## Successful 4-H Experiences

**Meaningful and successful 4-H experiences include:**

**Action**

4-H’ers enjoy doing things that

* are fun, exciting, and result in learning;
* can be finished and have meaning; and
* involve the use of their senses such as touching, smelling and tasting.

**Interaction**

Youth find meaning in a 4-H experience through interaction by

* learning to talk to and work with all kinds of people;
* learning to examine new ideas and to apply them; and
* learning to use such things as equipment, libraries, bicycles, fabric, magazines, lakes, animals, the backyard, or a computer.

**Decision-making**

4-H will help people learn to make decisions when they are involved in

* clarifying the need;
* setting goals;
* planning the steps to reach their goals;
* finding the help they need;
* doing the things they planned;
* assessing their progress; and
* sharing results.

**Recognition**

4-H can provide reinforcement for learning by

* acknowledgement from friends, parents, and leaders; and
* appropriate rewards and awards.

**Public affirmation**

This is a final stage in value development. 4-H can provide an opportunity to publicly share what has been made, learned, believed, or accomplished through

* public speaking;
* creating an exhibit;
* developing a demonstration; and
* performing a skill or talent.

**Leadership**

4-H provides opportunities for people to learn leadership by

* showing how to do something rather than doing it for them;
* encouraging observation and listening;
* supporting with encouragement;
* showing sincere interest;
* staying ‘just out of the way’;
* helping a person do things her/his way; and
* giving praise when needed or earned.

**Flexibility**

4-H can provide situational and individual alternatives in

* learning opportunities;
* policies and requirements;
* roles, role definitions, and job descriptions;
* ways to be involved; and
* expected outcomes.

**Use of resources**

4-H allows people to be creative with resources, including those from

* themselves – using their natural abilities, solving problems, expressing ideas, sharing with others, being a helper to others, learning from others;
* other people – parents, siblings, friends, neighbors and leaders in the community;
* activities – trips, events, gardening, home repair, sewing, playing music;
* the environment – trees, soil, plants, insects, animals, , rocks, lakes;
* things – their home and the things in it, things in their neighborhood and community, books, writing and art supplies, multimedia.

**Tips**

* Think of things related to a specific project that are important and could be fun to learn.
* Think of people, places, and things in your community that could help kids learn important things in fun ways.
* Plan with members for people, places, and things the project group will use for fun and learning this year.
* Contact the resource person and arrange for a visit.
* Let the resource person know what you want the kids to do, learn, hear, see.
* Remember to thank resource people, too.
* Libraries may be willing to set aside shelf space for 4-H learning resources. Talk to your librarian.