

Vermont

4-H

Leader Training Series



Welcome to the 4-H Family!

A 4-H Vision

4-H is . . . People

4-H is . . . Experience Centered Learning

New Pictures for the Vision

The name 4-H conjures up different pictures for different people. One vision of 4-H may be “cows and cooking,” a fashion revue, county and state fairs, boys and girls learning about conservation or shooting sports, square dancing and clogging, horse shows. Another vision may be of a youth, defying gravity, airborne over a skateboard barely attached to her feet! Your vision depends on your experiences with 4-H Youth Development.

Whatever your vision, 4-H is about people. 4-H is about helping youth and adults grow, learn, and develop into the most competent people they can be. It is about Extension educators teaching the latest technology and information to people in the communities where they live and work so they can put the knowledge to work for themselves, their families, communities, and society as a whole.

4-H is education for life! The 4-H Program is experience centered, not just information giving. This learn-by-doing approach enables young people to learn what is useful to them. It enables them to adapt what they learn to everyday life through action and reflection. 4-H gives youth the opportunity to experience a sense of accomplishment and success, key ingredients to gaining a sense of self-esteem.

That is why the 4-H program, in Vermont and many other states, is adding new pictures to the vision of 4-H. Now you can envision:

- a 4-H activity or a 4-H club in an after-school setting;
- a group of children, in a short-term program, learning about the right foods to eat;
- a classroom teacher using 4-H curriculum to enrich his/her curriculum.

*Adapted from: Betty Ann Smith,
County 4-H Agent, Middlesex
County, New Jersey, 1994*

Create a New Vision

And we will leave a mental page blank so together we can create new visions to reach youth!

4-H is . . . Volunteers

4-H volunteers are taught how to provide a safe environment for youth so they can experiment, make mistakes, correct mistakes, learn and grow. In 4-H mistakes are not viewed as failure, but as a part of a normal learning process. If a person is performing without mistakes, then it is time to set a new challenge and move on to learn a new skill.

By the time you are reading this welcome to 4-H, you might have already decided to become a 4-H volunteer. We celebrate with each and every one of you who have chosen the 4-H experience. Of more value than the skills you teach to youth or adults will be the message you convey that they are, first and foremost, persons of value who have much to contribute.

Support for Volunteers

You will receive training and support for whichever volunteer role you choose. You will begin one step at a time, and before you know it you will be running with the 4-H program!

Thank you for being you! Thank you for volunteering to share your uniqueness with Vermont 4-H youth and other volunteers. 4-H is about people like you working with other adults and youth. 4-H IS EDUCATION FOR LIFE!

WELCOME TO THE 4-H FAMILY!



EXTENSION

2004

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What is 4-H?

4-H is the youth development program of University of Vermont Extension. As a 4-H volunteer, you represent UVM. The Regional Specialist for 4-H/Youth Development is a UVM faculty member and 4-H educators and the secretary are staff members.

The 4-H Mission

The mission of the UVM Extension 4-H/Youth Development Program is to be a state leader in developing youth to become productive citizens and catalysts for positive change to meet the needs of a diverse and changing society.

The UVM Extension 4-H/Youth Development program creates supportive environments for culturally diverse youth and adults to reach their fullest potential. In support of this mission the program:

- provides formal and non-formal community focused experiential learning,
- develops skills that benefit youth throughout life,
- fosters leadership and volunteerism in youth and adults,
- builds internal and external partnerships for programming and futuring,
- strengthens families and communities, and uses research-based knowledge and the land grant university system.

Life Skills

This mission is accomplished by using the knowledge and resources of UVM along with the involvement of caring adult volunteers.

4-H members have the opportunity to learn life skills through all 4-H activities. Life skills are those abilities youth need to develop into responsible adults. They include:

- enhancing learning skills
- strengthening and using decision-making skills
- developing a positive self-concept
- communicating with and relating to other people
- responding to the needs of others and of the community

*Adapted from: Ginny P. Diem,
County 4-H Agent, Somerset
County, New Jersey, 1994*

4-H Emblem

The emblem is a four-leaf clover with a capital H in each leaf, standing for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health. The emblem was patented in 1924.



4-H Pledge

4-H members recite this pledge at each meeting or event:

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.

4-H Motto

The 4-H motto is: To Make the Best Better.

Volunteers

4-H has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for youth. As a potential volunteer, you will complete the Vermont 4-H Volunteer Application. The confidential procedure includes an application, three references, driver information, and an interview.

There are several ways in which you can serve as an adult volunteer (minimum age: 19 years).

You can be a:

- Club leader
- Resource person
- Judge
- Member of a foundation or advisory group
- Key leader for a project area or special event

For more information about volunteer positions, see *Selecting The 4-H Volunteer Role Right for You*.

Policy of Inclusion

4-H Youth Development programs are offered to all youth ages 5-19, without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. All possible effort will be made to include rather than exclude youth in events conducted by the 4-H Youth Development program.

Club Membership

Children ages 5-7 participate in 4-H Cloverbud clubs, an exploratory program designed to help young people explore various project activities in a noncompetitive environment.

Youth ages 8-19 may belong to a standard 4-H club. Clubs may be organized by project areas or within the community in which they live.

Clubs & Groups

The primary delivery methods for 4-H in Vermont are through organized 4-H clubs and the 4-H camping program. Other methods include:

- 4-H school enrichment programs
- 4-H special interest/short term programs/day camps
- 4-H school age child care education programs
- 4-H individual study/mentoring/family learning programs
- 4-H instructional TV/video programs

For more information on any of these, see *There's More to 4-H Than Clubs: Ways 4-H Reaches Youth*.

Fees

There are no regional, state, or national dues or membership fees. However, club members be asked to pay fees to cover or help defray expenses. They may also vote to collect dues to cover accident insurance or other minor costs. See *Fund Raising and 4-H Club Treasuries*.

Uniforms

Uniforms are not required for membership in 4-H, or for participation in 4-H activities. Fairs and shows may require livestock exhibitors to wear special clothing. Check with your regional 4-H staff.

Club Policies

All clubs should adopt the Suggested 4-H Club Constitution or adopt a constitution to fit their needs and to help the club run more smoothly. See *Devising a 4-H Club Constitution*.

Liability of Volunteers

Liability coverage for volunteers is provided under the University General Liability policy. In the event an injury to another occurs or property is damaged as a result of a volunteer's neglect, the University's liability coverage would respond. In the event a volunteer is injured while acting as a volunteer for the University of Vermont, the medical expenses incurred as a result of the injuries are paid under the University's Worker's Compensation policy. Disability payment for work time lost would not be covered since volunteers do not receive wages and are, therefore, not considered employees. Of course, only those volunteers who are registered in

Educational Materials

the Extension Office are covered. Therefore, it is important that 4-H Organizational Leaders keep the Extension Office up to date on volunteer enrollment records.

There is a state-approved curriculum list available from the regional office. Contact the regional 4-H staff to discuss age-appropriate curriculum. There may be a fee for curriculum.

How Does 4-H Fit in With the University?

In 1914, Congress passed the Smith-Lever Act that created the Cooperative Extension Service. The purpose of this act was to enable the land-grant university to extend research and practical education to people where they live. Vermont's land-grant institution is the University of Vermont. Funding for UVM Extension is provided by federal and state governments. Special programs may receive private funding from the state and county 4-H foundations or from other sources.

The Vermont 4-H Youth Development Program encourages the teamwork of faculty, staff, and volunteers as we offer youth and adults high-quality personal growth opportunities. Faculty and staff concentrate on involving volunteers as stakeholders in 4-H at all levels and educating the public about 4-H and Extension. Volunteers, as full partners in 4-H, contribute their unique talents, skills, and knowledge of our communities to provide personalized leadership with youth and adults.



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Life Skills in the 4-H Program

A primary goal of the 4-H Youth Development program of UVM Extension is to help youth learn life skills.

These skills are abilities, which once developed, can be used in many ways throughout a lifetime. A life skill can be defined as “an ability that is necessary and useful throughout life.” These skills include “thinking,” “doing,” and “feeling” abilities used in many situations. The life skills learned through our 4-H program are those which contribute positively to productive, healthy, and competent lives.



Life Skills

Learning together is the key to success. Planning programs *with* youth is sharing the leadership role and helping them develop the life skills they will need throughout their adult years.

In 4-H, the life skills that members learn are:

Enhancing Learning Skills—Developing an interest in learning and an inquiring mind. This is accomplished through hands-on learning, and includes capitalizing on curiosity and use of competitive and cooperative learning methods. 4-H’ers increase their abilities to identify needs and sources of knowledge.

Examples of activities which enhance learning skills are working on 4-H projects, preparing for a public presentation or demonstration, participating in a quiz bowl or animal clinic.

Adapted from: Rosalind Johnson Friedman, Extension Specialist in Leadership Development, New Jersey, 1990, revised 1994

Strengthening and Using Decision-Making Skills—Learning to make decisions, individually and collectively. This involves assessing needs and interests, identifying resources, setting goals and priorities and accepting the risk of taking action. 4-H’ers use their knowledge, skills and values in practicing this life skill.

Examples of activities which strengthen and use decision-making skills include planning a fund-raiser or other special club event, deciding what 4-H project to undertake for the year, deciding which animal to exhibit at the fair.

Developing a Positive Self-Concept—Self-concept is a belief about oneself which helps a person to successfully meet challenges and cope with issues of life. This includes recognizing your and others’ values; appreciating cultural heritage of self and others; defining your role within family, peer group and society; and evaluating your strengths and weaknesses. In addition, developing self-concept involves building self-esteem and self-confidence, as well as learning to accept success and failure, criticism and praise.

Examples of activities which help 4-H’ers to develop a positive self-concept include completion of a project, doing something successfully for the first time (i.e., public presentations), participating in project evaluation, serving in leadership roles.

Communicating With and Relating to Other People—Developing communication skills that enhance the ability to understand and respect another’s point of view. 4-H’ers also develop the ability to be objective, deal constructively with conflict and recognize and respect others’ worth.

Activities that teach youth to communicate with and relate to other people include being in a club, public presentations, community service activities, participating in region- or state-wide events, receiving newsletters, record-keeping, serving as club officers or in other leadership roles, participating in cooperative and competitive events.

Responding to the Needs of Others and the Community—Becoming aware of the concerns of the people who live there and taking action to meet the needs.

Activities which teach 4-H’ers to respond to the needs of others and the community include community service projects,

Teaching Life Skills

attending Citizenship Washington Focus, participating as youth members of advisory groups, environmental education projects, global education programs, inter-state/international exchanges.

Paid staff and volunteers of the 4-H Youth Development Program teach these skills through group and individual learning opportunities. These experiences may be 4-H projects, events, camps, club/group activities, or organized classes. While the learning experiences are “hands-on,” and deal with topics of current interest and relevance to the young person, they also develop basic, transferable skills useful in other settings. The challenge to you as a leader is to design, and encourage youth to participate in, experiences that build a variety of skills. Your job as a leader is to help young people reflect on how the skills learned apply in other times, places, and situations.

Planning 4-H Experiences

When planning 4-H learning experiences, ask yourself these questions:

- a. What are the life skills I want youth to learn?
- b. How can I teach these life skills through experiences?
- c. How can I reinforce use of these life skills in future situations?
- d. How can this life skill be used to strengthen family relationships?
- e. How can I involve youth as resources for subsequent teaching and/or reinforcement of these skills?
- f. How can I reinforce transferral of these skills?

The 4-H Youth Development Program is designed to help both youth and adults develop skills and cope successfully in an increasingly complex world.

4-H is Lifelong Learning . . . Active . . . “Hands-on” . . . and Fun!

Reference:

New Jersey 4-H Into the 21st Century - Prepared by Dr. Charles L. Lang in cooperation with the Long-Range Planning Task Force of the New Jersey Department of 4-H Youth Development and distributed to 4-H faculty. October 11, 1988



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There's More to 4-H than Clubs: Ways 4-H Reaches Youth

When most people think of 4-H, they think of 4-H clubs. Although 4-H clubs are the most commonly known, there are six other ways 4-H reaches youth. Each “delivery mode” serves a different purpose but all are equally important.

In Vermont, educational programs represented by the following delivery modes are offered to youth, ages 5-19. Membership in 4-H clubs is open to youth, ages 8-19.

1. Organized 4-H clubs.

Members of an organized group of youth, led by an adult, with a planned program that is carried on throughout all or most of the year. 4-H clubs may meet in any location and typically have elected officers and a set of rules approved by the membership to govern the club. Standard 4-H clubs involve youth ages 8-19 and focus on in-depth learning during the completion of one or more projects. 4-H Cloverbud clubs provide youth, ages 5-7, with an introduction to 4-H in a non-competitive environment. 4-H clubs usually meet in homes or community buildings. Refer to the Vermont 4-H Club Guidelines (see Appendix), for details of what an ideal 4-H club is expected to do.

2. 4-H overnight camping programs.

Youth taking part in an Extension- and volunteer-planned educational experience of group living in the out-of-doors which includes being away from home at least one night. This experience is not restricted to members of organized 4-H clubs. Summer 4-H camps fit this description.

3. 4-H special interest/short-term programs/day camps.

Groups of youth meeting for a specific learning experience for one or more sessions, which involves direct teaching by Extension staff or trained volunteers, including teachers. Such a program is not part of school curriculum and cannot be restricted to members of 4-H clubs. This delivery mode does not usually continue for as long as a 4-H club. Examples might be a five-

*Adapted from: Keith G. Diem, Ph.D.,
County 4-H Agent, Somerset
County, New Jersey 1994*

week babysitting course or a three-day state 4-H teen conference if they are open to the public.

4. 4-H individual study/mentoring/family learning programs.

Planned learning which occurs independent of a formal group setting such as a club, as an individual, paired, or family learning effort. Self-directed, usually with limited adult involvement except for parents (or mentor). Examples include self-study, home study courses, mentoring or shadowing with an “expert,” and whole families learning together.

5. 4-H school enrichment programs.

Groups of youth receiving a sequence of learning experiences in cooperation with school officials during school hours, to support the school curriculum. Involves direct teaching by Extension staff or trained volunteers, including teachers. An example might be a volunteer visiting a school to present a special program on science to youth during classroom hours and promoting 4-H while doing so.

Reference:

Cooperative Extension Service 1994 Annual 4-H Youth Enrollment Report



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The Vermont 4-H Cloverbud Program: 4-H for Younger Members

What is the 4-H Cloverbud Program?

4-H can be a valuable experience for people of many ages. In Vermont, the earliest 4-H club experience is belonging to a Cloverbud club.

The Vermont 4-H Cloverbud Program is a club program for children ages 5-7. The purpose of the program is to provide a fun and educational experience which helps children to:

- learn to get along with others
- explore many interests
- learn subject matter skills
- build self-confidence through healthy experiences
- become prepared to graduate into the standard club program
- have fun!

4-H Cloverbud Age

A child can belong to a Cloverbud club if he or she is age 5-7 as of January 1. At the age of 8 as of January 1, a child can join a standard 4-H club.

The Cloverbud Club

4-H Cloverbud clubs are similar to standard clubs in that they meet regularly and are led by adult volunteer club leaders. Most Cloverbud clubs have approximately five to eight members per leader and meet about twice each month. Some clubs elect or select officers and change them several times a year so that each member has the chance to serve in more than one office.

4-H Cloverbud clubs are different from standard clubs in that Cloverbud members do not select one or two specific projects to work on during the year. Instead, they participate in a variety of short-term activities in many different subject areas.

*Adapted from: Rita L. Natale,
Regional 4-H Agent, South,
New Jersey, 1994*

4-H Cloverbud is Non-Competitive

4-H Cloverbud leaders are very important people. They serve as role models to these youngest 4-H members. They are also responsible for making sure that the child's first 4-H experience is a positive one.

4-H Cloverbud is a non-competitive program. There is no rating or scoring of individual projects or activities for members. They may receive a participation ribbon.

This policy is based on research which shows that children of this age need to progress and develop at their own speeds, and that they find it especially hard to lose. To help these youth develop self-confidence, they need to have less pressure to "win." Since success is very important at this age, the success of just having completed an activity helps to increase self-esteem. It's the process and the fun of participating, not the product, which is important to these children.

Recognition

Although projects of Cloverbud members are not rated, these younger 4-H'ers are still recognized for their work. This is usually done through participation ribbons at the fair or other events, end-of-year certificates or pins, and other forms of creative recognition not based on a rating or scoring system.

4-H Cloverbud is Fun!

4-H Cloverbud sets the stage for a child's participation in the 4-H program. It is an opportunity for younger children to begin to have hands-on experiences as 4-H members. It is also a chance for adults to serve as role models at this important time in a child's life. Most importantly, 4-H Cloverbud is educational and fun for all involved!



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