

4-H Volunteer

Handbook

University of Maine Cooperative Extension

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# Dedication

*We dedicate this resource for 4-H volunteers to Norma Hardison, Community Education Assistant in Hancock County for 20 years, 4-H volunteer for 40 years and 4-H family member for a lifetime. Fondly known as “Norma’s Notebook”, Norma helped create this notebook years ago. Funding was lacking, and colleagues who started the project moved on, but Norma continued to believe it was an essential tool for new volunteers getting started with 4-H and she provided one in Hancock County. Over the years it has been updated and tweaked. “Norma’s Notebook” is now available for use in all 16 counties across the state of Maine. Thank you, Norma, for always keeping 4-H volunteers a priority and reminding us to think about things from their perspective. We appreciate all you have done over the years to make the best better!*

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# Welcome to University of Maine Cooperative Extension 4-H!

For more than 100 years, UMaine Extension 4-H volunteers have been making a difference in their communities by contributing their life experiences, love of learning, and energy in support of Maine’s most precious resource – our children. As the largest youth development program in the country, 4-H continues to depend on its dedicated volunteers as a true partner in that success.

This handbook is designed to provide practical information about Extension and the 4-H program, the many roles volunteers can choose from, and ways to make your experience with 4-H as meaningful as possible.

We are excited to have you join us as we work together in empowering young people to reach their full potential.

Lisa Phelps John Rebar

4-H Program Administrator Executive Director

# Understanding University of Maine Cooperative Extension and 4-H

University of Maine Cooperative Extension is part of the publicly funded Cooperative Extension System, an educational partnership extending nationwide with the support of USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), 74 land-grant universities, and 3,150 counties. For 100 years, UMaine Extension has made access to University of Maine research possible across the state, focusing on the Maine Food System, Positive Youth Development, and Community and Economic Development. Extension is cooperatively funded through USDA, Maine’s land-grant university, and county governments.

As the largest informal youth development organization in the world, 4-H is the youth development program of the Cooperative Extension System, providing opportunities for youth ages 5-19 to learn by doing. Through organized clubs, after-school programs, camps and independent projects, 4-H members gain experience in leadership development, citizenship, and essential life skills. Volunteers are the heart of 4-H, working with staff and educators in guiding and challenging youth to make the best better.

**4-H is about youth, their families and the communities in which they live.**

Positive youth development is the goal of 4-H, recognizing and strengthening positive assets of youth instead of highlighting the negative. Being acknowledged and valued for who they are now, what they can accomplish during childhood and adolescence and not just for the future adults they will become, is essential to the practice of positive youth development. As young people learn about something that interests them, they begin to learn and master project-specific skills while also developing basic life skills. The focus, then, is on learning and doing more than what specific project a 4-H’er pursues. The ultimate goal is for the young person to develop positive personal assets needed to live successfully in a diverse and changing world.

The essence of 4-H youth development is to:

• Create opportunities that promote positive youth development

• Teach knowledge and life skills that enhance quality of life

• Engage young people in the work of the land-grant university

The [mission of 4-H](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/youthdevelopment4h.cfm) is to provide meaningful opportunities for youth and adults to work together to create sustainable community change. This is accomplished within three primary content areas, or mission mandates – citizenship, healthy living, and science. The educational foundation of 4-H lies in these three mission mandates. These mandates reiterate the founding purposes of Extension (e.g., community leadership, quality of life, and technology transfer) in the context of 21st century challenges and opportunities.

Based on its [guiding principles](http://www.csrees.usda.gov/nea/family/res/pdfs/4h_guid_prin_2012.pdf), each 4-H program offers unique learning opportunities with support of the cooperative federal, state and county partnership; with the positive environments created by members, families, Extension staff and volunteers; and with community engagement by way of inclusive and intergenerational hands-on learning.

More information about the 4-H public partnership between the USDA and the country’s land-grant universities is available online [nifa.usda.gov/extension](http://nifa.usda.gov/extension).

# The 4-H Emblem, Motto, Slogan, and Pledge



The green four-leaf clover with a white ‘H’ on each

leaf was officially adopted as the 4-H emblem in

1911, and patented in 1924. The 4-H emblem

symbolizes the interactive nature of effective

learning and development. The four H’s are:

**HEAD** - Problem solving: ability to sort out complex problems.  
**HEART** - Emotional development: developing good attitudes toward work and learning; developing acceptance and appreciation of other people.   
**HANDS** - Skills development: ability to do, skill in doing and habit of doing.   
**HEALTH** - Physical development: understanding and appreciating physical growth and change

The 4-H Name and Emblem are protected by federal statute (Title 18 USC 707) and may be used only in accordance with statute requirements.

**‘To Make the Best Better’**

The motto as proposed by Carrie Harrison, a botanist with the U.S. Bureau of Plant Industry, was officially adopted in 1927, the same year the 4-H Pledge was introduced.

**‘Learn by Doing’**

The slogan reflects the 4-H educational philosophy.

**The 4-H Pledge** The 4-H pledge, written by Otis Hall of the Kansas

State College of Agriculture, was officially adopted at the first National 4-H Camp in June 1927. The pledge was changed in 1973 to include "my world."

**I pledge...**

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

More background information is available online [nifa.usda.gov/resource/4-h-name-and-emblem](http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/4-h-name-and-emblem).

# Becoming a Certified 4-H Volunteer

All adults working with youth as 4-H volunteers for more than 8 hours/year require certification by the local UMaine Extension office. Volunteers become certified through the following three-step process:

1. **Volunteer Application Process**

If you have not yet completed and submitted your volunteer application with the names of two references, and completed and \*submitted the supplemental volunteer application form, contact 4-H staff at your county’s Extension office for assistance before proceeding.

1. **Volunteer Training**

Once the application process is complete, discuss with county staff the training option that works better for you:

* Online training - [umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/how-do-i-become-a-volunteer](http://umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/how-do-i-become-a-volunteer/) - Four modules, 30 minutes each, at your convenience.
* On-site training – contact your local Extension office for more information on in-person volunteer training.

1. **Volunteer Enrollment Packet**

When the application and training processes are completed, you’re ready to complete and submit the following forms:

* 4-H volunteer enrollment
* UMaine Extension 4-H photo release
* Volunteer standards of behavior
* UMaine assurance of non-discrimination

Copies of these forms are available in Appendix B.

\*Submit completed forms to your county Extension office **except** the supplemental volunteer application. Send that form to:

University of Maine

Office of Human Resources

115 Corbett Hall

Orono ME 04469-5717

Or fax to 207.581.1548.

# Roles of the 4-H Volunteer

Volunteers and parents are valuable partners in the 4-H program, and their contributions can have a profound impact on the lives of 4-H members long after they reach adulthood.

The research-based, learn-by-doing 4-H model equips kids with skills such as problem solving, decision making and communicating -- essential for them to succeed in school, college, careers and communities. Volunteers have a vital role to play in 4-H clubs, after-school programs, community service, civic engagement and camping programs.

As a volunteer, you may be able to

* Teach young people in an area of personal passion
* Feel pride in making a big impact in the lives of others, youth *and* adults
* Develop new and current skills in teaching and in your area of interest
* Understand your community better and make a positive difference in it

There are many ways to volunteer, including volunteering short-term in a SPIN club or as a trip chaperone, or longer-term volunteering such as leading an after-school or traditional club.

Overall Qualifications for a 4-H Volunteer

* Keep participants safe.
* Be intentional about providing positive youth development and education.
* Work cooperatively with Extension staff, youth, other volunteers, and families.
* Be guided by the Essential Elements of 4-H, and provide educational opportunities for youth to experience Belonging, Mastery, Generosity, and Independence.
* Help young people be involved in all types of decision-making, at all ages.
* Be willing to stay informed and model life-long learning.

Benefits to a 4-H Volunteer

* Watching others, grow, adapt, and learn.
* Making positive contributions to youth, families, community, and state.
* Feeling the rewards of sharing your skills, knowledge, and time.
* Being recognized by the local and/or state 4-H program for your contributions.
* Developing lifelong friendships.
* Enhancing personal skills and/or potential career options.

All 4-H volunteers complete an application and background check, interview with county 4-H program staff, and provide references before working directly with youth. Ongoing training is made available to volunteers. More information is available from:

[www.extension.umn.edu/youth/mn4-h/volunteer/](http://www.extension.umn.edu/youth/mn4-h/volunteer/)

[oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu/volunteer](http://oregon.4h.oregonstate.edu/volunteer)

# Eight Essential Elements of 4-H

**(aka ‘The BIG-M’)**

No matter how you choose to volunteer, every 4-H volunteer is involved in positive youth development through these essential elements and concepts.

Concept: **Belonging** – young people don’t just join 4-H, they belong!

1. A positive relationship with a caring adult who acts as an advisor, guide and mentor. The adult helps set clear, supportive boundaries and expectations.
2. An inclusive environment is one that creates a sense of belonging and encourages members with positive and specific feedback. All members are celebrated, and everyone takes pride in their collective efforts.
3. A safe emotional and physical environment is part of the 4-H experience for youth, whether it’s the learning environment itself, other participants, adults or spectators.

Concept: **Independence** – young people have opportunities to choose and learn.

1. The opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future is to have hope and self-confidence in shaping life choices.
2. The opportunity for self-determination encourages critical thinking, personal responsibility and discipline.

Concept: **Generosity** – young people become active and engaged citizens.

1. The opportunity to value and practice service to others encourages connection, compassion, and the ability to approach problems as a member of an interconnected global society.

Concept: **Mastery** – young people master skills that are relevant.

1. Mastery, sometimes called self-efficacy, is the development of skills, knowledge, and attitudes with competent demonstration and use of each. Mastery is a process over time.
2. Engagement in learning involves self-reflection, building relationships and connections in order to develop understanding, and meaningful challenges.

Additional information on the Essential Elements is available in Appendix B.

# Using the Experiential Learning Model

In 4-H we talk a lot about *hands-on learning* and *experiential learning.* Experiential learning is more than just doing activities. It involves discussing the activity, drawing lessons from the activity, and applying the lessons to the real world. The following is an outline of that process.

**Do**

Experience – Begin with a concrete experience. This can be an individual activity or group activity, but it involves “doing something.”   
Activities can include: demonstrations that involve the youth judging items (e.g., which snack is better for them – not being judged by others), making exhibits for an event, field trips or recreational activities.

**Reflect**

Share – Next get the group or individual to talk about the experience. Share reactions and observations. Talk freely. Encourage group members to answer questions posed by others. Avoid having the leader answer questions.

*Sharing Questions*

1. What did you do?

2. What happened?

3. How did you feel?

4. How did it feel to..?

5. What was the most difficult? Easiest?

Process – Discuss how questions are created by the activity. The leader might list some of the reoccurring themes, issues, or questions.

*Processing Questions*

1. What problems or issues seemed to occur over and over?

2. What similar experience have you had?

**Apply**

Generalize – Find general trends or common lessons in the experience. Identify the important points that apply to the “real world.”

*Generating Questions*

1. What did you learn about yourself through this activity?

2. What did you learn about (life skill, i.e.., making decisions)?

3. How do the major themes or ideas relate to real life and not just the activity?

4. How did you go about making your decision?

Apply – Talk about how the new information can be applied to everyday life or sometime in the future.

*Applying Questions*

1. How can you apply what you learned (making decisions) to a new situation?

2. How will the issues raised by this activity be useful in the future?

3. How will you act differently in the future as a result of this activity?

More information is available online using the links in Appendix A.

# Parent Involvement in 4-H

At its best, 4-H is a family affair. Parent involvement is one of the keys to a successful 4-H club. It provides an ongoing base for club support, increases the opportunities for teaching and learning valuable life skills, and expands the potential for interesting and exciting 4-H programs. Active, involved, supportive parents mean active members, additional resources for leaders, a thriving 4-H program, and expanded support for a community’s youth development.

Parent/guardian participation in 4-H results in the following benefits:

• Family involvement in 4-H offers opportunities where both child and parent participate with common interest, strengthening family ties.

• Active parent participation can strengthen and broaden the 4-H program in any local club or in any county.

• When parental support is positive, a club or group is likely to become stronger, larger, and more active.

• In clubs where parental support is evident, individual members receive more personal attention and guidance from leaders and parents.

• Club activities and events will develop and expand with the additional support of parents. 4-H can have a positive influence on the lives of thousands of boys and girls. This happens when parents care enough to share their time, efforts, and talents.

**Some ideas to help inform and interest parents:**

• Involve members and parents in setting goals and planning your club’s program

each year.

• Become familiar with the interests and special talents of your members’

parents. Ask for advice in areas where they can contribute, then make good use of good ideas. Be specific with requests.

• When parents volunteer to help, make sure they are involved in something

worthwhile. Make a note of their offer and return their call within a few days with some specific task in which they can help.

• Involve parents in sharing leadership as project leaders. Emphasize that they can teach a skill or project that may require only a few 4-H meetings for the entire year. If the parent enjoys this role, encourage them to become a certified 4-H volunteer.

* Keep parents informed. Help them understand the 4-H objectives. Send notes and letters directly to parents about the club program. Allow time for discussion before or after meetings with parents. E-mails are a great tool for keeping families informed. Be sure your club has a phone and/or email chain for emergency cancellations and important messages.

• Invite parents to club meetings. For new members and parents, you might want

to have a special meeting explaining the 4-H program and your club’s activities. Let parents know what is expected of their child.

• Recognize both members and their parents. Thank parents for their support and

contributions to the club program both personally and in public.

• Encourage members to make their 4-H work a topic of family conversation.

• Solicit parent involvement at 4-H fairs and other activities and events where 4-H

club work is showcased.

To help parents think about the many ways they can participate, try sharing the checklist for ‘The Interested 4-H Parent’ found in Appendix B. Many times they only need to see a list of suggestions to realize how their help can truly make a difference.

Adapted in part from:

[www.4-h.org/resource-library/4-h-volunteer-resources/organization](http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/4-h-volunteer-resources/organization)

# 4-H Youth Development – The Club System

The 4-H club is the core structure where hands-on learning and teaching take place. An organized group of at least four youth, from at least three different families, meet a minimum of six times per year with adult volunteers and/or 4-H staff. With appropriate guidance from volunteers, club members elect their own officers, decide on programs and plan activities.

It's entirely up to 4-H members what their 4-H club does! 4-H clubs usually focus on one or more topics of the members' choice. They conduct project-related activities, for example, a gardening club may have a year-round garden or a technology club may work on web design at meetings. 4-H clubs also do lots of community service both in their project area and where they are needed.

The purpose of 4-H is to promote positive youth development. If club members and volunteers plan a wide variety of learning activities together, everyone has the chance to grow through experiential learning, developing individual skills and abilities, and participating in community service projects. A summary of 4-H

club policies is located in Appendix B.

The 4-H program year runs October 1 through the following September. Membership in Maine 4-H is open to all youth ages 8-19 (age as of January 1), regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, or public assistance. Children ages 5-8 can participate with selected age-appropriate activities through the Cloverbud program.

## Cloverbud Program – Ages 5-8

The primary goal of the Cloverbud program is to promote children's healthy development—mentally, physically, socially, and emotionally. The Cloverbud program provides an excellent opportunity for children to reach his or her highest potential because early life experiences, even subtle ones, affect future development.

The Cloverbud program is developmentally-age appropriate, therefore it is:

* fun and positive
* leader-directed
* activity-based
* noncompetitive
* success-oriented
* group-centered

The Cloverbud program allows for and encourages creativity and play. The goals of Cloverbud programs are for children to develop:

* self-understanding (self-esteem)
* social interaction skills (getting along with others)
* decision-making skills
* learning skills (learning how to learn)
* mastering physical skills

Additional information is available online [www.ohio4h.org/4-h-youth/cloverbuds](http://www.ohio4h.org/4-h-youth/cloverbuds) and [nifa.usda.gov/resource/4-h-club-design-factsheets](http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/4-h-club-design-factsheets).

**Cloverbud FAQ’s**

**What is the difference between a Cloverbud and other 4-H members?**

Children in this age group have developmental and learning characteristics that are different from older members. If you have spent time with kids that are 5-8 years old, you have seen that their attention span is shorter, they are physically smaller and they may handle competitive events in a different way than older, more experienced youth.

In Maine, Cloverbuds participate in 4-H activities but are limited to non-competitive activities and cannot exhibit larger animals in any fairs or events.

**What if a Cloverbud wants to take a specific project like cooking or dogs?**

When 5-8 year old members enroll, their project area (on the back of the enrollment sheet) should always be listed as 60074 “Introduction to 4-H Projects.” Programs for Cloverbuds should consist of introductory level (“sampler”) activities that build skills in a variety of 4-H project areas.

A Cloverbud activity focuses on developing a skill or concept related to a short-term experience. 4-H project work, a long-term planned course of study in one subject area, is designed for 4-H members ages nine and older. The skills Cloverbuds learn from their activities will prepare them for project work later.

**Do Cloverbuds keep records?**

Cloverbuds should have the opportunity to be introduced to simple record keeping skills using an age-appropriate method such as the Maine 4-H Cloverbuds Activity Record.

**Can a Cloverbud work with animals?**

The national 4-H policy states that for safety and developmental reasons, children ages 5-8 may not have animal projects. Cloverbuds may not show any animals competitively in 4-H classes at Maine fairs or other 4-H events.

Recognizing that engaging this age group in activities with animals builds long-term interest in working with animals, carefully structured, well-supervised, age-appropriate activities with animals are encouraged. See Section C.3.3 in the 4-H Policies and Guidelines for complete details. ([umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines](http://umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines/))

**Can Cloverbuds show at 4-H fair events?**

While Cloverbuds may not participate as competitive exhibitors in any 4-H events, they are encouraged to participate in fairs and other county events in other ways. Your local Extension office can provide more details.

## 4-H Members – Ages 8-19

### What is a 4-H Club?

Community 4-H clubs (once authorized by local Extension staff) consist of an organized group of boys and girls, with officers appropriate to the group, and under the supervision of one or more certified volunteer leaders. Clubs are frequently organized within a neighborhood, a school, a business or other location. Club size should be appropriate to the ages of the members, meeting place and leadership available. These clubs are encouraged to conduct at least one community service project annually to benefit disadvantaged individuals or other groups within their community. In addition to community 4-H clubs, youth may opt to participate through special interest groups/project clubs that focus on one specific topic, school enrichment or after-school programs. More information about the 4-H club system is available online from [nifa.usda.gov/resource/4-h-club-design-factsheets](http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/4-h-club-design-factsheets).

**What are the purposes of 4-H club meetings?**

Each 4-H club meeting should be designed to help youth:

• acquire new information

• learn to use leisure time creatively

• develop social skills

• acquire leadership and citizenship traits

• learn to conduct meetings

Meetings enable 4-H members to learn and practice decision-making and leadership skills in a group setting by using the knowledge and skills acquired at these meetings. Each 4-H member is expected to commit to attending club meetings, and to let the club leader know if it is necessary to miss a meeting. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend meetings with their children.Parental involvement demonstrates support for 4-H members, keeps them informed on club activities, and enables them to actively assist leaders. Remember, 4-H is a family affair!

**Club Structure**

Most 4-H clubs typically use two types of meetings: the general club meeting and the project group meeting.

All 4-H members meet with a club leader in a general club meeting. A sample format follows. Such meetings include 4-H activities not directly related to a project. These meetings can be scheduled once a month, every other month, or as needed. They may coincide with the school year, but aren’t limited to it.

Every part of the meeting should be well planned by the officers and club leaders. The club leader should be involved only as necessary in demonstrations and other educational programs. Take care to choose topics of interest to all for the general meeting program. The range of methods for presenting material is broad. Demonstrations, talks, panel discussions, outdoor explorations, videos, slides, guest speakers, judging, and quizzes are all among the possibilities. Just remember that the 4-H philosophy is all about ‘learning by doing,’ so the program should have as much hands-on learning as possible.

In project group meetings, 4-H members meet with a leader to work on a specific project, such as knitting, space science, nature study, or small animals. At this meeting, the members would actually learn how to do some aspect of that particular project.

In conducting a project program:

* Limit the group to one project – for example, photography – or one project area, perhaps black-and-white photography or taking action shots. Depending on size, a project group meeting might be more effective if members worked in small groups on project subject areas, such as ‘photo composition’ or ‘how to prepare photographs for display in an exhibit.’
* If you do break up a project group, do so by age level and ability.
* If project members are young, have a project leader or teen leader for every four to five members. Younger members usually need more time and help than older members. Schedule their meetings more often.

The emphasis in project groups is on education, involvement, and doing. Leaders, group peers, and outside resource people all help explore the project subject or skill.

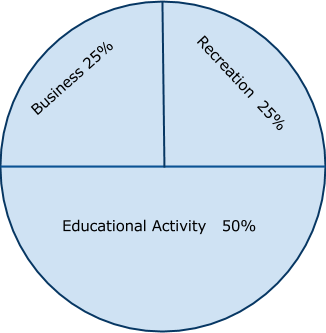
**What is a club meeting like?**

Each 4-H meeting normally lasts 1-2 hours and includes a business meeting, education, and recreation. Clubs may meet monthly or at any time determined by the club members. Meetings may include a variety of the following items:

**Business:** The business portion of the meeting should be short and snappy. It is a small democracy in action with members learning how to conduct meetings effectively, work with others through committee assignments, and cooperate with others in making decisions.

**Educational Programs:** This part of the meeting is designed to help members learn more about subjects of interest to the group. The program might include illustrated talks – using visual aids – and demonstrations – showing by doing – done by members; a field trip; a community service project; or a guest speaker.

**Recreation:** The recreation portion of the meeting distinguishes the 4-H meeting from other educational activities. Recreation may include challenges, group singing, relays, guessing games, singing games, active games, and quiet games.

Club leaders and members decide how to run their own meetings, but a suggested format is:

* Business meeting – 25%
* Education/Project Activity – 50%
* Recreation – 25%

### Planning a 4-H Club Meeting

Effective meetings require advance planning. Successful clubs get ideas from the members, then work to develop an annual club plan for meeting schedules and educational programs for the club year.

Usually, club officers do the initial program planning with guidance from organizational leaders and club parents. This plan is then presented to the entire club for review, modification and approval.

The officers elected at the beginning of the 4-H year are responsible for conducting meetings. The club leader(s) will want to work with them to help officers develop leadership skills and assist in developing agendas. Most clubs normally elect a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and reporter/historian. Other officers may be elected, depending on the individual club (i.e. recreation leader, song leader, etc.).

Club meetings are conducted by parliamentary procedure, a method of progressing through the items on a meeting agenda in order to maintain democratic rule, fairness, and the opportunity for debate in order to reach consensus on group decisions. Additional resources on parliamentary procedures are online [web.extension.illinois.edu/cefj/downloads/42196.pdf](http://web.extension.illinois.edu/cefj/downloads/42196.pdf), and

[urbanext.illinois.edu/who/inside.html](http://urbanext.illinois.edu/who/inside.html)

### Planning a 4-H Project Meeting

As a 4-H project leader, you can share your skills, talents or special interests such as photography, horses, dogs, rabbits, sewing, computers or woodworking. In this role, you may be called upon to offer a number of sessions at an afterschool program, or assist a club leader by sharing your expertise and working with club members. Many of the same questions and techniques can go into getting ready for a project meeting as planning for a club meeting.

**Review project materials**

* Contact your 4-H club leader or your county Extension office to get project material. There is usually something for both leaders and members.
* Review the material to learn what the project is all about and what the leaders are expected to do.
* Think about additional ideas you have or things you'd like to do or try, and make a note of them.

**Set up a 4-H file**

* You need a place to store your 4-H materials to keep them together and in some kind of order. A cardboard box makes a handy file.
* Use it to store:
  + Leader guides
  + Member guides
  + Your notes
  + A folder for your project plans
  + A folder for information on members and their families (names,  
     addresses, phone numbers, ages, etc.). Even skilled family members can

share with your project group.

* + Resources you find in newspapers, magazines, folders, brochures, or  
     other Extension written materials.

**Plan to make 4-H fun**

* Think about how members will perceive and experience the project.
* Think about the things that will make the 4-H project fun for members.
* Look around your home and community for resources to make 4-H fun.
* When 4-H is fun and members are involved in doing and discovering, they'll learn.

**Involve parents**

* + Plan to involve parents and other members of the 4-H families.
  + Obtain a list of names and addresses of 4-H’ers enrolled in the project from the 4-H club leader or your local UMaine Extension office.

**Involve teens as leaders**

* Include teen 4-H’ers in activities that can help develop leadership and citizenship skills.
* Provide opportunities to practice responsibility.
* Treat teens as adults and involve them in all aspects of the club program, including planning.
* Ask instead of tell.

More information about working with teens and providing leadership opportunities within your club structure is available in this resource from Montana State University [www.montana.edu/www4h/mt4h5267.pdf](http://www.montana.edu/www4h/mt4h5267.pdf).

### Project Meetings FAQ’s and Planning Resources

**How many meetings should I have?**

A minimum of eight meetings per year is required, although most leaders hold ten to twelve meetings a year. The schedule might look something like this:

* First Meeting – involve the members in planning. Have them help select things to do. Younger members may select from among choices you identify.
* Meetings Two through Eight – can be things like: exploring, making, trying, discovering, touring, interacting, growing, grooming, preparing, telling, showing, sharing, and maybe some listening and recording.)
* Meeting Nine – preparing for the fair and completing project records
* Meeting Ten – reflect on what was done and learned this year, as well as what you want to do next year.

**How often should we meet?**

Once or twice a month is about right, but for some projects it may be seasonal (10 meetings in ten weeks). You will want to plan with your group. A lot will depend on the project and when members are available.

**Where should we meet?**

We recommend that you try and meet in a convenient public place such as a school, church, business, library or community center. If you can't meet in a public place you can meet at a home. If you meet at home, it is important that you have up to date homeowners insurance. Call the local UMaine Extension office for a list of potential public meeting places.

**When should we meet?**

* School days: try from 4:00-6:00 p.m. or 4:00-5:30 p.m. Another option is early evening from 7:00- 8:00 or 9:00 p.m. Weekends: try 10:00am - noon.
* In summer, schedule meetings when leaders and members are available.

**How long should the meetings be?**

About one-two hours depending on the activity, the project, and member age. Remember, younger members have a shorter attention span for listening, watching or doing one thing.

**YOUR FIRST PROJECT MEETING –** What to Do (Not How to Do It)

* Help members get to know you and each other.
* Help members know what the project is all about.
* Review project materials. Discuss ideas for things to do in the project at meetings and at home. Use project material, your ideas, member ideas and parent ideas.
* List ideas for project meetings and involve members in choosing from the list. For younger members, list fewer options. Decide on a year's plan.
* Help members know the kinds of help you will give them at meetings, by phone, or at home (your home or their home).
* Help members think of things to do and learn that are realistic for their age and circumstance.
* Help members set realistic goals for doing and learning.
* Include a short project related activity that involves members in doing (and/or demonstration by you or the teen leader).
* Help members know how the teen leader will help with project work.
* Discuss things members can do at home before the next meeting.
* Remind members of the time, place, and things to bring to the next meeting.
* Say goodbye and thank the members for coming! Members are more likely to return if they believe they are welcomed.

**PLAN YOUR 4-H MEETINGS**

Planning Helps Ensure Success

Planning helps make 4-H leaders successful. You will want to develop a planning sheet that works for you. Here are some ideas to include in your plan. Other examples are included in the Appendix.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **When and where is the next meeting?** | Date: |
| Time:  Place: |
| **Opening and roll call** | What: Pledge of Allegiance, 4-H Pledge, etc.  Led by:  Roll call topic: |
| **Topic or Purpose** | Members will be able to: |
| **Equipment** /  **Supplies needed** |  |
| **Who will bring**  **what?** | Refreshments:  Other: |
| **Things the club leader(s) will do** |  |
| **Things the teen**  **leader(s) will do** |  |
| **Things members**  **will do** | Recreation:  Led by: |
| **Things members**  **will do in advance** |  |
| **Next meeting:** | Date: |
| Time: |
| Topic: |
| Members bring: |
| **Thank you and safe travels home** | Time meeting adjourned:  Notes: |

**Recordkeeping in 4-H –** Recordkeeping is a skill for living

4-H record requirements vary among counties, clubs and projects. 4-H records help youth:

* establish good organizing and planning habits;
* evaluate economic growth;
* gain satisfaction and motivation from progress;
* improve written communication skills;
* improve decision making and priority setting skills; and
* establish positive direction and identify goals.

4-H members do not learn these skills automatically. Younger 4-H'ers need practice, encouragement and help in the record keeping process.   
  
4-H records are very valuable at the local project and club level:

* as evidence of accomplishments (for employment, family awareness, recognition, goal setting, etc.);
* as a tool for helping leaders and other youth know the young person better; and
* as a tool for involving the family in the youth's goals and accomplishments.

4-H scrapbooks – including video, audio, and other media – can also be a fun and useful way to keep records of activities and projects.

Project record forms are available online [umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/forms](http://umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/forms/) and in Appendix B.

## Starting a new 4-H Club

**Informing the Community**

Informing the community about newly organized 4-H clubs, and 4-H activities in general, is important. Please remember to involve, and get approval from, 4-H staff before publicizing anything, including 4-H fundraisers and other events. It is important for 4-H staff to create any flyers and media releases for approval in order to align with university policies.

**Planning the First Meeting**

In planning the first meeting, be sure to give at least a week’s, and preferably two weeks’, notice. If possible, send special invitations to families with the right aged children. Outline the first meeting carefully. If 4-H is new to those you expect to attend, plan the meeting as an informal session and don’t try to organize the club until the second meeting. Make the program interesting and limit it to an hour and a half. Remember, the first meeting will set the tone for those that follow.

County 4-H staff would be happy to help in planning and conducting your first couple of meetings. Experienced 4-H members and leaders may also be available to help you plan and conduct the meeting. Contact the Extension office for help. If possible, enroll new leaders at your first few meetings.

The first meeting might proceed as follows: You and other organizers might arrive early to check the physical conditions (heat, ventilation, and seating,) and to greet others as they arrive and set them at ease.

* Open the meeting with a brief review of 4-H and its leadership roles and organization.
* Discuss the 4-H project areas, encouraging prospective members to choose one suited to their needs and interest. Suggest that families discuss together the choice of a project.
* Pause for a question and answer session.
* Have prospective members indicate their desire to join by a show of hands or in writing.
* Stress the need for leaders in areas where interest has been expressed.
* Decide the time and a place for the next meeting.
* Close with songs, games, and refreshments.

**Uniforms and Dues**

4-H members are not required to wear uniforms or pay dues to Extension or other sponsors. Members may, if they wish, assess dues for their local club to help cover the cost of refreshments, project materials, and special club or community service activities. Donations are welcome. If your club decides they want to fundraise, contact your county 4-H staff to learn about acquiring a federal EIN, and fiscal accountability and responsibility.

**Parent Cooperation**

Parent support of 4-H is vital to the club’s success. The greatest incentive to parent cooperation is cultivating a sense in them that they have something important to contribute. After all, they are the ones best suited to helping their child choose and carry out a project. And it is a parents’ praise for a job well done that means the most to a child. You can help involve them in a variety of ways:

* Invite them to 4-H meetings and events. Let them know what is expected and suggest ways they can help.
* Maintain personal contact with them.
* Whenever possible, ask each for specific help.
* Form parent committees at the outset to help with community service, social activities, transportation, membership drives, and leader recruiting.
* Hold a parents’ night program at least once a year.
* Parents benefit as much as children from a thriving club. Parents will usually help a club that helps their child.

**Planning the Second Meeting**

* The agenda of the second meeting follows naturally from the first:
* You will undoubtedly describe 4-H in more detail, perhaps showing a video suggesting its scope and variety.
* You might briefly discuss the 4-H symbols (emblem, colors, pledge and motto.)
* New leaders should be introduced and new projects reviewed.
* If members feel sufficiently well acquainted, you might hold the election of officers, or wait until a later meeting.
* Appoint a representative committee of officers, leaders, members and parents to plan the year’s program.
* Pass out materials explaining 4-H, project opportunities, leader training, etc.

Another resource on 4-H clubs is available online from University of Florida Cooperative Extension [florida4h.org/clubs/files/quality\_vibrant\_clubs.pdf](http://florida4h.org/clubs/files/quality_vibrant_clubs.pdf).

**Risk Management**

4-H volunteers are an essential partner in our youth development program, and UMaine Extension is committed to ensuring the safety of volunteer leaders and members as much as possible. Our risk management policies and procedures are designed to guide 4-H leaders on ways to reduce risks involved in working with youth, and the risk of harm to 4-H members. One element of orientation for all Maine 4-H volunteers is training in low-risk management practices, with the expectation that volunteers will be ready to take proactive measures in minimizing or reducing potential risks for programs, events, and activities sponsored by UMaine Extension.

Section B.1.7 of Extension’s 4-H Policies and Procedures Guidelines ([umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines](http://umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines/)) is your best resource for low-risk management practices. There you will find information on many topics including volunteers and liability; liability associated with vehicle use and reporting an accident; working with animals; guidelines for volunteers acting as chaperones; how to report suspected child abuse and/or neglect; crisis communication; event and program guidelines; and financial management.

4-H staff are available for guidance whenever questions or concerns are raised. A sample risk management checklist for event planning is available in Appendix B.

The Positive Development of Youth

**Comprehensive Findings from the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development**

The first-of-its-kind research defined and measured positive youth development. The result is a model that is driving new thinking and approaches to youth development around the world.

For more than a decade, preeminent youth development scholars, Drs. Richard M. Lerner and Jacqueline V. Lerner, and the team at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, Medford, MA, partnered with faculty at America’s land-grant universities to conduct this groundbreaking research.

The final report, “The Positive Development of Youth: Comprehensive Findings from the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development” reviews the multi-year research findings. The report’s website URL is available in Appendix A.

**Research Shows 4-H Youth Excel Beyond Their Peers**

The longitudinal study discovered that the structured out-of-school time learning, leadership experiences, and adult mentoring that young people receive through their participation in 4-H plays a vital role in helping them achieve success.

Compared to their peers, the findings show that youth involved in 4-H programs excel in several areas:

**Contribution/Civic Engagement**

* 4-H’ers are nearly 4 times more likely to make contributions to their communities (Grades 7-12)
* 4-H’ers are about 2 times more likely to be civically active (Grades 8-12)

**Academic Achievement**

## 4-H young people are nearly 2 times more likely to participate in Science,

## Engineering and Computer Technology programs during out-of-school time (Grades 10 – 12)

## 4-H girls are 2 times more likely (Grade 10) and nearly 3 times more likely (Grade 12) to take part in science programs compared to girls in other out-of-school time activities. (Data found in Science, Engineering and Computer Technology (SECT) section of full report)

**Healthy Living**

## 4-H’ers are nearly 2 times more likely to make healthier choices (Grade 7)

## 

## The Power of Positive Youth Development

The research is helping families, schools, communities and youth programs develop strategies to support children and adolescents. Effective youth development programs like 4-H are putting the research to work by focusing on three important areas:

• Positive and sustained relationships between youth and adults

• Activities that build important life skills

• Opportunities for youth to use these skills as participants and leaders in

valued community activities

The study assessed the key characteristics of PYD – competence, confidence, character, connection and caring – followed by the impact of valued community programs, including 4-H.

**4-H PYD Inputs + Youth Outcomes = Impact**

Skill building Competence Contribution

Meaningful leadership Caring

Long-term caring adult Character

Connected

Confidence Reduced risk behavior

**Background**

The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development is a longitudinal study that began in 2002 and was repeated annually for eight years, surveying more than 7,000 adolescents from diverse backgrounds across 42 U.S. states.

The first wave of research began with fifth graders during the 2002-2003 school year and ended with twelfth graders (Wave eight) in 2010. More recently, the Tufts research team examined all eight waves of data and conducted new and more rigorous analyses in order to produce the latest comprehensive report of findings. The new report, while sometimes diverging from earlier results, provides powerful evidence of the impact of 4-H participation throughout Grades 5-12.

“The potential for change is a core strength of all youth – a strength that can be built upon. This strength is cause for optimism for it means we can positively influence the life paths of all children.“ Lerner et al., 2013

## 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.

## Skillathons: Showing What You Know

**A skillathon is…**

* a fun, active, and challenging learning tool for a group of almost any size, age, or ability.
* a competitive, noncompetitive, learning-by-doing activity. This teaching method helps youths develop both life and project skills. The skillathon works well at a project meeting, club meeting, camp classes, after-school sessions, in the classroom, or at a mall or fair.
* a series of learning stations with realistic situations and tasks to do. Teams attempt to complete tasks before being told or shown. The station facilitator follows with questions to help the teams build on their experiences.

Setting up a skillathon is an excellent activity for youths to practice developing their leadership skills. People and materials need to be organized, decisions made, and signs prepared. To help guide the planning committee, some tasks that should be considered are listed below. Skillathon stations can be set up on almost any curriculum, e.g., Identifying Breeds of Animals, Preparing a First Aid Kit, Finding Your Way, How Long Does It Last?, What Makes an Ecosystem?, Fabric Durability, Identifying Woodworking Tools, or Water On the Move.

Skillathon Preparation

* Decide on the stations needed, considering time and resources available
* Make up a realistic situation and task sign for each station so that teams don’t

require additional directions

* Decide who will be in charge of each station
* Decide on the equipment and supplies needed at each station
* Delegate the responsibility for gathering supplies

Station Facilitator

* Be familiar with the skillathon topic
* Develop several questions to ask participants
* Allow participants to discover for themselves how to accomplish the task,

instead of telling or showing them how

* Help the learning by using the steps of the skillathon model

Skillathon Model

* Form teams of 2 to 5 participants
* Make supplies available
* Provide the teams with realistic situations and tasks
* Step back and allow the teams time to discover their own solutions
* Respond to teams’ questions with questions so answers are their own
* Listen to teams’ presentations
* Accept the teams’ solutions
* Ask questions to help them build on what they presented
* Reinforce their efforts with praise

## Experiential Learning Process – for learners and leaders

**Experience***:* *(Doing)*

Youths do before being told or shown how. Experiential learning focuses on the learner not the group leader. Youths test and discover their own solutions while practicing one or more life skills. The group leader’s challenge is to observe and encourage, instead of showing or telling how.

Depending on the size of the groups and the number of stations, divide the members into teams of two to four. Start each team at a different station. Rotate the groups through all stations. Allow about ten minutes at each station. Then ask each team to select a station and give a short presentation on how they solved that task. Follow with questions about the overall activity.

**Share***:* *(What Happened)*

Youths describe the result of the experience and their reactions. Helpers ask questions such as, “What did you do? What happened? How did it feel?” and encourage everyone to reflect on their individual experiences.

# *What was it like to plan and conduct a skillathon? What was hardest for you to do? Easiest?*

**Process***: (What’s Important?)*

Youths discuss what was most important about what they did. Learners expand on common themes and ideas discussed in the Share stage. They discuss both project subject matter and life skills practiced.

*What did you learn from this activity that you didn’t know before?*

*What difference did you notice about how different teams did or did not work together?*

*Why is it important to take time to plan carefully?*

**Generalize** *(So What?)*

Youths relate the project and life skill practiced to their everyday experiences. Key questions include: “So what? What does this mean to you? What similar experiences have you had?” Again, the discussion should focus on both the subject matter and the life skill.

*How did teaching and learning this way compare to what happens in classrooms?*

*What did you learn about being a leader that will help you in working with groups?*

**Apply***: (Now What?)*

Youths share how they could use the new life and project skills and knowledge gained from the experience. Ideally this stage leads directly to building on the experience by youths doing another activity and intentionally using what they learned. Thus, the cycle begins again.

# *If you were going to conduct another activity, what aspects of planning would you do differently?*

West Virginia University 4-H [4-hyd.ext.wvu.edu/learning/publications/skillathons](http://4-hyd.ext.wvu.edu/learning/publications/skillathons) , 2008.

## Building on Experience – Handling Group Problems

**Lack of Participation**

When members do not participate in group activities, leaders need to determine

why this is happening. This frequently occurs with younger members who may

hesitate to participate in meetings and discussions.

**Possible Causes**

1. Members may not understand goals.

2. Members may feel insecure.

3. More aggressive members may not give others an opportunity to participate.

4. Members may not know how to participate.

5. Members may not be interested in program or activity.

6. Meeting time may not fit members’ other responsibilities.

**Suggested Solutions**

1. Make sure members have a part in setting goals.

2. Make sure members have a part in planning programs and activities.

3. Try to let each person serve in a role that challenges and in which

she/he can succeed.

4. Be sure to teach members about the role or assignment if needed.

5. Provide opportunities for younger, inexperienced members to participate – for

example, serving on a committee – so they gain experience before giving them a big assignment.

6. Promote a friendly, helpful group spirit where no one laughs at or ridicules a

person who “goofs.”

7. Keep lines of communication open.

8. Develop a group goal of “everyone participates.”

9. Change meeting time to suit needs of the group.

**Lack of Interest in Program**

When members lack interest perhaps the programs are uninteresting.

Another indication of lack of interest occurs when there is good attendance only

at social functions. It’s also possible that members joined for the wrong reason.

**Possible Causes**

1. Members do not identify their personal goals with those of the program.

2. Members may have had little part in planning the program.

3. Members may not find a satisfying role in carrying out the program.

**Suggested Solutions**

1. Involve members in setting group goals.

2. Involve members in planning programs they want.

3. Involve members in carrying out the program. They need challenging

responsibilities that they can carry out successfully.

4. Give members recognition for their contributions.

**Lack of Local Support for the Organization Leader**

Many 4-H Clubs have trouble getting and keeping enough adult volunteers to

help the club function to its potential. Sometimes the one organizational

leader finds herself/himself assuming nearly all the responsibility for the club,

though there are plenty of responsibilities that can be shared. Sometimes lack of

parental support is evident.

**Possible Causes**

1. The group may not have let parents and other people know that it is

providing a worthwhile program.

2. The community may not be aware of the needs of the group or

opportunitiesfor involvement.

3. The group may not have explained fully what is expected of potential

leaders.

4. New or potential leaders may lack the training to carry out needed

responsibilities.

5. The group may be asking potential volunteers to do too much.

**Suggested Solutions**

1. Improve group public relations by carrying out programs, projects, and

activities that will be recognized as worthwhile in the community.

2. Discuss the roles of adult leaders and what is expected of them before

contacting prospects.

3. Arrange leader training if leaders need specific training or orientation to

carry out their responsibilities.

4. Encourage members to express their thanks and appreciation to

volunteers frequently.

5. Have programs for parents and others to acquaint them with the

accomplishments of the group. Coordinate with Extension 4-H staff to help

publicize activities.

6. Break up the jobs to be done into reasonable pieces. More people will agree

to help if given a relatively small, well-defined task.

**Declining or Stagnant Membership**

Membership needs attention either when members are dropping out or when

attracting new members is difficult.

**Possible Causes**

1. Some people may not know about the group, what it does, who may belong,

how to join.

2. Present members may be cliquish and fail to welcome prospective or new

members.

3. The program may not be of interest to current or prospective members.

4. Some members may not have a way to get to meetings.

**Suggested Solutions**

1. Strive to improve the group atmosphere—make it warmer, more friendly.

2. Make a list of prospective members and extend friendly, personal invitations.

3. Invite prospects to go to a meeting with you.

4. Make sure that present and prospective members understand the purpose

of the group.

5. Involve members in planning a program attractive to them.

6. Give members responsibilities so they will have a role in the organization

and feel important to the group.

7. Give members recognition for what they do.

8. Make members feel liked and wanted.

9. Publicize the program and activities.

10. Arrange car-pools if transportation is a problem.

**Disorderly Meetings**

Meetings are disrupted when members come late, don’t attend regularly or are

disorderly.

**Possible Causes**

1. Group has fallen into bad habits.

2. Some members do not feel a part of the group.

3. Some members feel insecure and strive for attention.

4. The group has cliques.

5. Members may lack interest in group or program.

6. Members may not know what is expected.

**Suggested Solutions**

1. Discuss problems with members. What standards do they want? What kind

of a group do they want to be?

2. Encourage members to state their expectations.

3. Hold training for members, leaders and officers if increased knowledge or skill

is needed in areas such as conducting meetings and decision-making.

4. Change meeting time if it doesn’t fit the group.

5. Involve group in planning a more interesting program if that seems to be the

issue.

6. Consider opening with the most attractive parts of the program to encourage

promptness. This might mean starting with some recreational activities as

members arrive.

**Poor Group Relationships**

When there is bickering and jealousy among members, or if the group has

cliques, poor group relationships result. This problem also arises when young

people want to run the show and feel that adult leaders are too dominating. Members may not know how to discuss these problems with leaders, and this can add to the problem.

**Possible Causes**

1. Individuals may not understand their own motivation or that of others.

2. Individuals have not learned to distinguish between differences in ideas and

differences between personalities.

3. Individuals may feel insecure and, therefore, are excessively shy, afraid or

aggressive.

**Suggested Solutions**

1. Build self-confidence and feelings of worth by focusing on each member’s

assets and strengths. “I like the way you handled that.” “I appreciate what you

did.”

2. Let the members know their worth. Recognize improvement and effort, not

just accomplishment. Encourage cooperation rather than competition.

“You’re improving.” “It looks as if you worked very hard on that.”

3. Focus on member’s ability to manage her/his life and make decisions. Do

not anticipate failure. “I trust you to become responsible and independent.”

4. Focus on contributions and appreciation. “Your contribution counts.” “We

appreciate what you have done.”

5. Accept members as they are. Don’t make your approval and acceptance

dependent on their behavior.

6. Work to develop mutual understanding and trust between members and

leaders.

**Resources**: Most of the resources needed will be found in the imaginations of your members. Provide enough to make them comfortable. They will be off to a good start.

**Questions**: Strive to ask questions that stimulate thought. After you ask a question, pause long enough for members to think and to answer. Questions taht can be answered “yes” or “no” do not help develop group discussion.

**Presentations**: Encourage members to share their ideas with others. Skits, plays, puppet shows, posters, etc., should be encouraged. Explore many methods for sharing ideas.

**Sources**: University of Florida Cooperative Extension, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. This guide has been adapted from “Handling Group Problems,” LG778, University of Missouri-Columbia, by John A. Rutledge, Jr., Extension 4-H Youth Specialist.

# APPENDIX A

4-H Public Partnership: USDA and Land-grant Institutions

[nifa.usda.gov/extension](http://nifa.usda.gov/extension)

[nifa.usda.gov/program/4-h](http://nifa.usda.gov/program/4-h)

[nifa.usda.gov/cooperative-extension-history](http://nifa.usda.gov/cooperative-extension-history)

4-H Mission and Mandates

[nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/4-H%20Mission%20Mandates.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/4-H%20Mission%20Mandates.pdf)

4-H Guiding Principles

[nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/4-H%20Guiding%20Principles.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/4-H%20Guiding%20Principles.pdf)

4-H Name and Emblem

[nifa.usda.gov/resource/4-h-name-and-emblem](http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/4-h-name-and-emblem)

4-H Charter Fact Sheet

[nifa.usda.gov/resource/charters-key-official-recognition](http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/charters-key-official-recognition)

4-H Club Design Fact Sheets

[nifa.usda.gov/resource/4-h-club-design-factsheets](http://nifa.usda.gov/resource/4-h-club-design-factsheets)

4-H Volunteer Resources – Positive Youth Development

[www.4-h.org/resource-library/4-H-volunteer-resources/positive-youth-development](http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/4-H-volunteer-resources/positive-youth-development)

[www.4-h.org/about/youth-development-research/positive-youth-development-study](http://www.4-h.org/about/youth-development-research/positive-youth-development-study/)

4-H Essential Elements

[nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Essential\_Elements.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Essential_Elements.pdf)

[www.4-h.org/resource-library/professional-development-learning/4-h-youth-development/youth-development/essential-elements/](http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/professional-development-learning/4-h-youth-development/youth-development/essential-elements/)

4-H History

[www.4-h.org/about/4-h-history](http://www.4-h.org/about/4-h-history)

4-H Life Skills – Definitions and life skills wheel

[nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Targeting%20Life%20Skills.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Targeting%20Life%20Skills.pdf)

4-H Recordkeeping

Powerpoint PDF about the importance of record books and tips for parents and leaders on how to help kids keep track - [aces.nmsu.edu/4h/documents/4-h-record-keeping.pdf](http://aces.nmsu.edu/4h/documents/4-h-record-keeping.pdf)

Experiential Learning Model

[florida4h.org/clubs/files/101.10\_Using\_Experiential\_Learning\_Model.pdf](http://florida4h.org/clubs/files/101.10_Using_Experiential_Learning_Model.pdf)

[nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Experiential\_Learning.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Experiential_Learning.pdf)

[nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Inquiry Based Learning Methods.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Inquiry%20Based%20Learning%20Methods.pdf)

Learning Styles and Environments

[nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Inclusive\_Diverse\_Learning\_Experiences.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Inclusive_Diverse_Learning_Experiences.pdf)[nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Understanding%20Learning%20Styles.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Understanding%20Learning%20Styles.pdf)

Maine 4-H Cloverbud policies and guidelines

[umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines/table-of-contents/4-h-cloverbud-policies-c-3](http://umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines/table-of-contents/4-h-cloverbud-policies-c-3/)

Maine 4-H Forms – also see ‘Forms’ in Appendix B

[umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/forms](http://umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/forms/)

Maine 4-H Low-risk Management Practices

[umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines/table-of-contents/low-risk-program-management-practices](http://umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines/table-of-contents/low-risk-program-management-practices/)

Risk management checklist for event planning

[umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines/table-of-contents/policies-for-volunteers/#1.7](http://umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines/table-of-contents/policies-for-volunteers/#1.7)

Risk Management Strategies

[nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Youth%20Protections%20v.2013.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Youth%20Protections%20v.2013.pdf)

# APPENDIX B

**Forms and Handouts**

This section houses hardcopies of frequently used forms and handouts, and those referenced in the Handbook, for the printed version; and

links, including our 4-H forms library, for the online version.

[umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/forms](http://umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/forms/)

4-H Member Enrollment

4-H Program Participation Permission, Agreements and Health

4-H Volunteer Application

4-H Volunteer Enrollment

Assurance of Non-discrimination

Photo Release

Project Records

Volunteer Standards of Behavior

Risk Management Checklist

[umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines/table-of-contents/policies-for-volunteers/#1.7](http://umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/policies-procedure-and-guidelines/table-of-contents/policies-for-volunteers/#1.7)

Eight Essential Elements of 4-H

[nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Essential\_Elements.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Essential_Elements.pdf)

4-H Life Skills – Definitions and life skills wheel

[nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Targeting%20Life%20Skills.pdf](http://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Targeting%20Life%20Skills.pdf)

[umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/forms/#l](http://umaine.edu/4h/volunteers/resources/forms/#l)

**4-H Club Meeting Format**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Call to order - President
2. Opening (Pledge of Allegiance, 4-H Pledge, songs, etc.)

What: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Led by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Roll call topic: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Reading of Minutes
3. Treasurer’s Report
4. Reports of Committees: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Unfinished business
2. New business
3. Adjournment of business meeting
4. Program: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

By: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Demonstrations: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Talks: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Other (films, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Recreation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Led by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Other special features or assignments:

**Parents & Members: Please Read**

**4-H CLUB POLICIES**

**Privileges of Membership** – All members in good standing who have been enrolled for at least four months are eligible to participate in all 4-H activities that are suitable for their age and capabilities. Clubs may participate in county and state events if they have been actively meeting the “4-H Club Standards” during that 4-H year. For example, we require that clubs must have held at least six meetings since October 1 in order to participate in 4-H Horse Camp in June. (The “4-H Year” is October 1 – September 30.)

**Attendance at 4-H Activities** – 4-H requires the commitment of both members and parents to get members to meetings and other 4-H events. One of the life skills 4-H teaches is responsibility, so we expect that leaders, members and parents will all take **mutual responsibility** for knowing club policies and the dates and times of meetings. Our intent is to encourage member commitment and participation in club activities while recognizing that members have a life outside of 4-H.

Our “Club Standards” state that, “To remain in good standing, members must **attend at least 75% of club meetings**.” Some clubs meet monthly, others meet weekly; some meet in the summer, and some do not; some consider county events as “club meetings.” So in one club, a member may miss six “meetings” and still be in good standing, while in another club, a member may lose “good standing” status after missing only two or three events. It is up to the leaders, members and parents to communicate with one another so that all members and parents know the club’s schedule and attendance policy.

It is **county** policy that members be excused from club activities in order to participate in events related to their 4-H club or project work, **if they have prior permission** from their club’s principle leader. For example, a member could be excused while attending a State or National 4-H event; a dairy member could miss a meeting to take part in a dairy related activity, such as a dairy show at a fair, a feed seminar on ITV, or a veterinary science workshop in the next county; or a member who is on her school swim team and has to practice every day after school, November to April, would be excused for missing after school meetings if she were enrolled in a “swimming,” or “sports,” or “fitness,” or related project. To be excused, members must be **participants**, not just observers, in the alternate event and must have prior permission from their principle leader.

**Eligibility** – All members in good standing may participate in all 4-H activities that are suitable for their age and capabilities. Members who become ineligible to participate in 4-H events in one club remain ineligible for the remainder of that 4-H year. If they change clubs or become “Independent” members, their eligibility record stays with them until the new 4-H year begins the following October 1.

Principle club leaders are expected to make fair decisions about these policies and to keep members, parents and the Extension office informed **in writing** if a member’s “good standing” status is threatened. Members are expected to know their schedule of club meetings to actively participate in the club.

**SURE, I'D LIKE TO HELP –**

**THE INTERESTED 4-H PARENT, GUARDIAN or FRIEND**

Parent interest and participation helps the leader's job be more rewarding and the workload much easier. Leaders can kindle the 4-H fire, but family encouragement makes it burn brightly.

Please check activities you are willing to help with or willing to do:

\_\_\_Open home for an occasional meeting

\_\_\_Provide light refreshments (Your child serves them; a committee helps with clean up.)

\_\_\_Share a special interest or hobby with 4-H (please list)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_Assist with 4-H projects or activities (please list) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_Help with transportation to 4-H meetings or events

\_\_\_Assist with fundraisers

\_\_\_Record Keeping

\_\_\_Judging

\_\_\_Enrollment/registration

\_\_\_Recruiting members

\_\_\_Coordinating parent group

\_\_\_Recognition of members

\_\_\_Assist with Community Service

\_\_\_Program planning

\_\_\_Demonstrations

\_\_\_Field trips/tours

\_\_\_Camping & outdoor activities

\_\_\_Fairs

\_\_\_Project leader for

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Project

\_\_\_Other (please list) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Town\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ email\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Member’s name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The child's success and growth as a 4-H'er largely depends on family encouragement and involvement. Please join us!

Thank you!

**THIS SECTION RESERVED FOR COUNTY-SPECIFIC INFORMATION**

**Including Leaders’ Association information, county events, etc.**

**Please connect with county 4-H staff for these resources.**

**NOTES**