

THE BASICS OF 4-H

Advisor's Guide

Definition and Purpose of 4-H

Four-H is a voluntary, educational program designed to meet the needs and interests of boys and girls who are age 9, or in the third grade as of January 1, and who have not passed their 19th birthday as of December 31 of the calendar year (January 1 to December 31). Many counties also elect to offer 4-H programs for youth ages 5 to 8. Participation and membership are open to all such youth without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender, religion, disability or Vietnam-era veteran status.

The purpose of 4-H is to provide learning experiences and opportunities for boys and girls which will help them grow and develop to the fullest of their potential. Projects, programs, and activities are tools used to help members in this regard. They should be adapted, in so far as possible, to fit the needs and interests of each person, or group of persons.

Overall guidelines for developing and conducting 4-H youth development programs are:

- ◆ Start with people where they are;
- ◆ Learn by actual participation - "Learn by Doing";
- ◆ Base projects on real life, adult-like experiences;
- ◆ Make effective use of volunteer leadership to expand the total effort; and
- ◆ Assure that projects are related to agriculture, home economics, and natural resources.

4-H Educational Goals

Although 4-H is flexible and should be adapted to the needs and interests of individuals and the local situation, it is also a national program. All 50 states and many countries throughout the world are actively involved in 4-H. National goals and objectives, which are guides for the total 4-h program are to help young people become self-directing, productive and contributing members of society. Most specifically, its objectives are to help young people to:

- ◆ Acquire skills and knowledge in subject matter areas (e.g., agriculture, home economics, science and technology);
- ◆ Develop a positive self-image;
- ◆ Learn to respect and get along with people;
- ◆ Develop leadership skills and fulfill leadership roles;
- ◆ Develop and practice responsible environmental skills;
- ◆ Learn and use accepted practices for mental, physical, emotional, and social health;
- ◆ Explore and evaluate career and job opportunities;
- ◆ Use leisure time productively;
- ◆ Participate in community affairs; and
- ◆ Develop volunteers as individuals and leaders for 4-H and the community.

The Ohio 4-H Values, Mission and Vision

Ohio 4-H initiated a strategic planning process in the autumn of 1991. Throughout 1992, input was gathered from Ohio 4-H members, volunteers, donors and sponsors, and professionals including district 4-H advisory committees and the State Extension 4-H Advisory Committee. The following Ohio 4-H values, mission and vision were finalized in 1993.

Ohio 4-H Values

We believe that:

1. Youth development is the focus of everything we do and 4-H encourages individuals to reach their potential through:
 - ◆ active involvement in self-determination of their learning activities.
 - ◆ quality experiences that stimulate the life-long learning of values and skills,
 - ◆ relationships that empower people to voluntarily help themselves and each other,
 - ◆ hands-on and experiential learning that allows learning by doing,
 - ◆ explore opportunities,
 - ◆ growth through successes and failures and
 - ◆ providing supportive and nurturing environments.
2. Partnerships are essential to successful youth development for:
 - ◆ creating caring environments,
 - ◆ developing resources,
 - ◆ delivering innovative and educational programs,
 - ◆ developing mentorships and
 - ◆ accessing and applying research-based knowledge,
3. Volunteerism is fundamental to:
 - ◆ develop and implement programs,
 - ◆ develop adult and youth leaderships,
 - ◆ help youth to value volunteerism and
 - ◆ achieve the mission and vision.
4. Diversity strengthens the ability of 4-H to:
 - ◆ develop positive values among program participants in today's global society,
 - ◆ develop and deliver quality educational experiences,
 - ◆ learn and share with one another and
 - ◆ provide opportunities for program involvement regardless of race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender, age, disability or Vietnam-era veteran status.

Ohio 4-H Mission

Four-H Youth Development Education creates positive environments for culturally diverse youth and adults to reach their fullest potential as capable, competent, caring and contributing citizens.

In support of this mission we will:

- ◆ provide formal and nonformal community-focused experiential learning,
- ◆ develop skills and values that benefit youth throughout life,
- ◆ enhance career exploration,
- ◆ foster leadership and volunteerism in youth and adults,
- ◆ build internal and external partnerships for programming and funding,
- ◆ strengthen families and communities and
- ◆ use research-based knowledge and the land grant university system.

Ohio 4-H Vision

Ohio 4-H is the state's premier leader in developing youth to become positive, productive citizens and catalysts for effective change to improve our diverse society.

Distinctive Features of 4-H

Four-H is a real life experience. Members learn how to do jobs and make decisions similar to those that are important in adult life.

Four-H can be a family affair. Others in the family can participate if they want to. Sometimes parents, brothers, sisters, and friends can be reached and taught through 4-H members.

Four-H is adaptable. Programs can and should be “tailor made” to fit each individual, each home, and each community.

Four-H is decision making. Four-H'ers learn to stand on their own feet, to think for themselves, and to explore and consider alternatives.

Four-H provides for ownership. Making, buying, and selling are all a part of 4-H. Each project “belongs” to the member.

Four-H is based on science and fact. The resources of The Ohio State University, Ohio's Land Grant College, are used for the development and carrying out of projects and programs.

Four-H is part of a community. A 4-H group becomes involved with improving economic and social conditions where the members live. Members learn citizenship by taking community responsibility.

Four-H is “learning by doing.” It's an action program. Four-H'ers watch others, they study, they experiment, and they “do and practice” themselves.

What Makes 4-H Possible?

Four-H is a combination of many things. The Ohio 4-H Team, finances, and community support, to name a few.

Four-H is tax supported. The combined efforts of the county, state, and federal governments have permitted 4-H to develop into a practical, educational program based on everyday living.

Four-H is a part of Ohio State University Extension of The Ohio State University, the Federal Extension Service, and the United States Department of Agriculture. Many Extension personnel are faculty members of the University. Volunteers for 4-H are sometimes referred to as non-paid field staff of the University.

The 4-H Emblem, Motto, and Pledge

The emblem is a four leaf clover with an H in each leaf. The letters in the emblem stand for *Head, Heart, Hands, and Health*. They form the foundation for all 4-H programs. Here is a brief explanation of what each of the four H's mean:

Head - learning to think and make decisions, understanding the "why," gaining new and valuable knowledge.

Heart - being concerned with the welfare of others, accepting responsibilities of citizenship, determining values and attitudes by which to live, learning how to work with others.

Hands - learning new skills, improving skills already know, developing pride in ability to work, and respect for it.

Health - practicing healthful living, protecting your own well being and that of others, making constructive use of leisure time.

An Ohio 4-H History

The following history of Ohio 4-H was written in November, 1980, by Duane Lau, Ph.D., former State 4-H Specialist, and updated in December, 1993, by Jeff King.

JANUARY 15, 1902

A. B. Graham held the first meeting in the basement of the County Building in Springfield in Clark County, Ohio of the Boys and Girls Agricultural Club. By the end of the year, 85 youth were meeting once a month on Saturday afternoons.

Youth grew varieties of corn furnished by the Agricultural Experiment Station, learned to test soil acidity with litmus paper, and how to splice rope and tie knots. Some members grew vegetables and many of the girls grew flowers.

Other members of the first Boys and Girls Agricultural Club collected insects and identified trees or kinds of wood.

1903

Members of the first Boys and Girls Agricultural Club exhibited their products at the Community Farmer's Institute of Springfield, Ohio held in January in the courthouse. Exhibits consisted of corn, soil testing, herbariums, and class books.

A shiny wood saw was presented for the best corn exhibit and each student received a carpenter's pencil.

On June 4, A.B. Graham and a group of 100 traveled by inter-urban coach from Springfield, Ohio to Columbus to tour the College of Agriculture. The group was composed of members of the Boys and Girls Agriculture Club, parents, and school board members.

The 4-H Motto

"To Make the Best Better"

The motto is "To Make the Best Better." This refers, again, to each individual. It means that each person will do the "best" that he or she possibly can in whatever is attempted, then will try to improve the next time so his or her original "Best" becomes even "Better". 4-H'ers stretch their abilities and capacities to greater achievement, not to the breaking point, but within their own potential.

The 4-H Pledge

I pledge My Head to clearer thinking, My Heart to greater loyalty, My Hands to larger service, and My Health to better living, for my club, my community, my country, and my world.

When saying the pledge, members stand straight and tall. They raise their right hand to the forehead when they say, "My Head to Clearer Thinking." They lower their right hand to their heart as they say, "My Heart to Greater Loyalty," As they say "My Hands to Larger Service," they put their hands upward. At the line "My Health to Better Living" they stand at attention, arms and hands at their sides, and remain in that position until the close of the pledge.

1905

In January of 1905, Mr. Graham spoke to the Agricultural Student Union at Ohio State. On July 1 of this year, Mr. Graham was named Superintendent of Extension at the Ohio State University College of Agriculture.

During the same year there were 20 Boys and Girls Agricultural clubs with 1,036 members. The Locust Corners Club made the first exhibit at the County Fair in Morrow County.

The following year the membership increased to 3,000 and a Domestic Arts Club was organized in Washington Township at Dublin.

1907 to 1916

During this period, pupils of Sugar Creek Township School exhibited at the Green County Fair beginning in 1908.

In 1914, two years after a circular had been issued by Washington describing the 4-H emblem of Head-Heart-Hand-and Health, the Smith-Lever Cooperative Extension Service Act became effective.

The year of 1916 was one of the many events in the Ohio 4-H program. From around the state, 126 boys journeyed to the Ohio State campus to receive recognition as livestock judges. This event called "Club Week" became what is known today as "Ohio 4-H Congress."

This was also the year in which the Department of Boys and Girls Club Work was created in the Agriculture College and in March, W. H. Palmer became the first Ohio State Leader of 4-H Club Work. In September, Treva Kaufman, a home economist, was named as a member of State 4-H Staff.

It was in 1916 that the first 4-H Club Agents were hired in four counties. Enrollment in Club Work had grown to 3,650 youth in 42 counties. Work was also started to organize local clubs under the leadership of volunteer adults.

State 4-H Leader W. H. Palmer in cooperation with Edgar Dale, W.A. Charter and Ralph Tyler developed the project concept and project book plan.

In the Spring of 1916, R. W. Galehouse, the first County Agent in Mahoning County organized the first two 4-H Clubs under Extension using the green and white emblem. He was assisted by George Farrell and O. H. Bensons of the U.S.D.A.

1917 to 1925

In 1917, Governor Cox transferred the contests of the Agricultural Commission to the 4-H club office of the Extension Service.

In 1918, the first 4-H Clubs participated at the Ohio State Fair, exhibiting *Poultry, Pigs, Canning, and Demonstrations*.

In 1919, Summit County 4-H Agent R. Bruce Tom conducted the first 4-H Camp; Club Charters were issued to 126 local clubs.

The year of 1923 was significant on campus. It was the beginning of the University 4-H Club.

W. H. Palmer became the first Ohio State Leader of 4-H Club Work.

1926 to 1930

A group of Extension Agent leased 71 acres from John Coleville in Eden Township in Licking County for \$100.00 per year with an option to buy for \$1,700.00. This site, which became Camp Ohio, was purchased in 1928.

It was during 1929 that the term Local 4-H Leader was changed to “4-H Advisor” and the State Junior Fair was established.

During 1925 to 1930, 30 different projects were available to 4-H’ers.

1931 to 1935

Seven counties organized Older Youth Groups for those 16-24 years of age the same year. It was also during this year and the four that followed in which most counties organized County 4-H Councils. This five-year period also brought about the introduction and use of “work-type” 4-H member books.

On July 12, 1933 the new lodge was dedicated at Camp Ohio, the State 4-H Camp. It was also the year in which “home scoring” of 4-H projects was started.

In 1934, 52,565 4-H’ers were enrolled in nearly a hundred different projects.

*The new lodge was dedicated at
Camp Ohio.*