Clothing and behaviors, both verbal and non-verbal, can say a lot about a person. When participating in a 4-H event, or representing 4-H at a local, regional, state or national opportunity, 4-H’ers are expected to abide by both their code of conduct as well as dress code. While these codes can leave a lot to interpretation, it is important to recognize that individual choices can at times, bring unwanted attention either to an individual or to the group as a whole. The 4-H Program’s top priority is to the safety of all of its members. Volunteers, chaperones and parents should ensure that 4-H members understand appropriate clothing choices and acceptable behaviors relevant to the trip or experience; for example:

- When going on an interview, ripped jeans or a dirty t-shirt are not appropriate – cleaner clothing would be a better choice to help show respect for that position or person with whom you are to meet. There are times however, when ragged clothes may be appropriate, perhaps with community service activities or other informal environments.
- Loud screaming, suggestive behavior, revealing clothing, laughing or vulgar language can, in any environment, draw attention from bystanders and can lure strangers into conversation.

Volunteers, chaperones and staff should be knowledgeable about the environment in which they take 4-H members, and prepare them accordingly with expectations around appropriate behavior and dress. 4-H’ers should also understand why they are being asked to dress and conduct themselves in a certain manner, to help reinforce the expectation and further develop life and job skills around understanding self as well as communicating and relating to others. Further resources can be provided through your 4-H Educator if you need help or would like to explore this topic more in-depth.

In 4-H, in everything we do, we are role models for youth of all ages. How 4-H’ers present themselves to the public is very important. Therefore, we have high expectations that both 4-H members and leaders will abide by the dress code and program content/presentation criteria outlined below. It is an honor and a privilege to represent Vermont 4-H at events. It is the responsibility of adult 4-H leaders to advise 4-H participants on dress and program content expectations, and to guide them in making appropriate choices.

**Dress Code**

1. All clothing should be neat and clean.

2. Printing on shirts or jackets should promote a positive 4-H image.

3. If wearing shorts/skirts, they must reach at least mid thigh.

4. The entire torso must be covered.

5. Undergarments should not be visible.
*Fashion Revue participants: If the garment being modeled was made by the model, it does not have to strictly comply with items 3 & 4. However, any garments being modeled which were not made by the model must comply with items 3 & 4.

Program Content/presentation – Lyrics, costumes, signs, dialogue and other program content should support the positive ideals of the 4-H program. 4-H prides itself on helping young people develop skills for success in life; for example…..conflict resolution, solving problems by peaceful methods, modeling respect for all groups of people, and appreciating differences. With this in mind, all activities at University of Vermont 4-H events…….

1. Will discourage the use/display of any items or activities which promote violence. Firearms, archery supplies and other related equipment are permissible when used in an educational context by trained Shooting Sports enthusiasts in a forum which promotes safety.

2. will not promote violence;

3. will not include sexually explicit material or foul language;

4. and will not be degrading to any population.

Please know that poor choices that violate one or all of the criteria may result in losing a space at State Day or the opportunity to represent Vermont at the Big E and other events.

(Originally prepared by the Vermont 4-H State Day Subcommittee of the Vermont 4-H Cabinet; edited and approved by the Vermont 4-H Team of faculty and staff. Finalized 9/13/99. Revised 11/05, revised 3/11, revised 6/11.)