

Information for 4-H Families

Parents are vital to successful 4-H clubs. What our youth gain from 4-H depends on the attitude and involvement of parents. Parents help their 4-H'er gain support, self-confidence, assistance, and a feeling of security. 4-H provides an opportunity for parents to spend more time with their child on practical, educational experiences that supplement the teaching of the home, school, and church.



Defining what 4-H Is . . .

- The official youth development organization of the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture's Cooperative Extension Service.
- An informal educational program for:
 - Boys and girls.
 - Ages 5 to 19.
 - Urban and rural.
- 4-H members:
 - Belong to a club.
 - Enroll in a project.
 - Keep a record of their projects.
 - Participate in activities such as shows, contests, workshops, and camps.
 - Participate in monthly club meetings and activities that benefit the 4-H'er and the community.
- 4-H projects are educational and practical. They are for both urban and rural youth. Project work enables young people to:
 - Learn facts and skills useful in everyday life.
 - Learn skills not taught in school.
 - Learn more about education and career opportunities.
 - Learn desirable, personal standards for conduct, work, and health.
 - Learn to work and play with others.
 - Learn to be a leader.
 - Learn to be a good citizen.
 - Make new acquaintances and friends.
 - Earn and save money for the future.
 - Receive recognition for work well done.

- Awards such as:
 - Certificates for completing projects.
 - Ribbons and medals for outstanding project work.
 - Recognition through pictures and written communication.
 - Scholarships.
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The greatest reward of 4-H will be the personal satisfaction of a job well done.

Responsibilities of Parents

Parental interest and encouragement are major influences on young 4-H'ers. If parents are involved right from the beginning, chances are high for a successful 4-H experience. Some of the major responsibilities of 4-H parents are listed below:

- Assist child in selecting a 4-H project he or she can do and will enjoy.
- Read the project book your child receives. You will find ways you can help your child with the project.
- Serve as a "4-H Project Home Helper" to your child. This means you don't do the work for the child, but you guide and assist.
- Attend 4-H club meetings and activities with your child as often as possible. This will help you understand the type of assistance your child needs.

- Read the 4-H communications from your county Extension office and state 4-H office. This will help you stay up to date on what is going on. You will be able to remind your child of upcoming events and due dates.
- Encourage your child to attend 4-H meetings and activities. You should make sure your child has a way to get to the events. Offer to assist the 4-H club leaders with specific tasks.
- Provide light refreshments for your child's 4-H club meeting when requested.
- Lend your kitchen, backyard, living room, garage, or basement for an occasional 4-H club meeting when requested.
- Share a hobby, skill, or interest of yours with 4-H club members during a meeting or workshop.
- Assist your child in keeping records on his or her 4-H work. A 4-H member is to keep a written record of what they do in 4-H. This includes 4-H project work, demonstration talks given, awards received, leadership positions held and community service involvement.
- Attend and participate in 4-H club meetings and activities.
- Attend and participate in county, district and state activities, workshops, and programs when possible.
- Help plan and support 4-H club activities – community service, fund-raising, etc.
- Read the 4-H news from newsletters, emails, or text messages. Share this information with your parents.
- Keep a current and up to date 4-H calendar of meetings and activities. Ask parents to remind you of upcoming events and due dates.
- Ask your parent, relative or other adult to serve as a 4-H project home helper to assist you with your 4-H project.
- Serve as an officer of the club or on a committee when asked.
- Take an active part in the 4-H club meeting.
- Prepare a written record of your 4-H project work and turn in to the 4-H club leader at the appropriate time.
- Share a hobby, skill, or interest of yours with other 4-H club members during a meeting or workshop.
- Keep parents informed about 4-H club meetings, projects, and activities.

Responsibilities of 4-H Members

4-H parents need to know what is expected of the 4-H member to effectively assist their child. The goal of 4-H is to meet the basic needs of youth and help them acquire essential life skills through planned “learn by doing” experiences. The 4-H program provides its members with many opportunities. It helps develop skills and interests. It offers trips and scholarships for those who put forth that extra effort. It is the responsibility of the 4-H member to get involved and to take advantage of the opportunities provided in 4-H. Some of the major responsibilities of the 4-H member are listed below:

- Complete the online application for 4-H membership at the beginning of each through 4-H Enrollment.
- Select a 4-H project with the help of your parents.
- Read the 4-H project book you receive and do the activities in the book.

Since most groups or clubs are judged by the behavior of individual members, it is the responsibility of the 4-H member to always conduct themselves during 4-H meetings and activities in a manner that would be a credit to the individual, the family, the 4-H club, the county, and the state.

