 4-H club consists of five or more school-age youth, guided by one or more adult volunteers. The 4-H Club's goal is long-term youth development, which encourages its participants to learn life skills that will help them grow into healthy and productive citizens.

A 4-H club is an informal, educational youth opportunity, which serves as a "hands-on" laboratory for helping youth grow in any or all of the following ways:

- Learning how to make thoughtful decisions
- Developing zest and skill for lifelong learning
- Learning positive socialization skills by working in a group and as part of a team
- Improving communication skills
- Learning and using practical technical skills
- Acquiring confidence and a positive attitude toward self
- Enhancing citizenship skills through community involvement
- Developing leadership and teamwork skills
- Exploring possible vocations and careers
- Learning to manage time wisely and set priorities
- Interacting with adults, who act as role models and have a positive influence on their lives
- Spending quality time with parents in a mutually rewarding setting

### Types of Clubs

**Neighborhood 4-H Clubs** are groups of youth (five or more) that are usually led by parents/guardians. They meet in schools, churches, community centers or homes to complete a variety of 4-H projects throughout the year. With the exception of a few countywide clubs, members are usually from the same community.



**4-H School Clubs and After-School 4-H Clubs** - When 4-H curricula are used within the classroom during regular school hours or in an after-school program, these children form a 4-H club. The classroom teacher and/or other resource people serve as club leaders.

**Sponsored 4-H Clubs** - A government agency, religious group or other youth serving organization may sponsor a 4-H club. Sponsored clubs usually meet at the agency's facilities and are led by agency staff (paid and/or volunteer).

## Membership Requirements

All youth regardless of gender, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation or marital status may join 4-H.

**Age and grade in school** - In New York State 4-H membership is limited to children enrolled in kindergarten through youth age 19. Kindergarteners must turn 5 by January 1 of the current 4-H year and teenagers may not enroll or re-enroll if they will turn 19 before January 1<sup>st</sup> of the new club year (October 1 to September 30).

**Independent membership** - When circumstances prevent a child from joining a 4-H club, that child may participate in the 4-H Club Program by enrolling as an independent member. Independent members work on projects of their choice at their own pace with parental or other adult assistance. They are encouraged to participate in county activities.

**Minimum size of clubs** - In New York State, a club must have a membership of five or more youth. Smaller groups may register youth as independent members.

## Volunteer Leaders

Several types of volunteer roles contribute to the leadership of the 4-H Club Program. They include:

**Organizational Leader** - The organizational leader establishes and maintains a club structure that supports 4-H Youth Development activities for school age youth. He/she works with the project leader, activity leader and youth in planning the club program; arranges for meeting facilities; complies with Cornell Cooperative Extension procedures; ensures that all enrollments, program registrations and reports are filled out and turned in to the county 4-H office and keeps the 4-H staff informed about activities, accomplishments and problems. An organizational leader may also act as a project leader.

**Project Leader** - The project leader provides instruction and guidance to 4-H members when doing a project. The key component of the project leader's role is teaching; the "classroom" is wherever the members meet in order to work on their project. Project leaders may also assist with project-related activities on the county level and guide members in the selection of projects and the completion of project reports.

**Activity Leader** - The activity leader helps members plan for and participate in activities such as community service, public presentation, special celebrations and trips.

**Resource Leader** - Resource leaders are volunteers who are selected by Cooperative Extension staff to aid, train and work with 4-H club leaders or members on a short-term basis. They have a specialization in a certain program area and have undergone training or have completed a certification program. Resource leaders often teach workshops or serve as evaluators at fairs and contests. Some examples of resource leaders are Master Sewer, or Master Gardener.

## Volunteer Training and Support

Support for each leader is provided by the county Cornell Cooperative Extension staff and varies from county to county. This support may include personal visits, telephone calls, training workshops, meetings, manuals and newsletters. Special equipment may be available on loan for use with certain projects or activities. Additional learning opportunities are available at the district, state, regional and national levels.

## Equal Program Opportunity

Because the 4-H Youth Development Program is a component of the national Cooperative Extension System, which is supported by federal, state and county funds, it is governed by the equal opportunity laws of those three governmental entities.

*Cornell Cooperative Extension actively affirms equality of program and employment opportunities regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation or marital status.*

## 4-H Club Names

Members and leaders work together to select a name for a new 4-H club. Once your club is chartered (see page 3-4) you will not want to change its name. Therefore it is important that the name can stand the test of time - not too trendy or juvenile. So avoid using the names of TV cartoons, situation comedies, singing groups, etc. Also, the name should not imply that its membership is limited to any group. For example, names such as the 4-H Lads or Lassies, Kings or Queens would be inappropriate.

## 4-H Symbolism

### 4-H Motto - "To Make the Best Better"

This national 4-H Motto should be the objective of each 4-H leader and member.

### 4-H Slogan - "Learning by Doing"

This is the educational philosophy of the 4-H program. Since young people learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process, 4-H projects are designed to provide "hands-on" experience that is reinforced through group discussion and application - "do - reflect - apply".

### 4-H Pledge -

"I pledge

**My head** to clearer thinking, (With right hand lightly touch forehead with fingers)

**My heart** to greater loyalty, (with right hand placed on chest like you're saying the pledge of allegiance)

**My hands** to larger service, and (both hands waist high, palms up like a book)

**My health** to better living for my club, my community, my country and my world". (both hands along sides of body naturally)

#### **4-H Colors -**

The 4-H colors are green and white. White symbolizes purity and green represents life, springtime and youth.

#### ***4-H Club Emblem - A green four-leaf clover with a white "H" in each leaf***

In 1907, a clover was chosen for the emblem, originally featuring only three leaves representing head, heart and hands. In 1908, a fourth leaf was added to represent health. There are detailed instructions for using the clover, available at <http://nys4h.cce.cornell.edu/Pages/default.aspx>. Please check these guidelines whenever you want to use the clover in exhibits or promotional materials.

# **Section 3: Practical Tips**

## ***Organizing and Conducting a Successful 4-H Club Program***

### **Planning - the Key to Success**

Most 4-H leaders, members and their parents are busy people who are involved in a variety of family, school and community activities. Planning a yearly calendar will help everyone integrate 4-H into their schedules. Adults and youth should work together to develop the yearly plan. The older the youth, the greater the role they should play in this process.

### **New Club Organizational Meeting**

A 4-H staff member or experienced volunteer will meet with leaders and parents to help you make decisions about:

- Meeting site(s)
- Meeting frequency & schedule
- Parent/guardian involvement.
- Your first 4-H project or activity and other projects for the year
- Countywide 4-H activity participation
- Financing - money needed to cover projects and activities and fundraising and dues policies.

### **Planning a Club Program**

An effective planning process will create a well-balanced program and provide 4-H members with opportunities for personal development. Each member should be encouraged to voice his/her interests, goals and opinions. A well-planned program will:

- Provide opportunities for each person to assume responsibility
- Include a variety of activities that address each of the four H's
- Identify the preparation needed for meetings and events
- Provide for timely communication
- Avoid calendar conflicts

**When and how do we plan?** Most clubs plan their programs and elect their club officers in September or October. Clubs that operate only part of the year need to plan a program as soon as possible in order to complete the project(s) in time.

Start by reviewing your club's situation. What have members done in previous years? What are the ages and other characteristics of the members? How many members are there and how many leaders/parents are available?

In small clubs, the entire membership usually does the planning at a general meeting. In somewhat larger clubs, the newly elected officers and club leaders do the planning. In clubs with 25 or more members, a program planning committee does this work. Regardless of the planning method, participation should include club officers, other members of various ages, organizational, project and activity leaders and parents. For assistance, visit the 4-H Web site for the "4-H Club Planning Calendar." The first section of this calendar is a list of club goals for the year.

**What are goals?** Goals are simply statements of what you want to accomplish, what you want to do or what you want to learn. Goals have three parts that allow us to measure and check our progress. They are:

- The Action - How
- The Result - What
- The Timetable - When

Club goals should reflect what is important to the group and should:

- Be realistic and measurable
- Meet the needs and interests of the club members
- Promote cooperation
- Provide individual achievement opportunities
- Promote improvement over last year
- Provide community and service participation



**What will we do to meet these goals?** Once the goals are agreed upon, it is important to survey all club members for specific program ideas.

When everyone's ideas have been presented and the group is ready to discuss them, it is helpful to have these items handy:

- School calendars
- County 4-H calendar
- 4-H Project lists
- Information about community service and field trip opportunities
- Information about community celebrations, festivals and events

Small clubs may fill in the 4-H club planning calendar as they reach agreement on projects. In larger clubs, planning leaders should review all the ideas, prepare a suggested calendar and present it to the membership at a later meeting. Everyone should be allowed to ask questions, voice their opinion and share concerns about schedules. After the plan has been discussed and revised as needed, the members should vote to approve and adopt it as their yearly 4-H program.

**How do we ensure that the plan will be followed?** Through communication and check-ups!

- Provide each family with a 4-H year calendar of club events.
- Announce dates at meetings, in newspapers and by radio.
- Check with subcommittees to see that responsibilities are being carried out.
- Call club members.

**What if the plan isn't working?** As the year progresses, changes may be necessary. You may spot lagging interest, more pressing needs or new opportunities. After several meetings the club should review progress towards goals, discuss new opportunities and, if necessary, amend the club plan.

## Getting Started

It is very important to get off to a good start. There is a lot to be accomplished during the first two meetings of a new club. Everyone should leave these meetings feeling that they had a good time, understood and contributed to what went on and know what will happen next. You may want to arrange for a 4-H staff person, experienced leader or 4-H teen to attend these meetings and provide guidance.

**First meeting** - Tasks to be completed at the first meeting include:

- Select a Club Name -Learn what the four H's are and what the clover symbolizes
- Learn the 4-H Pledge and Motto
- Learn the responsibilities of club officers and conduct elections)
- Start work on a project

**Second meeting** -

- Club officers conduct the club's first business meeting. Teach the basic rules of order as the meeting progresses.
- If time permits, project work can continue after the business meeting.

**Succeeding meetings** - Proceed with project work, meetings and activities according to the club's plan. If questions or difficulties arise, contact a 4-H staff member or mentor-volunteer as soon as possible. Little difficulties tend to grow and may become unmanageable if not addressed quickly and appropriately. A little guidance can go a long way in helping to make 4-H club participation a positive experience for all.

**Chartering** - The Club Charter identifies a group as an organized 4-H club that is authorized to use the 4-H name and emblem for educational purposes. The Charter stays with the club as long as it is in existence. All chartered clubs are expected to operate within the framework of the 4-H program. The charter does not have to be renewed when leaders change or minor revisions are made in the club structure. A charter application should be submitted soon after the club has elected its officers and met the other eligibility requirements. Charter application information can be found on page 1 of the **4-H Club Secretary's Handbook** and the application itself is on page 2 of that book.

# Tips for Conducting Club Meetings

## Structure Meetings Appropriately

The way club meetings are structured depends largely on the size of the group and the age of the members. In general 4-H meetings are divided into 3 segments:

- Business Meeting - Members learn how to conduct a meeting and practice democratic decision-making.
- Educational Program - Usually project work, but may involve special presentations or activities conducted by resource people, parents or older members.
- Refreshments and Recreation

The order of these segments and the amount of time devoted to each may be varied to suit the specific activities planned, time and place the meeting is held, etc. Here are some specific suggestions:

1. **Small groups that meet right after school** may want to have refreshments available as the members arrive. Quiet recreational activities such as 2-person pencil and paper games can be used to keep order and foster interaction until you are ready to start the meeting.
2. **When members can't settle down and focus on the task at hand**, a short active game followed by a quiet one can release energy and get the group ready for more "serious business." If the club's recreation leader always comes prepared with at least one active and one quiet game to play these can be led at a time like this rather than at the end of the meeting.
3. **While Cloverbud groups** do not conduct business meetings, starting each meeting with the same opening ritual establishes a structured routine that is important for this age group. Use of a closing ritual is also recommended. Members can be assigned an "office of the day" to help conduct these rituals.
4. **The timing of meeting segments** must relate to both the attention span of the age group and the nature of the activities planned. A Cloverbud activity should last no more than 15 to 20 minutes. On the other end of the continuum, older teens can sustain interest for 2 hours or more. *But* no activity should be conducted for more than an hour without a break.
5. **Sharing club leadership with your members** makes your job easier and develops life skills in the members. Some children are "natural leaders" but all children can lead when given the opportunity and support. To foster the development of leadership characteristics, group followers with followers - a leader will emerge from within this group. Group leaders with leaders - strong personalities will be forced to negotiate. Support both groups with suggestions that relate to group process
6. **Beyond the three segments**, there are many little things you can do to make your 4-H club meetings fun, educational and extra special. A potpourri of ideas can be found online at the 4-H Web site, under the Staff Site, "Tips for 4-H Meetings."

## Manage Project Activities for Safety, Efficiency and Effective Learning

Detailed information about the purpose of 4-H projects and the use of experiential learning methods can be found in Section 5. Here we deal with the practical matters of time, space and organization.

- 1. Become familiar with and follow the Youth Protection Guidelines for Accident Prevention.** See “CCE Youth Protection Guidelines” online at the 4-H Website.
- 2. Be prepared before members arrive.** Write a lesson plan and know how you will handle transitions between steps or activities. Set up the room and work areas as appropriate for the activity(s). Gather all equipment and supplies and arrange them in the areas where they will be used.
- 3. Help members practice skills before applying them to their own project.** To save on time and supplies, you can set up workstations (one for each skill to be tried) and rotate members through them. Experienced members, teens or parents can be called upon to help during the practice session.
- 4. Prepare members for independent work.** Instead of answering the question “What do I do next?” ask a member to read the instructions and tell you what they mean. This both reinforces reading skills and builds the member’s confidence in his/her ability to “do it myself.”

## Use the 4-H Business Meeting as a Developmental Tool

In addition to learning the standard procedures for running a meeting, participation in 4-H business meetings helps members:

- Gain experience in planning
- Learn how to make group decisions
- Assume leadership
- Develop a sense of responsibility

But this does not happen automatically; the members must be actively involved in planning and conducting the meeting, rather than simply following a script provided by the leader. The following tips will help you make the business meeting a truly educational experience.

- 1. Elect officers democratically.** Officers are elected only once each year, unless a vacancy must be filled. It is best to change positions every year so that members have an opportunity to learn and practice the role of several different offices. Before nominations are made, review the duties of all officers and stress the importance of selecting people who have the right skills for the job: the secretary should be able to write neatly or use computers, the president should be fair to everyone, and the treasurer should be good at math and managing money.

The duties of 4-H Club Officers can be found on pages 4 and 5 of the 4-H Club Secretary’s Handbook. Since it is not wise for a club to have more officers than general members, you may use one or more combined offices (Secretary/Treasurer, Vice President/News Reporter, Song and Recreation Leader). Conversely, clubs may also “invent” extra offices such as “refreshment chairman” or “safety officer” to give everyone a job.

**Ensure that officers receive training.** Encourage new officers to participate in any officer training program offered by the county 4-H office. If none is available, meet with them to review the things they need to do before, during and after meetings.

2. **Use an agenda planner.** Work with the president and secretary to fill in the agenda planner, using the previous meeting's minutes to identify the old business and any committees that may need to report. A sample agenda planner is available on the 4-H web site, "The 4-H Business Meeting - Agenda Planner." The agendas for small clubs of elementary school youth are generally short and simple, so the agenda can be planned a few minutes before other members arrive. After the president and secretary have planned agendas with you a few times, they should be able to do most of it themselves before the meeting day. You will only need to check it over and add the new business when they arrive.
3. **Use standard rules of order, from Roberts Rules of Order.** Specifics about the rules are available online at with a simple search of "Roberts Rules of Order".

### **Use Positive Behavior Management Techniques**

Behavior management, whether exercised by youth themselves or by adult authority, starts with a shared understanding of behavioral expectations. Some expectations, regarding health and safety and group values, are nonnegotiable, but in other matters, youth should have an active role in defining limits and establishing club rules. Here are some tips.

1. **Use the "4-H Member's Code of Conduct"** (available online at the 4-H Web site) to clarify and enforce the nonnegotiable expectations.
2. **Discuss ways members can make additional rules.** Connect discussion of club rules to the code of conduct. Suggestions should be presented as motions and voted upon at the next business meeting. Let members know that they can always discuss rules they feel should be changed or added. Using a suggestion box might be helpful for members who seldom speak up at meetings.
3. **Eliminate temptation.** When members are busy and having fun, they are not looking for ways to "get in trouble." So plan ahead to eliminate "down time."
4. **Do more listening than talking.** When an individual is acting out or there is conflict between members, those involved are in a heightened emotional state; they can't "hear" what you say. Follow these steps:
  - a. Separate the member(s) from the group.
  - b. Calm the situation by speaking softly.
  - c. Find out what happened but place the emphasis on discovering **why** it happened.
  - d. Create a sense of responsibility without placing blame.
  - e. Help member(s) recognize the potential consequences of the action. Try to use questions - "What would happen if..." - to lead the thought process.
  - f. Help member(s) decide how to handle a similar situation in the future. Again, guide the thought process without prescribing the solution.
5. **Consult with parents when behavior problems persist.** Use tact and sensitivity when talking with parents about their children. Here are some do's and don'ts:

- a. **Don't** inform the member(s) that you intend to talk to the parents - it may be taken as a threat.
- b. **Do** request the parent's assistance - "I hope you can help me solve a problem I've been having during 4-H meetings."
- c. **Do** present the facts, but **don't** use labels (troublemaker) to describe the child's behavior.
- d. **Do** explain the behavior management techniques you have tried and the child's response.
- e. **Don't** tell the parents what they should do, but **do** ask if there is anything they can do to help and if they have any suggestions for you.

### **Use Ceremonies to Build Cohesiveness Among 4-H Members**

Participation in ceremonies produces a sense of kinship among members of an organization. Depending on their nature, ceremonies may also foster teamwork, reinforce expectations, proclaim an organization's values to the general public or provide recognition to members. Four ceremonies commonly used by 4-H clubs are the Installation of Officers, the New Member Induction, the Presentation of Colors (flags) and the 4-H Candle Lighting Ceremony. Programs for all of these ceremonies are available online at the 4-H Web site.

### **Evaluate Meetings Regularly and Take Action When Problems Arise**

After the group has been meeting for four to six months, take a close look at how things are going. Three methods for evaluation are the "Room to Improve Your 4-H Club Meeting," "Lesson for Evaluating Your 4-H Meeting" and "4-H Meeting Checklist" worksheets, all available online.

Even though every effort has been made to keep things running smoothly, problems will occasionally arise. "Troubleshooting 4-H Club Problems," available online, describes some common 4-H club problems, lists possible causes and suggests alternative solutions.

### **Motivate Members through Positive Reinforcement**

Positive reinforcement is the single most effective tool for motivating youth. It is also very important in discipline. Youth need constant reinforcement for their positive activities. But providing positive reinforcement is not easy. It requires a positive outlook on your part and must be practiced. It comes in two forms: verbal and nonverbal.

When giving positive reinforcement, it is important to be specific and sincere. As you see the results of your words and actions, the importance of positive reinforcement will become quite clear and you will find your own ways to provide it both verbally and nonverbally. More suggestions for positive reinforcement are available in the "Ways to Say 'Good for You'" sheet, available online.

## Involve Parents - “4-H is a family affair.”

Everyone benefits when parents are involved in the 4-H club program:

- **4-H members** need their own parents’ support and encouragement to attend meetings, complete projects and fulfill responsibilities to the club.
- **Parents** have an opportunity to spend time with their children and enjoy activities together. In many ways 4-H is a “partner in parenting.”
- **4-H leaders** have a lot to juggle. Being able to delegate some of those responsibilities, even the smallest ones, can be a big help.
- **The community** benefits when families support community-minded organizations like 4-H. Involved families are more knowledgeable about community issues and therefore more likely to support community efforts as well.

Keep these benefits in mind when you invite parents to attend events or to lend a hand - it is in their own best interest to say “yes!” But, how, when and who do you ask? Here are some suggestions:

1. **Meet with parents at the beginning of each year.** While members should make the final decisions about projects and activities, leaders need to inform parents and enlist their support and leadership early in the year. Two tools to help are “4-H Parent Participation Survey” and “Parents Can Help in Our 4-H Club Program,” both available online.
2. **Maintain good communications.** In order for parents to feel involved in the club, they must be kept informed about the “when, where and why” of both the club’s activities and the 4-H club program in general.
3. **Create opportunities to get to know parents better.** For example, hold “parent nights” or “family days” during which members can “show-off” their accomplishments and you can socialize with parents. Learn about their personal interests, hobbies and family activities. Later requests for help can then be based on the things you know they enjoy and can do well.
4. **When you need help:**
  - a. Ask an individual, basing your request on that person’s interests, skills and abilities. Generic calls for help don’t work!
  - b. Be honest and specific about the time commitment and time frame.
  - c. Ask well in advance of when the job needs to be done.
5. **Express your appreciation appropriately.** Regardless of how much or how little a parent has done, they deserve a “thank you,” whether it is a phone call, a hand-written note or public recognition.

## Involve Junior Leaders

Junior Leaders are 4-H teens who partner with adults to provide leadership for 4-H clubs and countywide 4-H activities. Depending on age and experience, a junior leader can serve as a general assistant, teach a project, mentor individual members, coordinate activities or assume almost any other 4-H leadership role under the supervision of an adult.

## Section 4: Money Matters

A 4-H club, like any other organization has expenses and income (from dues and/or fundraising). The procedures used to record the flow of money, pay bills and account for ways in which club funds are used, provide 4-H club treasurers with valuable experience in fiscal management. Discussing required financial procedures with the whole club and enforcing them is one way of teaching youth about the importance of money management for both groups and individuals. Tool L-17, 4-H Club \$\$\$\$ Checklist will help you keep track of the club's money matters through the year.

Because a 4-H club is a part of Cornell Cooperative Extension it must operate within the fiscal parameters set by the CCE system. As a tax-supported organization Cornell Cooperative Extension must ensure that all monies raised or collected by groups under its auspices are used for appropriate purposes and are accounted for properly.

### The 4-H Club Treasury

A 4-H club treasury is intended to support the planned projects and educational activities of the club's members. Most clubs collect dues (the amount being decided by the members with input from parents and leaders) at regularly scheduled business meetings. Some "jump-start" the treasury by collecting a larger amount at the beginning of the club year.

Other possible sources of revenue include:

- Countywide 4-H fundraisers - Some counties return a percentage of the money earned back to the club.
- Club fundraisers - Clubs must receive written approval from the 4-H office before conducting any type of fundraiser. Fund raising should not be a major goal of the 4-H group, but should be limited to meeting short-term needs.

Any funds raised in the name of 4-H are, in fact, property of the county Cornell Cooperative Extension Association. In case a club dissolves or becomes inactive, the money in the club's treasury should be returned to the 4-H office. Most counties have established a policy for the use of such funds or the club may be asked to recommend alternative uses.

Read the next 4 pages carefully for detailed information about procedures your club must follow to handle its money matters responsibly. Information about officer responsibilities, bank accounts, required financial reporting, and fundraising is included.

# Financial Procedures for 4-H Clubs

## Responsibilities

The club, when organized, must agree to:

- maintain records of all financial transactions;
- submit a financial statement, including a list of all financial transactions, to the extension association at least annually (see Tool L-18); 4-H Club Financial Statement

## Club Records

1. The club-elected **secretary** will keep accurate minutes of each business meeting including the treasurer's report. The secretary will also read the minutes of the previous meeting for approval. The elected **treasurer** will report the amount of money collected, the amount of bills paid since the last meeting and the current balance.
2. A **volunteer leader** of the club will ensure that the treasurer understands his/her duties, as described in the treasurer's record book and this document.

## Safe-guarding Funds

1. A club may choose to establish a checking account in which to deposit all cash or checks received from club sales, collection of cash from club members for activities, or donations made to the club. The County Association determines whether individual clubs should open bank accounts. The account should be established in the name of the club and the association with the club treasurer and adult volunteer leader as well as the association check signor listed as the designated signers on the account.

If a club opens an account, the name on the account should be **Cornell Cooperative Extension of "Example" County - "Example" 4-H Club**.

**NOTE:** 4-H clubs are required to submit an annual financial statement to the local Cornell Cooperative Extension Association **regardless of the amount of gross receipts**.

*a. If a checking account exists, the volunteer leader is to ensure that:*

- deposits are made in a timely manner;
- another club member, not the treasurer, is chosen to reconcile the monthly bank statements with the treasurer's book;
- all payments of bills made by the club or group are to be made by check, and with supporting documentation (bills, statements, packing slips, etc.). All bills are canceled (marked "paid" and dated) as they are paid;
- The volunteer club leader is to be the co-signer for checks written on behalf of the club.

*b. If a checking account does not exist, the volunteer leader is to ensure:*

Adapted from New York State 4-H Club Leader Handbook, Cornell Cooperative Extension - 1/2011

- another club member, not the treasurer, is chosen to count the cash and compare the totals with the Treasurer's record book on a monthly basis.
  - cash is adequately secured and safeguarded; ie. Locked in a safe or lockbox
  - all payments of bills made by the club are to be made with supporting documentation (bills, statements, packing slips, etc.). All bills are canceled (marked "paid" and dated) as they are paid.
2. It is **not** recommended that a club open a savings account or other interest bearing account. Fees may be applied and the club would be subject to a great deal more record keeping and paperwork. If a club handles large amounts of money and would really benefit from an interest bearing account, discuss the requirements and options with a 4-H staff member before approaching a bank.
  3. Every club handling funds should use an audit committee to examine and verify the accounts of the club at the end of the 4-H year. The chairman of the committee should make a report to the club and file a written statement (See Tool L-19, 4-H Club Audit Report) with the elected secretary that becomes a permanent record in the club's minutes. An audit committee prevents misunderstandings and protects the outgoing and incoming treasurers of the club. Such a committee is usually appointed by the president of the club at the time the books are to be audited.

## Fundraising

1. Prior to beginning a fund raising activity, the club needs to ensure that it will be in the best interest of the club and must receive permission from the appropriate Extension Educator to raise funds in the name of 4-H. The required request form must be submitted to the Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H office at least 30 days before the proposed fund raising date. (See Tool L-20; Fundraising Guidelines for 4-H Clubs and Request for Permission to Raise Funds in the name of 4-H.) Fund raising activities may be conducted on an individual club basis or in conjunction with other local clubs.
2. Use the following cash control procedures when your club collects cash or checks:
  - **Door-to-door sales** - As the club member receives cash for a sale, a sales summary form must be completed. All cash and a copy of the sales summary form are to be given to the chairperson responsible. (**Reminder:** Cloverbud members are prohibited from participating in door-to-door sales.)
  - **Fair Booth** - Cash collected should be under the control of two people whenever possible, particularly when it is not practical to issue receipts. For example, at the end of each day, cash taken in at a fair booth should be counted by two people and a cash summary sheet should be prepared (see Tool L-21; Sample: Cash Summary Form for 4-H Sales). Use of a cash register is advised.

**NOTE:** Sales tax need not be collected on sales made door to door; however, sales tax must be collected if a table or booth is set up at a shop, store, or at a fair. Discuss required procedures and paperwork with a 4-H staff member before finalizing plans for your sale. (See Tool L- 22, Facts 4-H Clubs Need to Know about New York State Sales Tax)

3. On a timely basis, all cash and checks received from fundraising must be turned in to the club treasurer with sales summary sheets for verification.

Adapted from New York State 4-H Club Leader Handbook, Cornell Cooperative Extension - 1/2011

## **Club Balance**

A club should not carry a balance exceeding \$750 into the new fiscal year. If a club has a balance in excess of \$750 at year-end the funds should be transferred to the Association account.

If, however, the club expects to utilize the funds for specific programs or activities in the next year, a request to carry the balance over to the next fiscal year should be submitted to the appropriate Extension Educator. This request should include a list of the planned events for which these funds will be used. The Extension Educator will review the status of the club with the Executive Director to determine if the funds should remain within the club account.

## **4-H Clubs and Taxes**

4-H Clubs and affiliates are not to apply for separate NYS sales tax exemption. If however a club has a large purchase to make (ie for a fundraising sale) discussions with the extension educator may be initiated to possibly make the purchase through the association and utilize the NYS sales tax exemption held by the CCE office.

Donations made to clubs for 4-H activities are tax deductible. In the case of a donation exceeding \$250.00, whether it be in cash, materials or an animal for sale, the Association office should issue a donor acknowledgement letter in recognition of the gift. A copy of the acknowledgement must be kept in the 4-H club's treasurer records. Non-consumable donations such as equipment should only be accepted if the 4-H club is prepared to accept the responsibilities of ownership including care, maintenance, and insurance.

## **Donations**

Non-cash donations to 4-H clubs should be acknowledged in writing to the donor. A copy of the acknowledgement must be kept in the 4-H club's treasurer records. Non-consumable donations such as equipment or animals should only be accepted if the 4-H club is prepared to accept the responsibilities of ownership including care, maintenance, and insurance. Written acknowledgment should be sent to the donor; a copy must be kept in the 4-H club treasurer's records.

## **Disbandment of Club**

When a 4-H club disbands, all assets (including equipment, property, bank accounts, etc.) must be submitted to the local Cornell Cooperative Extension Association. If the local extension association does not have a policy that any treasury money received from disbanded clubs be used to support specific programs, the members of the club may wish to recommend a specific use for the funds.

# Section 5: What is a 4-H Project?

## Understanding 4-H Project Work

A project is a planned series of learning activities/experiences that engage youth in the use of their *heads* and their *hands* in ways that result in enhanced competencies, open *hearts* and better *health*.

4-H projects give youth opportunities to:

- gain new knowledge and develop the critical thinking skills that lead to *independence* of thought and action;
- experience a sense of *belonging* through cooperative learning activities;
- develop a spirit of *generosity* by sharing knowledge and using skills to help others;
- achieve a feeling of *mastery* as the cumulative result of project work.



4-H projects always teach the “why’s” as well as the “how’s.” For example: a member making a birdhouse as part of a woodworking project might learn the safest and most effective way to use hand tools and also gain experience selecting hardware and finishing materials. The knowledge and skills learned can be applied when making other wooden items in the future. It is this transferable knowledge and skill that is the essence of the project – not just the finished product.

The 4-H “learning by doing” method involves several steps in a process: doing, thinking, planning and often doing again. Such learning is called experiential learning and is a powerful way for young people to develop a variety of life skills.

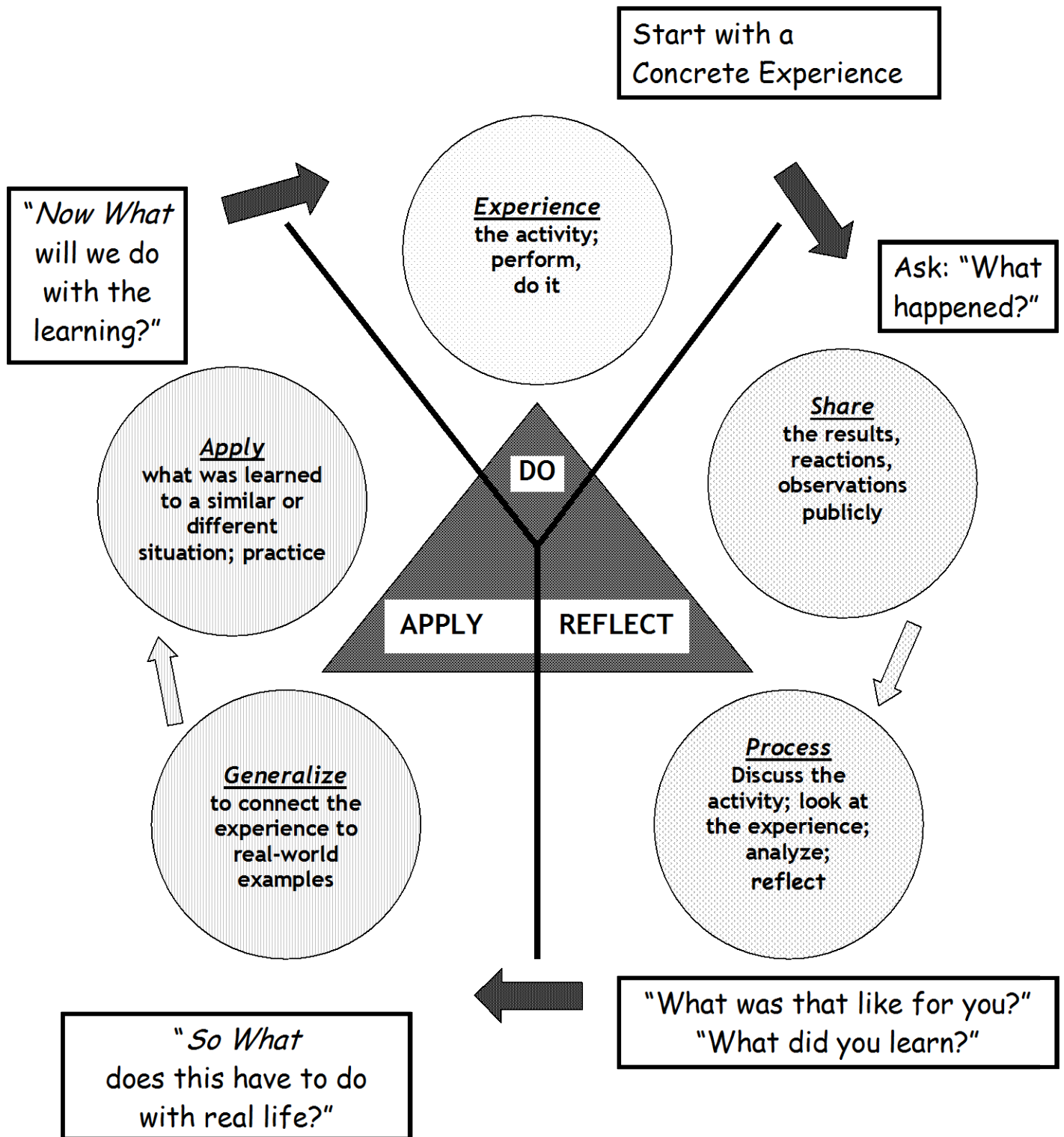
The experiential learning approach starts with a concrete activity – something to DO. Following the concrete activity

members REFLECT on what they have experienced. Ask the members questions such as “What happened?” and “What was that like for you?” or “What did you observe?”

Next we help members generalize the concepts formed through this experience so that they can APPLY their learning to future real-life situations. To do this, we first ask “So what?” questions such as “So, what made it easier or harder for you?” and “So, what are the key things you learned from this activity?” Finally, we ask, “Now what?” and “Now that I know this, what do I do next?”

\*Approximately six hours should be dedicated per project.

# Experiential Learning Model



## Project Selection

County, state and national 4-H resources are available for a wide array of projects that are categorized within eight broad program areas - citizenship and civic education, communications and expressive arts, consumer and family sciences, environmental education and earth science, healthy lifestyles, personal development and leadership, plants and animals and science and technology. For more about these program areas, see the “4-H program categories” fact sheet online.

Often these materials are designed in sets including a leader’s guide and youth guide(s) for members of a specific age group. Most of the leader guides provide a selection of activities that you can tailor to the needs and interests of your members, the time available and the meeting place. While you are welcome to incorporate your own ideas and use your own creativity, you are advised to rely on these pre-tested 4-H materials for the bulk of your club program.

Every 4-H member is required to complete at least one project each year. Some projects will be done by your whole club, while others are selected by individual members. In either case, success is dependent on the developmental appropriateness of the project for each member.

As members become older and more experienced, a club leader should encourage them to take on greater responsibility and enjoy freedom in selecting their projects. Teens especially need a voice in decisions that affect them. As the 4-H member grows in knowledge and experience, the leader’s role should change gradually from “directorship” to “advisorship.”

4-H members are more likely to complete a project when:

- The project is of real interest to them
- High standards are set for performance
- Youth are involved in planning what they will do to meet standards
- They receive encouragement and compliments along the way
- Parents care about 4-H and work with the members at home
- Club meetings are friendly and fun
- Club members feel they belong to an important group with important things to do

## Project Goals

Once a project has been selected, each 4-H member needs to **set a GOAL** for the 4-H project. Project goals are individual, even when several members are working on the same project. The online sheet, “4-H Goal Writing Worksheet,” can help members set project goals.

A variety of learning activities, background information, instructions and listings of materials can be found in the 4-H project guides.

## Project Records

The project record is the measuring tool members use to see their own progress. It is an integral part of the project and is required for project completion. Some project guides include their own record sheets. General record keeping forms are available from the 4-H office.

The project record includes a summary of the member's accomplishments and the challenges met while working on the project. Additionally, project records are rich sources of testimonials, invaluable for telling the 4-H story to others.

To ensure that the completion of project records will be an effective part of the project learning experience rather than a burden, 4-H leaders are advised to:

1. Explain the record at the beginning of the 4-H year so members and parents know what is expected.
2. Check the members' records once in a while and give help in keeping them up-to-date. This can be done at club meetings or project meetings.
3. Instruct members to write down facts when they happen.
4. Help members to finalize their project records right after a project is completed so they do not have to fill them out at the last minute for year-end recognition.

## **Developmental Appropriateness of Projects**

The developmental appropriateness of projects is of utmost importance. Pushing children to do things too early creates frustration and leads to failure; however providing only "foolproof" activities that present no challenge result in boredom and misbehavior.

The Leader's Guide for most 4-H projects will state the age group for which it was designed, but be aware that age alone is not the only predictor of development.

From kindergarten through high school, youth pass through four developmental stages. The stages are most commonly classified as follows: ages 5-8 (middle childhood), ages 9-11 (late childhood), ages 12-14 (early adolescence), and ages 15-18 (middle adolescence). Encourage youth to select project activities that stretch their current abilities and are still appropriate for their developmental stage.

The characteristics of 5-8 year olds are listed in the 4-H Cloverbud Leader Handbook. The remaining age groups are charted on the following pages.

*Age group characteristics charts on pages 5-7 through 5-9 have been adapted from "Understanding Youth," Module 4 of The Ohio 4-H BLAST! - Building Leadership and Skills Together, The Ohio State University, 1993*

Because 9 to 11 year-olds are like this:	Their leaders should:
<p><b>Physical Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth this age are very active; they are unable to stay confined or sit still</li> <li>At the peak of interest in skill for its own sake</li> </ul> <p><b>Growth in Thinking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beginning to think logically and symbolically.</li> <li>Vocabulary is greater than experience; can read words they don't understand</li> <li>Still think concretely, however, can handle ideas if they are related to things they can do or experience with their senses.</li> <li>There is no middle ground; things are either right or wrong, fun or boring</li> <li>Very curious and ask many questions</li> <li>Want to make choices but are confused by too many options</li> </ul> <p><b>Social Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beginning to identify with peers; still look to adults for guidance</li> <li>Satisfaction from completing projects comes from pleasing an adult</li> <li>Seek groups of same gender; interests of boys and girls in both work and recreation differ</li> <li>Developing an increased independence of thought</li> <li>Like being part of an organized group</li> <li>Developing an increased ability to cooperate</li> </ul> <p><b>Emotional Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have a strong need to feel accepted and worthwhile</li> <li>Still seek approval and encouragement from adults</li> <li>Becoming aware of personal appearance</li> <li>Like to measure skills against others, but...</li> <li>Self-confidence is fragile</li> <li>While still short, interest-span is increasing; it is longer when interest is high</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan lot of hands-on involvement and provide plenty of direction to keep them busy and on task</li> <li>Help members select projects that use tools and equipment they can manage and provide plenty of individual coaching to develop manual skills.</li> <li>Keep directions short and simple.</li> <li>Go over directions several times in different ways.</li> <li>Remain flexible so you can take advantage of the "teachable moments" created by members' curiosity and questions.</li> <li>Guide members through the planning of projects and group activities, helping them to evaluate alternatives.</li> <li>Be alert to ways of involving each member.</li> <li>Set a good example.</li> <li>Provide opportunities for members to show their work to parents and other adults.</li> <li>Have members work in pairs with partners of their own choosing.</li> <li>Encourage exchange of ideas among members.</li> <li>Use teamwork to develop cooperation and assign leadership tasks when possible.</li> <li>Hold initiation and installation ceremonies for new members and officers.</li> <li>Praise good work.</li> <li>Reassure youth that it is natural for children to grow differently; don't allow teasing about physical differences.</li> <li>Provide opportunities for competition but ensure that competitors are well matched in skill level.</li> <li>Emphasize successes, no matter how small.</li> <li>Change activities and pace from time to time and when members get "antsy."</li> <li>Help limit what members undertake, since they are better starters than finishers.</li> </ul>

Because 12 to 14 year-olds are like this:	Their leaders should:
<p><b>Physical Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growth spurts occur; may create a problem with clumsiness.</li> <li>• Growing rapidly, with some girls far more mature than boys of the same age.</li> <li>• Interested in skills for specific uses; must use their skills or lose interest.</li> </ul> <p><b>Growth in Thinking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving from concrete to more abstract thinking</li> <li>• Enjoy finding solutions on their own</li> <li>• Depth and scope of intellectual interests are increasing; they want to try new things.</li> <li>• Enjoy playing with ideas; learning to think for themselves.</li> <li>• Getting better at making choices, but still need guidance.</li> <li>• Are better at planning than executing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Social Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opinions of peers gaining more importance.</li> <li>• Use the group as a proving ground to gain independence from adults.</li> <li>• Are more secure with same-sex peers; status in the group is very important.</li> <li>• Have entered the “hero worship” phase.</li> <li>• Developing mature friendship skills.</li> <li>• Enjoy participating in activities away from home.</li> </ul> <p><b>Emotional Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beginning to test values.</li> <li>• Mood swings</li> <li>• Think they know it all and reject help; while they really want adult guidance they reject domination and resent criticism.</li> <li>• Struggling to accept their changing bodies; are interested in personal appearance only for special occasions.</li> <li>• Do not like embarrassment.</li> <li>• Have a longer interest-span</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be patient and provide individual guidance when members are learning physical or manual skills.</li> <li>• Reassure members that development varies between boys and girls.</li> <li>• Provide learning experiences that will develop and show off special abilities - through demonstrations, appearing before groups and serving on committees.</li> <li>• Give good reasons for your requests or limits. Helping them to understand “why” is a good mental exercise and a lesson in decision-making.</li> <li>• Organize directed group work and guide young teens in pursuing acceptable activities. Otherwise behavior will deteriorate into intolerant acts against those not in “the group.”</li> <li>• Set few rules, but be firm.</li> <li>• Young teens need contact with several strong adults of the same sex to help them learn what it means to be a masculine or feminine individual.</li> <li>• Provide social and recreational opportunities in settings where boys and girls feel at ease.</li> <li>• Have reassuring, informal heart-to-heart chats that inspire them to feel more self-confident</li> <li>• Help members recognize and appreciate their good points; recognize and improve their weaknesses; give praise for progress made.</li> <li>• Stress good health habits, good grooming and proper diets.</li> <li>• Help them to laugh at themselves (without laughing <i>at</i> them) and thus accept changes that are sometimes embarrassing (ex. voice pitch).</li> <li>• Show warm affection and a sense of humor - no nagging, condemnation or talking-down.</li> <li>• Hold project meetings separately from business meetings so that members can devote more concentrated time to more advanced project work while having more time for social interaction at the business meetings.</li> </ul>

Because 15 to 19 year-olds are like this:	Their leaders should:
<p><b>Physical Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Still growing at different rates but boys are catching up and passing the girls.</li> <li>• Most awkwardness has been overcome.</li> <li>• Can master skills that hold their interest.</li> </ul> <p><b>Growth in Thinking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have increasing ability to see how things relate and to use this in problem solving; are mastering abstract thinking.</li> <li>• Have the ability to make and execute short term plans; able to initiate and carry out tasks without supervision.</li> <li>• Are becoming better judges of their abilities.</li> <li>• Goals are based upon personal needs and priorities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Social Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have exaggerated interest in personal appearance to meet group standards.</li> <li>• “Going along with the gang” tapers off, but being an accepted part of a mixed group is important. Can recognize own status in group.</li> <li>• May have great interest in the opposite sex and dating.</li> <li>• Relationship skills are usually well developed.</li> <li>• Are ready to assume leadership and to prove they are capable of working in an adult manner.</li> <li>• Beginning to feel responsibility for contributing to group and community efforts.</li> <li>• Recognition is important</li> </ul> <p><b>Emotional Growth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal motivation overcomes limitations in vocabulary and experience.</li> <li>• Striving for independence and identity; have great need to make their own choices.</li> <li>• Need and want guidance on an adult level, but seldom ask for it. Communication may be difficult.</li> <li>• Accept guidance readily from one with prestige.</li> <li>• Have an interest span similar to that of adults.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide opportunities for older teens to develop physical and manual skills on an advanced level.</li> <li>• Provide time for discussions and opportunities for oral presentations of all kinds so teens can try out and expand their ideas within their own age group.</li> <li>• Allow for self-directed group responsibilities; let teens plan and carry out programs on their own.</li> <li>• Use skills of members to carry out group events.</li> <li>• Foster the development of judgment and decision-making ability by helping them to see and understand what is important in life and factors to consider when evaluating alternatives.</li> <li>• Stress social graces; let teens introduce guests and plan and hold parties and other social events.</li> <li>• Help members understand the rules of society because they must take responsibilities for their own actions.</li> <li>• Set up work and recreational activities that enable teens to observe the behavior of the opposite sex in a variety of situations.</li> <li>• Be alert to opportunities for teens to assist less skillful or younger club members.</li> <li>• Provide experiences for leadership development beyond the club level.</li> <li>• Encourage the use of democratic group procedures and promote national and international interest.</li> <li>• Direct teen interest in contributing toward something they can accomplish successfully; encourage group participation in community service projects.</li> <li>• Use news articles to publicize the leadership roles and community service activities taken on by teens and provide for public recognition of personal accomplishments.</li> <li>• Trust teens; tolerate some conduct that is recognized as part of their developmental phase.</li> <li>• Accept each teen for what s/he is; encourage independent thinking and decision-making.</li> <li>• Don’t expect them to tell you all but be willing to listen and help them evaluate their problems.</li> <li>• Foster values of integrity, generosity, fairness, etc.</li> <li>• Offer career guidance; use resource people.</li> <li>• Include projects and activities that require more patience and perseverance; provide training, encouragement and experience on an adult level.</li> </ul>

## Section 6: 4-H Events and Activities

In 4-H Youth Development, we speak often of programs, projects and activities. To help us use common terms, here are the 4-H definitions of those words:

- **Program** - A broad, encompassing educational endeavor. It consists of a series of projects and activities designed to strengthen the learning goals for which the program was designed. (Example: 4-H Youth Development Horticulture Program.)
- **Project** - An organized series of progressive learning experiences culminating in a product, tangible or intangible. A project helps young people develop initiative, leadership, cooperation, appreciation for quality of workmanship, and the ability to make decisions. (Example: “Budding Gardeners” - horticulture project for 8 to 11 year olds.)
- **Activity** - A single event stemming directly from a 4-H project or program. It supplements and reinforces specific project learning experiences. (Example: A horticulture program activity might be a “House Plant Clinic.”)

The educational activity plays an important role in the total 4-H program. The special events contribute to the overall mission of 4-H by maintaining interest, stimulating greater participation and providing excellent educational opportunities for members. Many of these activities are planned on a countywide basis and occur annually.

### Types of 4-H educational activities include:

- Clinics
- Family Outings
- Public Presentation Days
- Community Service Events
- Educational Trips
- Leadership Training Events
- Recognition Events
- Workshops

### Standard Annual Activities

Because they relate so closely to the overall 4-H objectives and values, there are three activities that are conducted every year: Public Presentation Events, Community Service Activities, and Evaluation Events. 4-H members are strongly encouraged to participate in all of these annually. They are described on the following pages.

### 4-H Public Presentation Events

The public presentation program is the one most often credited by 4-H alumni as having given them an edge above peers in both college and professional careers.



Through communication activities, youth learn to express themselves and their ideas, develop a positive self-concept and poise, attain self-confidence before a group, and gain subject matter knowledge. Types of presentations include demonstrations, illustrated talks, formal speeches, interviews, and creative communications such as dramatic recitation.

At “Public Presentation Days, 4-H members give their presentations in front of a small audience (usually other 4-H’ers and parents) and are evaluated by an experienced volunteer or 4-H teen.

## **Community Service and Service Learning Activities**

Community service is the action aspect of the 4-H Citizenship and Civic Education Program and 4-H members are encouraged to participate in at least one service activity per year. While other citizenship activities help members to *understand* their community and *appreciate* its diverse population, community service activities give them an opportunity to *do* something that will help others or improve their community. Such participation enables youth to:

- Better understand the community in which they live
- Take responsibility for their lives in the community
- Learn about social change and participation in a democracy
- Make a difference
- Improve their self-esteem and confidence
- Work cooperatively with others
- Improve their leadership skills
- Demonstrate that they have a positive role to play in their communities

There are many different types of service a club may do - ranging from extended service learning projects to short-term activities. The activity needs to match the developmental stage of those involved, be of interest to those participating and be of value to the community.

### **What’s the difference between “community service” and “service learning?”**

While both provide service to others or to the community as a whole, service learning connects the learning of subject matter to the service activity. For example, a club that wants to learn how to sew may make breathing-aid bears for abdominal surgery patients as the product of their sewing project. Or a group that wants to learn about landscaping may work with village personnel to improve the landscaping around village hall. Before the activity can be completed, members must have gained some knowledge and skill, which is then enhanced through the service activity

## **Evaluation Events**

Evaluation is an important part of the educational process. Evaluation is built into the 4-H Club Program through special events that occur throughout the year. It is conducted by the members themselves, leaders, educators and judges or evaluators at public presentation events, clothing revue, fair, animal shows, and other contests. No

matter what or where the evaluation occurs, the ultimate goal is the development of the individual or 4-H member.

### What is accomplished by evaluation?

- It helps members gain a greater appreciation of excellence and quality of workmanship or performance.
- It educates members and helps them to improve their skills and techniques.
- It encourages members to discover and develop their talents and potential.
- It makes members think critically and objectively about their work and themselves.

### How is judging done?

- The Danish System is used to evaluate 4-H project exhibits. In this system there is no limitation to the number of awards that may be presented at any level. Each entry receives an award. Items are compared to a standard set of criteria, not to each other. **Awards include:**

Blue or Excellent - The workmanship shows little need for improvement compared to the relative standard.

Red or Good - The workmanship is satisfactory or average but there are definite areas for improvement, even considering the age and challenges of the child.

White or Worthy - The workmanship shows that a worthy effort has been made and that the finished product is useable for the purpose intended. However, there is much need for improvement even considering the age and challenges of the child.



Items that do not meet specifications listed or class descriptions are disqualified.

- The consultation method of evaluation may be used in combination with the Danish System. The 4-H member will be present with their exhibit or item. The evaluator will talk with the 4-H'er about the item and the process utilized.
- A modified Danish system is often used in competitive events such as animal shows or equitation competitions. After each entry receives the appropriate award a specified number of the top entries are ranked to receive "place" awards.

## Recognition Events and the 4-H Recognition Model

Recognition is an important way to help young people feel good about themselves. Recognition is not limited to awards or formal evaluation events, but is also provided through positive reinforcement on a continual basis and should acknowledge more than levels of achievement. The **National 4-H Recognition Model** includes five types of recognition:

1. Recognizing youth for their *participation* can be a first step in building self-esteem.
2. Recognizing young people for their *progress toward personal goals* helps them gain experience in goal-setting and realistic self-assessment.
3. Establishing *standards of excellence* gives 4-H members a pre-determined target for accomplishment, and, recognizing the achievement of those standards helps them to appreciate the skills they are learning.
4. The desire to win is a strong motivator for some people. On the other hand, some young people are threatened by competition with their peers. Recognition that is given as a result of *peer competition* needs to be handled carefully and is not appropriate for youth under age 8.
5. When young people work together, they examine their own skills and abilities and explore solutions beyond their own ideas. This prepares them for life in today's inter-dependent, global society. Young people should, therefore, also be recognized for *cooperation*.

*Sources: 4-H Youth Development Education: A National Model for Recognition in 4-H Programs, page 3; National Cloverbud Manual, Recognition in Youth Programs: Helping Young People Grow, Volunteer Handout, pages 2-6.*

#### **4-H Achievement Night**

Many counties conduct an annual achievement program to award certificates and year pins to members. Members may also be recognized for community service work, promotion of the 4-H program and leadership or excellence in a particular project area. Educational trips and scholarships are often awarded to teen members.

## Section 7: Working with Teens

If you will be working with teen members for the first time, you may be wondering what to expect - from them and from yourself! Do you have what it takes, that “magic touch,” that keeps teens active, interested and cooperative?

This section will focus on teen development and the importance of building a relationship. Also included are: tips for motivating teens, planning programs and overcoming the logistics barriers.

**Developing a relationship with your teens is the most important thing that you can do.** How you value the energy, ideas and input of your teen members comes across in your language, questions and actions. As you might expect, a caring and respectful adult who listens to ideas and has high expectations has a much better chance at success than one who is disrespectful and expects the worst.

How do you really feel about teenagers? Take a few moments to assess where you are by reviewing the Anonymous Leader Survey that follows. Being aware of your current attitudes will help you to strategically think about how you want to work with teens.



### TEN TIPS FOR WORKING WITH YOUTH

1. Share the responsibility for leadership. Provide guidelines, but avoid total control.
2. Listen carefully to youth and try to understand their perspective.
3. Provide meaningful roles and assignments for youth.
4. Share all work activities, even tedious ones.
5. Treat young people as equals and develop a partnering relationship.
6. Keep youth informed about activities, even when problems occur.
7. Be energetic and excited about activities.
8. Have a positive, open attitude.
9. Make activities fun and challenging.
10. Be clear about levels of authority for youth and back their decisions when they fall within the agreed-upon guidelines.
11. Serve as a role model and be consistent and fair in your actions.

## LEADER SELF SURVEY

Answer these questions to get a better feeling for your own attitudes about working with teens. This is a personal survey.

1. Teens have unique perspectives and knowledge that would enhance our club's capacity and efforts.

1  
strongly disagree

2  
undecided

3  
strongly agree

2. Our club leaders should invest more time in working with teens.

1  
strongly disagree

2  
undecided

3  
strongly agree

3. Teens are reliable and should be trusted.

1  
strongly disagree

2  
undecided

3  
strongly agree

4. Teens should have the opportunity to lead younger 4-H members.

1  
strongly disagree

2  
undecided

3  
strongly agree

5. Our club should adjust certain meeting times to accommodate teens' schedules.

1  
strongly disagree

2  
undecided

3  
strongly agree

6. Even if teens are not involved with all of our club projects, it is important to take the time to work with them.

1  
strongly disagree

2  
undecided

3  
strongly agree

Source: *Activism 2000 Project* \* [www.youthactivism.com](http://www.youthactivism.com)

If you responded "strongly disagree" to some questions, please read on. There are ways to work with teens that could change your opinion entirely.

## How do you communicate respect to teens?

Following are a few ideas:

**Take them seriously and avoid sharing your judgments.** Adolescents need to be seen as mature, unique people -- equal to adults in their worth and dignity. Unfortunately, some adults tend to brush off what adolescents are going through with comments like “it’s only puppy love” or “you’re just going through a stage.” Instead of trivializing teenagers’ experiences and feelings, or sharing your opinion, make an effort to listen.

**Keep in mind, teenagers are not children.** Teenagers are changing in many ways - physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially, so adults need to change the way they interact with teens. One of the most degrading things a parent, teacher or another adult can do is treat teenagers like children.

**Treat teens the way you expect to be treated.** Adolescents have much to offer - provided they are given a chance. One way is simply to ask for their opinions and suggestions - and then pay attention to what they have to say. You should also demonstrate respect for teenagers by extending basic courtesies instead of issuing orders, demands and ultimatums.

**Recognize their talents, abilities and efforts.** Instead of assuming teens already know when they’ve done a good job, give them specific feedback and tell them that their contributions and actions are appreciated. Teens live in a terribly competitive world. Sometimes they feel that no matter what they do, it’s just not good enough.

**Teenagers need positive adult role models.** Teenagers look up to adults whom they like and respect. Such adults are usually respectful to teens and are fair and consistent in their own actions. Remember that when it comes to influencing teenagers, the things you say probably aren’t as important as the things you do.

**Sharing your expectations and power with teens can provide leadership opportunities for teens and fewer discipline problems.** Teens need and want opportunities to assume responsibility for their actions. There are ways to offer guidance and support that will encourage success without coming across as being controlling. Here are some strategies:

**Provide clear messages.** Expectations, boundaries and consequences need to be carefully explained and discussed. Even the things that seem obvious to you may not be obvious to your teens. When adolescents challenge the rules and expectations set for them, help them by negotiating and discussing new limits and consequences.

**Consider the amount of control you use.** Teenagers need to gain experience thinking and choosing for themselves. Expecting your orders to be carried out

simply because “I said so” is setting the stage for trouble. Instead, provide expectations for expanded roles and boundaries - then step back.

**Understand the difference between discipline and punishment.** While young people need greater responsibility, they also need structure that adults can provide. So leaders and parents must be able to follow through with discipline strategies that help teens learn from the mistakes they make, rather than punish them.

*Sources: Small, Stephen A. and Day Patricia M. What Teenagers Need from Parents, Teachers and Other Adults. Cooperative Extensions Service. University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin. (Taken from Moving Ahead Together); Asset Building for the Success of All our Youth, Town of Perinton, Village of Fairport, Fairport Central School District*

## Planning and communication

Working with teens requires creative methods for communication and planning. Here are a few ideas to try:

**Use technology:** E-mail, texting, blogs, discussion boards, three-way calling, social media etc. can help you stay connected. Your teens can tell you their preferred method of communication and can help you become acclimated to the technology.

**Plan your program and stick to it:** It helps to schedule meeting dates at the beginning of the club year because of the busy schedules of teen members. Include as many county and state events as possible, so that your teens and their families can schedule accordingly. Because schedules change, be flexible and willing to change.

**Meet when it is convenient and conducive for your teens.** This may mean evening meetings will work best, or that you plan to meet around after-school jobs.

**Check with your teens on their expectations.** Have a meeting with your teens to discuss their ideas, expectations, needs and boundaries. The table below is full of ideas developed by teens for other teens.

## DOs & DON'Ts for working with adults (a list developed by teens)

### DOs

- **DO** ..Check your expectations before initiating a project or program—what do you expect from it?
- **DO** ..Ask for information about the organization or project: How would you fit into the process? What would your responsibilities be?
- **DO** ..Address “youthism:” What are your stereotypes about working with adults? What will you have to do to communicate effectively?
- **DO** ..Develop your skills so that you feel comfortable participating. Open yourself to learning!
- **DO** ..Make an effort to really listen.
- **DO** ..Respect the views and experiences of others.

## **DON'Ts**

- **DON'T** ...Hesitate to ask questions
- **DON'T** ...Hesitate to be creative, energetic, and enthusiastic.
- **DON'T** ...Assume all adults will treat you like your parents treat you.
- **DON'T** ...Over commit yourself!

## **Advice to young people from adults (a list developed by teens)**

- Be on time.
- Come prepared to participate - read any notes or minutes before meetings, note any questions about your role, learn more about the organization or project.
- Focus on the purpose during meetings and activities.
- Take your role and commitments seriously.
- Listen a lot at first to get a sense of how the group/organization functions and explore ways that you can best contribute.
- Don't expect to understand all that you hear - - but make sure to ask questions!

*Source: National 4-H Youth Directions Council, National 4-H Conference 2001*

**For more information about working with teens, see the fact sheet “Positive Youth Development Resources: Informative Web Sites” on the 4-H Web page.**

## **Special events and opportunities**

Statewide, 4-H Youth Development offers a wide variety of opportunities for young people to become involved in everything from career exploration to citizenship to science and technology. For more information, check out the State 4-H website ([www.cce.cornell.edu/4h/](http://www.cce.cornell.edu/4h/)) or review the following list of annual events:

### **Events (listed by date):**

**Capital Days** (March; Albany): A two-day visit to the state capital to tour, learn about history and state government. Participants will also have an opportunity to meet with their state representatives.

**National 4-H Conference** (March or April; National 4-H Center Chevy Chase, MD): Youth and adults work together to run this conference, which will include seven to nine New York members.

**4-H Dairy Discovery** (April - for 4-H'ers 15-17): Hands on educational sessions challenge participants to consider the many diverse and exciting career opportunities within the dairy industry. Applications due February 15. There is a small cost for each trip.

**State Teen Ambassador Training** (April; State Fairgrounds, Syracuse, NY): This three-day training is for every level of teen ambassador and advisor. The training is designed to offer practice in public speaking; debate and personal conduct speaking with decision makers.

**Career Explorations** (June; Cornell): 350 teens from across the state attend this three-day adventure on campus. Learn about Cornell campus life, department programs and meet others from across the state. Career Explorations offers a program, called Focus for Teens, focused on areas of interest for teens in 10-12 grade and a less intense program, called University U, for teens entering 8 & 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Registration is in April.

**Statewide Presentation Program** (June; Cornell; ages 13 and older): Districts choose their top three public speakers and one alternate for each presentation area. For more information, please visit the State 4-H website ([www.cce.cornell.edu/4H/](http://www.cce.cornell.edu/4H/)).

**State Fair** (August; Syracuse): State Fair is an opportunity for fun, leadership and learning. There are many ways for teens to be involved in State Fair. To name just a few:

- **Junior Superintendents:** Teens selected to work the entire State Fair, coordinating animal shows and the youth building.
- **Teen Leaders:** Some 500 Teen Leaders annually at State Fair. Teen Leaders work six hours a day in programs like: Press Corps, Teen Evaluators, Fashion Review, Welcome Booth.
- **Group Action:** This includes clubs demonstrating a specific project in a county booth.
- **County Booth:** Some Teen Leaders work specifically in their county booth, assisting evaluators in finding items in their booth, keep things tidy, answering questions and in some cases providing hands-on activities.



**Agri-Business Career Conference** (October; Cobleskill College): A collaborative effort of Farm Bureau, Cobleskill College and Cornell Cooperative Extension, The Agri-Business Career (ABC) Conference introduces teens to a vast variety of opportunities available in the field of Agriculture. Open to teens across the state.

**Annual Opportunities** (listed by alphabetical order):

**4-H Residential Camps:** This provides great opportunities for social, personal, and educational growth within a natural environment. For more information on 4-H camps in your county, please look on the web at:

<http://www.4hcampsny.org>

**Citizen Washington Focus:** This is a 4-H leadership program for youth, ages 15-19, from across the country. For more information look on the web at:

<http://www.cwf.n4h.org/>

**In-state Exchange:** A less expensive, but equally as rewarding, alternative to out of state exchanges. County teens make arrangements to visit another county, generally staying in homes, visiting areas of local interest.

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**Out of state exchanges:** Information about out of state exchanges is available at:  
<http://www.states4hexchange.org>

**Wonders of Washington:** This is not an event, but a trip that your teen group can schedule at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, MD. Tours are scheduled and facilitated by Center staff.  
<http://www.4hcenter.org>

**Leadership Opportunities:** While trips are fun, there are also many other opportunities to get involved in 4-H.

- 4-H Statewide Teen Advisors
- 4-H Foundation Representative
- 4-H State Fair Advisory Committee
- Technology Leadership Team

Collegiate 4H - go to  
<http://nys4h.cce.cornell.edu/get%20involved/Pages/Collegiate4-H.aspx>

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<http://www.forumforyouthinvestment.org>

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<http://www.ahs.state.vt.us/whtwks/wwProPosYthDev.pdf>

# Section 8: Cornell Cooperative Extension and You, the Volunteer

## *Welcome to Cornell Cooperative Extension*

**We are pleased that you have accepted a volunteer role in Cornell Cooperative Extension.**

From its beginning, Cooperative Extension believed in and relied on volunteers -people who enjoyed sharing their know-how with others. Today, our volunteer force is as strong as ever, helping both adults and youth to improve themselves, their quality of life and their communities. You have joined the ranks of nearly 70,000 volunteers who engage in the delivery, support, management and administration of Cooperative Extension programs throughout New York State. Without your time, talents and expertise we could not provide the high quality programs that help 6.3 million New Yorkers “put knowledge to work” each year. We welcome you and thank you.

## **What Volunteers Need to Know About CCE**

### **Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) - New York’s Partner in a Nationwide Educational System**

Cooperative Extension is a nationwide system of educational programs jointly funded by federal, state and county governments. The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is the federal partner, while land grant universities are state partners.

The name **Cornell Cooperative Extension** reflects this history and partnership:

**Cornell** - the land-grant university for New York State

**Cooperative** - cooperation among the land-grant institutions, USDA and New York county governments.

**Extension** - the extending of land grant university resources into communities, enabling all citizens to put research-based knowledge to work in their daily lives.

County governments throughout the state provide substantial funding for Cornell Cooperative Extension programs conducted within their boundaries. County Cooperative Extension Associations, governed by elected boards of directors, provide local input to the program development process and monitor expenditures to ensure that these funds are used to effectively meet the needs of county residents. The county name is added to the Cornell Cooperative Extension title to identify these local Associations.

Empowered by this unique organizational structure, Cornell Cooperative Extension engages citizens and community leaders in processes that identify the educational needs of local people, design programs that support lifelong learning and initiate actions that improve communities. This process of linking research-based knowledge with local citizen participation is summarized in the CCE mission statement.

## **Our Mission**

*The Cornell Cooperative Extension educational system enables people to improve their lives and communities through partnerships that put experience and research knowledge to work.*

## **Cornell Cooperative Extension Programs - Based on Research, Focused on Local Needs**

The educational programs of Cornell Cooperative Extension vary from county to county, influenced by local needs and interests, local and national issues and local resources available. Information about individual and community needs also influences the research agendas of land grant universities.

Statewide program initiatives address issues that are common across counties.

Cornell Cooperative Extension's current program initiatives are:

- Agriculture & Food Systems
- Children, Youth & Families
- Community & Economic Vitality
- Environment & Natural Resources
- Nutrition, Health & Safety

More information about these initiatives can be found on the Cornell Cooperative Extension website.

## **Cornell Cooperative Extension Includes All People**

Part of Cornell University's statement on diversity says "Cornell is committed to act responsibly and forthrightly to maintain an environment that opens doors, opens hearts and opens minds." This spirit of inclusiveness lies at the core of Cornell Cooperative Extension's plan for ensuring equal program opportunity.

In compliance with federal law "*Cornell Cooperative Extension actively affirms equality of program and employment opportunities regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, disability, age, gender, sexual orientation or marital status.*"

To fulfill this commitment CCE:

- interacts with all people about their interests and needs;
- develops and delivers programs that address these needs;
- trains staff and volunteers to create programs with and for diverse audiences;
- joins with other groups and organizations in developing, providing and evaluating programs;
- tolerates no form of discrimination against any group in program participation or involvement in the program development process.

At the county level, the executive director ensures compliance with equal opportunity laws and Cornell Cooperative Extension's *Affirmative Action Policy*.

## ***What Volunteers Receive from CCE***

Cornell Cooperative Extension is committed to making your volunteer experience as satisfying for you as it is valuable to the accomplishment of our mission. You can expect:

- orientation, training and supervision to effectively use your interests, skills and time
- pertinent information and communications appropriate to your status
- respect, recognition and trust earned through performance
- a safe environment and protection from liability claims arising from volunteer assignments
- a process for addressing concerns and conflicts

You will also benefit personally from your relationship with Cornell Cooperative Extension. You will have access to educational resources, build friendships with other volunteers, discover new interests, develop new skills and have an impact on your community. We hope you will take full advantage of these opportunities.



## ***Responsibilities of CCE Volunteers to Cornell Cooperative Extension***

Since CCE volunteers act as representatives of Cornell Cooperative Extension, when performing assigned duties you have the responsibility to:

- abide by CCE policies and external regulations
- execute CCE business in an ethical manner and uphold the established code of conduct
- preserve the confidentiality of information about clients and CCE internal affairs that may be entrusted to you
- accept only those assignments that are suitable to your capabilities and time availability and then fulfill those commitments
- use time wisely and work as a team member with CCE staff and other volunteers

## **Volunteer Insurance Coverage**

### **General Liability - County Association Volunteers**

Cornell Cooperative Extension's **County Association's Liability** insurance protects you from bodily injury and/or property damage claims **only when** you are acting within the scope of your assigned volunteer responsibilities. If you have personal insurance that includes liability for volunteer activities, the association's general liability program will act as excess coverage for you. If you do not have such personal insurance, the Cooperative Extension Association's General Liability Program will apply, provided the incident is within the scope of the insurance coverage.

### **Board Members**

New York State law protects **directors** and **officers** of charitable not-for-profit organizations from lawsuits for activities directly related to those official positions, provided your actions do not constitute gross negligence.

### **Automobile Coverage**

If you use your personal vehicle for CCE business, your vehicle must be insured in accordance with the New York State Motor Vehicle Law. No liability, collision, comprehensive or no-fault insurance coverage is provided by CCE and you are not covered for side trips.

## **Using Official Names and Artwork**

The names and artwork associated with Cornell University, Cornell Cooperative Extension, the 4-H Youth Development Program, including all 4-H clubs, the Master Gardener Program, the Sea Grant Program and other Extension programs are regulated either by license, law or program guidelines. The situations in which the names and artwork may be used, the manner in which they may be displayed, the text style and colors required for their reproduction and the size and placement of any official artwork in relation to any other artwork are all specified.

The use of official names and artwork is an important way of identifying Cornell Cooperative Extension programs and building a positive image in the community. However, given the complexity of the regulations, you should check with the staff member in charge of your program whenever you want to use an official name or artwork.

## **Preventing Accidents and Preparing for Emergencies**

As a CCE volunteer, you share with Cornell Cooperative Extension responsibility for the health and safety of your participants. Basic safety guidelines are listed below. **More specific safety instructions and emergency procedures can be found in the county section of this handbook and the Cornell Cooperative Extension Youth Protection Policy**, or from your local 4-H Youth Development Program Leader. Review these instructions and procedures periodically to keep them fresh in your mind.

### **Basic Guidelines:**

- Do not deviate from the instructions given during training classes or from the procedures detailed in printed program materials.
- Before using any tool, piece of equipment or hazardous material for the first time, request safety instructions and follow them.
- Explain and demonstrate safety procedures and the proper use of tools and equipment to those you teach or lead.

Before beginning an assignment or starting a program, locate or bring along a first aid kit, list of emergency procedures and emergency phone numbers.

- In case of an accident, medical emergency, natural disaster or other major incident, put a responsible individual in charge of your group before starting to follow the emergency procedures. Contact the CCE Executive Director or other designated emergency contact as soon as possible and refer all inquiries to that person. **Do not make any statement or give any information to the media or anyone other than Cooperative Extension staff and emergency personnel.**
- If an incident results in personal injury or property damage, the following information should be gathered while it is fresh in everyone's minds -
  - Name, address, phone number of injured person(s)
  - Complete description of events causing injury or property damage
  - Name, address, phone number of witness(es) (VERY IMPORTANT)

**For sample accident reports, acknowledgement of risk and parental permission contact your local 4-H Office.**