Vermont **4-H** Leader Training Series

How to Start a 4-H Club

Two Ways in Which 4-H Clubs Operate

- ***Community-based***—An adult volunteer leader starts a 4-H club in his or her neighborhood with at least 4 to 5 local children from at least 2-3 unrelated families. The club selects one or more projects. The group usually meets about once a month or more often at the leader's home, county 4-H office or center, or other convenient location(s).

- ***Other***—The 4-H Youth Development Program extends itself to all residents of the county. The 4-H office will help any individual, agency, or organization with resource material or consultation regarding youth development, within the limits of time, staff, and mission of the 4-H program.

Getting Started

1. Read information about the 4-H Youth Development Program supplied to you. If you have nothing other than this sheet, obtain what's available from the 4-H office.

2. Begin by recruiting several (four to five or more is usually a good minimum number) interested, eligible children to join the club. Age requirements for 4-H members are:

   • 4-H Cloverbud member—ages 5-7 as of Jan. 1st of current year.
   • 4-H Club member—ages 8-18 as of Jan. 1st of current year.

Membership in 4-H is offered without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status.

3. Organize your club at the first meeting. If convenient, you may want a separate session for parents. If not, certainly invite parents to the first organizational club meeting. Tell the parents that their help is needed. (4-H leaders are not merely baby-sitters!) Encourage parents to attend meet-

Adapted from: Keith G. Diem, Ph. D., County 4-H Agent, Somerset County, New Jersey, 1990, revised 1994

ings and to become involved whenever and however possible.

It's usually best to make specific requests for help from individuals, based on their interests and abilities. However, under no circumstances should adult involvement in the club overshadow member participation!

4. What to do at the first meeting (or shortly thereafter):

   A. Describe available 4-H projects to the members (those you or other project leaders are willing to lead). Ask members to select, or at least begin to think about, projects to be carried by the club.

   B. Encourage members to choose or begin to think about a name for the club. (Refer to *Selecting a Name for Your 4-H Club,* found on page 221.)

   C. Devise/approve a basic 4-H club constitution. (Refer to *Devising a 4-H Club Constitution,* found on page 223.)

   D. Ask for nominations and elect officers for the club. Depending on the size and type of club, typical officers might include: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, reporter, and recreation leader. You aren't limited to these positions and also may not need all of them. Many clubs seem to operate fine with a president, vice-president, and secretary-treasurer.

   E. Ask all members (and leaders) to fill out registration forms, which your 4-H staff will provide for you.

Be sure all are *complete*! You should deliver or send these forms to the 4-H office as soon as possible. This informa tion is needed for these reasons:

1. Members and leaders are placed on a 4-H mailing list to receive regular 4-H newsletters and other important information.
2. As a tax-assisted organization, certain membership information is required for reports to the government.
3. Volunteer leaders are covered by liability insurance.
4. Leaders and members can receive recognition.

G. Decide on a *regular* club meeting schedule, which includes date, time, and place.

5. Obtain necessary materials for 4-H project(s), such as member and leader/project guides and project record books if necessary (from your 4-H office).
   You may also order project material from the National 4-H catalogue.

Suggestions

1. Keep in contact with the 4-H office. Feel free to ask for help or materials. The 4-H office is always a busy place, but the staff and administrative assistants will do their best to help you promptly. Remember to send Club Meeting Reports (which can be obtained at the 4-H office) regularly. Copies are available at the 4-H office (See Appendix). This keeps the 4-H staff informed of your club's activities and may be printed in the 4-H newsletter so other 4-H clubs will know what *your* club is doing. Posting information to a county or state facebook page is another way to share information.

2. Recruit co-leaders if desired. At the very least, ask for parental support. SHARE the workload!

3. Review the main points of the most recent 4-H newsletter at club meetings by reading aloud so members will know what's going on in the total 4-H program. Encourage all members to participate in a variety of 4-H activities.

4. Encourage *parents* as well as members to read the 4-H newsletter.

5. Attend leader meetings, workshops, and forums. This will

keep you informed of details about the 4-H program, and also provide an opportunity to share ideas with other 4-H volunteers and learn from other people's experiences. You might also wish to consider becoming active in county, regional or state committees.

6. Keep your leader information/orientation materials and other 4-H information, such as the 4-H newsletter, "on file" for future reference.

Your decision to serve as a volunteer 4-H leader
is sincerely appreciated!
The 4-H program could not exist without your interest.

BEST WISHES IN YOUR EFFORTS!

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4-H

Parent Involvement in 4-H

4-H is a family affair! Parental involvement is one of the keys to a successful 4-H club. It provides an ongoing base for club support and expands the potential for interesting and exciting 4-H club programs. Active parents mean active members:

Favorable Attitudes + Parent Interests + Active Parent Cooperation = Successful 4-H Clubs

Why Should Parents Participate in 4-H?

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

- 4-H is a family affair, offering many 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, the club 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 only when parents care enough to share their time, efforts, and talents.
- Involve members and parents in setting goals and planning your club's program each year.

Adapted from: Erika U. Leal, Regional 4-H Agent, North, New Jersey, 1990, revised 1994

Ideas to Help Inform and Interest Parents and Gain Their Cooperation

- 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. Use the *Parent Interest Inventory* on the last page of this information sheet.

- When parents volunteer to help, make sure they are involved in something worthwhile. Make a mental 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.

- Keep parents informed. Help them understand the 4-H objectives. Send notes and letters directly to parents about the club program.

- Invite parents to club meetings. This is especially important if you don't meet in homes. Hold a club meeting for parents where 4-H members present the program, using presentations, judging, or exhibits.

- Let parents know what is expected from their child, and your interest in their child. Show parents that you are interested in their child by phone calls, letters, home visits, and discussions before and after club meetings.

- Recognize both members and their parents. Thank parents for their support both personally and in public. Compli-

ment parents for their contributions to the club program.

- Maintain parent interest. Arrange a special social event with parents. Ask 4-H staff to attend a parent-night program. Introduce parents to the 4-H staff so they can become better acquainted.

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

- Solicit parent involvement at the 4-H fair and other activities and events where results of 4-H club workers are shown.

References:

Smith, Carolyn A., New York State 4-H Club Management, a Resource Guide, Cornell Cooperative Extension, November 1982.

Parents - Partners on the 4-H Team (tape-slide program), Cooperative Extension Service, The Ohio State University.

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4-H Parent Interest Survey

Dear 4-H Parents:

Welcome to the 4-H Family! 4-H helps youth to develop knowledge, attitude and skills they need to become competent, caring and contributing citizens of the world. Parents and 4-H leaders working together can do so much more for the girls and boys than either can do alone.

We hope you share in 4-H by encouraging your child to participate and, as the 4-H motto says, "Make the Best Better!"

Please check the things you are willing to do to provide learning opportunities for the 4-H members and return to the club leader.

Home

_____ 1. Enable my child to attend all meetings and encourage him/her to be an active, contributing member of the club.
_____ 2. Encourage my child to start and complete projects on time. I will take an active interest and encourage pride in his/her own achievements.
_____ 3. Encourage my child to participate in 4-H workshops, public presentations, fair, camp and other activities which enhance learning opportunities.
_____ 4. Encourage my child to keep an up-to-date calendar of 4-H meetings and events.
_____ 5. Encourage my child to maintain current records of 4-H projects and activities.
_____ 6. Enable my child to meet financial responsibilities such as project expenses, etc.

Club

_____ 1. Provide an occasional meeting place for the club.
_____ 2. Help provide light refreshments for a 4-H meeting.
_____ 3. Share a special interest or hobby with the group. List _____.
_____ 4. Help carpool transportation for meetings or field trips.
_____ 5. Be a leader's helper for one project. List _____.
_____ 6. Help youth prepare for public presentations or fair.
_____ 7. Serve on committee to help plan and conduct events.
_____ 8. Make telephone calls.

County/Regional

_____ 1. Help carpool transportation to county/regional meetings or events.
_____ 2. Help at county/regional events.
_____ 3. Serve on county/regional committee as an interested parent.
_____ 4. Assist during the fair (set up, take down, staffing booths, etc.)

Thank you!

Name _____

Street Address

City _____ Zip

Telephone (day) _____ (evening) _____

Email _____

4-H

Parents: Helping Your 4-H'er Succeed

The Do's and Don'ts of Being a 4-H Parent

DO'S

- *DO* take time to learn about 4-H, what is stands for and how it operates.
- *DO* advise your son or daughter in selecting 4-H projects. Help them select a project they are interested in, have the ability to accomplish and is one for which you can help furnish needed materials, facilities, financing and guidance.
- *DO* show your interest and enthusiasm for the 4-H projects selected. Find out what is suggested for members to do and learn. Encourage your child to work on the project and record keeping all year long, and not to wait until the last minute.
- *DO* encourage your child to participate in county, regional and state events, such as public presentations, camp, fair, workshops and other activities.
- *DO* keep the purpose of the 4-H project in perspective. Realize that a project is simply a teaching tool and a method for involving boys and girls in a worthwhile activity. Above all, remember that your child is more important than the 4-H project.
- *DO* keep in mind that the most important goal of 4-H is personal growth of the individual.
- *DO* give encouragement when your 4-H'er succeeds and even more when he/she fails. Judging and awards are not final exams. Whatever ratings are given or scores received, help your child to see progress made, things that have been learned, and goals that have been reached.

Adapted from: Ginny Diem, County 4-H Agent, Somerset County, NJ, 1990, revised 1994

- *DO* offer your home for 4-H meetings; volunteer your hobbies and talents to 4-H leaders; provide transportation to other members.
- *DO* be tactful—with 4-H leaders, staff, judges, your child.
- *DO* remember that 4-H leaders and judges are often volunteering their own time for the benefit of your child; don't forget to show them your appreciation.
- *DO* ASK QUESTIONS!

DON'T'S

- *DON'T* do your child's project for them, even though you may be able to do it faster, better, simpler and with much less mess.
- *DON'T* discourage a child's enthusiasm by providing too much corrective influence or criticism.
- *DON'T* let the desire to win overpower your child's ability to learn. Do keep in mind that the 4-H experience should be an educational one.
- *DON'T* schedule family vacations which conflict with your child's 4-H schedule.
- *DON'T* re-live your childhood experiences through your child.
- *DON'T* view your child as an extension of yourself. Don't view his/her success or failure as a reflection of your ability or worth.
- *DON'T* assume anyone is always right.

Parent's 4-H Pledge

I pledge my HEAD to give information to help my child see things clearly and to make wise decisions.

I pledge my HEART to encourage and support my child, whether he has successes or disappointments.

I pledge my HANDS to help my child's club; if I cannot be a leader, I can help in many equally important ways.

I pledge my HEALTH to keep my child strong and well for a better world through 4-H, for my child's club, our community, our country, and our world.

Making the Best Better

Ask yourself why you wanted your child to join 4-H. If it is to win, you will be disappointed. If it is so your child can learn and become involved in a worthwhile activity, you will be satisfied. Recognition comes with doing the best your child can do. Be a supportive parent and help your child and 4-H leader to "Make the Best Better!"

Reference:

Adapted from unknown source.

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4-H

Selecting A 4-H Project

Qualities Leaders Bring to the Project

The 4-H project is the method used by 4-H'ers and leaders to teach and learn new skills and/or to acquire a body of knowledge.

You, the 4-H leader, bring your:

- subject knowledge or the willingness to learn knew knowledge and skills.
- desire and ability to work with children, their parents, and other volunteers.
- belief in the worth of each individual.
- confidence that children can take responsibility for and make decisions about their learning.
- commitment to the hands-on-learning process.
- genuine concern and care for young people.
- willingness to share your time and knowledge to help 4-H'ers develop to their potential.

Qualities 4-H'ers Bring to the Project

Your 4-H'ers also bring important qualities to the task of learning through project work. They bring:

- enthusiasm.
- a willingness to work and learn.
- trust in the adult leader.
- a desire to learn by "doing it themselves."
- an individual package of needs, talents, and expectations.

Project Selection

Project selection is:

- a goal setting process.
- a decision making experience.
- the key to a rewarding 4-H experience.

Adapted from: Betty Ann Smith, County 4-H Agent, Middlesex County, NJ, 1990, revised 1994

Who is Involved in Project Selection?

- the 4-H'er
- the 4-H'er's parent(s)
- the project leader

NOTE: In Vermont many 4-H Clubs emphasize one project. All members of a project club work on the same subject. Often project selection is made before joining any club. A 4-H'er who has been involved in the 4-H Cloverbud program, ideally, will have been introduced to a number of project (subject) areas and experiences before becoming a member of a project or community club. Community Clubs offer a variety of projects. Members of a community club have more project selection opportunities.

A Suggested Method for Project Selection

Goal Setting

Ask your 4-H'ers to set some individual goals. In goal setting, the younger 4-H'er may need more adult help than will an older 4-H'er. This can be done at the same meeting as the next suggested step or at aseparate time.

(Refer to *Helping Youth Set Goals, page 415*.)

Questions to answer that will help with goal identification:

- What do I like to do?
- What do I already know?
- What do I need/want to learn?
- What must I do to learn more about a particular subject?
- What must I do to learn a new skill?

(Refer to Project Selection Worksheet #1, *Goal Identification Worksheet For Selecting My 4-H Project*, following this information sheet.)

Decision Making

Leaders' Role

Obtain a listing of current projects offered and/or a selection of available 4-H curriculum project guides and project record books available from your local or regional 4-H office. Plan a meeting to give a brief overview of several project areas. Allow time for the 4-H'ers and their parents to look at different project materials. Discuss whether adults are available to help with specific projects. Also discuss time, money and supplies required for the project. Then discuss what to do if the project the 4-H'ers want to work on is not offered.

Members and Parents

Your 4-H'ers will be ready to make a decision after they have been introduced to a variety of project areas where capable adult leadership is available, and they have participated in a goal identification activity.

Allow time for the 4-H'er and parent(s) to discuss the project. The goal is to be sure the 4-H'er and the parent(s) understand what the project requires of the 4-H'er and the parent.

Answers to the following questions will help in making decisions.

(Refer to Project Selection Worksheet #2, *4-H Projects That Look Interesting To Me*, following this information sheet.)

- Is there a leader for this project?
- Will my parents help with this project if no leader is available?
- Do I have the money available for expenses this project will require?
- Is there a way for me to earn the money for this project?
- Do I understand how much time and energy the project will require?
- Can I handle the work involved?
- Will my parents let me work on this project?
- Will my parents be able to get me to the project meetings or county/regional events?
- Does this project fit in with my goal identification?
- Do I really want to work on this project?

How Many Projects Can a Member Take?

The number of projects a member takes depends on:

- the age of the 4-H'er.
- the experience of the 4-H'er.
- the ability of the 4-H'er.
- the amount of money involved/available to the 4-H'er.
- the time available to 4-H'er/leader/parent.
- the ability of a 4-H'er to work with minimal direction.
- time needed to learn about and participate in other parts of 4-H beyond project work, i.e., public speaking, trips, camp, other county/regional events.

A Project Plan

After the 4-H'ers have been introduced to project areas, have completed some goal identification, and have been through the decision making process with parents and leaders, they are ready to develop a project plan.

(Refer to Project Selection Worksheet #3, *My 4-H Project Plan [Setting Goals]* following this information sheet.)

A Simple Outline

The project plan can be as simple as an outline of goals and objectives that indicate a beginning and an end to the project.

The 4-H'ers can refer to their goal identification developed earlier or set a new goal. The goal is a statement that answers the question: "Where do I want to be in my project by the end of the year?" The objectives are simple statements that answer the question: "What do I need to do to get to my end goal?"

Share Plan With Parents

Encourage the 4-H'ers to share their plan with their parents. The more parent involvement and support the 4-H'er receives the more rewarding and successful the project will be.

RECORD KEEPING

Follow the method of recordkeeping established by your county/regional 4-H office. Encourage your 4-H'ers to keep their plan with their records, and refer to it throughout their project work.

Encourage 4-H'ers to answer these questions as they progress:

- Am I on target?
- Do I need to revise my goal (my idea about what I will accomplish)?
- Do I need to revise my objectives (the steps I am following to complete my project and reach my goal)?

Reference:

Diem, Ginny P., Leaders' Notebook developed for Ohio 4-H program

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Goal Identification Worksheet For Selecting My 4-H Project

Name _____ Year _____

Instructions

Take time to think about the things you do at different times of the day, week, month, year; at home, school, or work; and who you do these activities with.

Read the questions below and list as many answers as you can.

1) What do I like to do? (Example: Play with little kids.) _____

2) What do I need or want to learn? (Example: How to get the kids I baby sit for to pick up their toys instead of leaving them for me to pick up?) _____

3) What do I already know about the subject? (Example: They go brush their teeth when I make a game out of it.) _____

4) What do I need to do to learn more about a particular subject? or to learn a new skill? or to gain knowledge about a particular subject? (Example: Why do kids cooperate better when you make it a game?) _____

Keep this worksheet in your record book.

Written by Betty Ann Smith, County 4-H Agent, Middlesex County, New Jersey, 1990

4-H Projects That Look Interesting To Me

Name _____ Year _____

Instructions

As you and your parents review different project materials, list the ones that look interesting to you. Put a check by the statements under your choices that are true. The more checks you have, the more likely you will have a successful project.

Project _____

_____ There is a leader for this project.

_____ My parents will help with this project if no leader is available.

_____ I have the money for expenses this project will require.

_____ I can earn the money to pay for this project.

_____ I have the time to do this project.

_____ I have the ability to do the work in this project.

_____ My parents will allow me to work on this project.

_____ My parents will arrange transportation to project meetings.

_____ My parents will get me to county/regional events.

_____ This project will help in meeting my goals.

_____ I <u>really want</u> to work on this project.

If more than one project interests you, complete a worksheet for each project.

Keep this worksheet in your record book.

Written by Betty Ann Smith, County 4-H Agent,
Middlesex County, New Jersey, 1990

Project Selection Worksheet #3

My 4-H Project Plan (Setting Goals)

Name _____ Date _____

Project _____

Resources: Your goal identification worksheet #1;
your project decision worksheet #2;
the project materials; your 4-H Leader; 4-H Teen Leaders; project leader and helpers; and your parent(s).

Goal: (What I want to complete by the end of the year.
Example: I will make a skirt and blouse.)

_____

_____

_____

Objectives: (What I need to do to reach my goal. Example: I need to do: purchase pattern and material. I need to do this by: Sept. 30.)

I need to do:	I need to do this by (date)	I did it! (check off)

Put this worksheet in your record book.
Unchecked objectives can become next year's objectives.

Written by Betty Ann Smith, County 4-H Agent, Middlesex County, New Jersey, 1990

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4-H Leader Training Series

Selecting a Name for Your 4-H Club

Naming a 4-H Club is Both Challenging and Fun

Each 4-H club is a unique group of individuals who work together toward common goals. A club name should reflect the purpose(s) of the club, often relating to the project(s) the club participates in, or the geographic area where members live, or the club meets. Allow all of the members to participate in selecting a name for the club. Information in this sheet may help you guide the members in making a wise choice.

Since 4-H is an educational youth development program, committed to equal opportunities for all, be sure to keep this in mind when selecting a club name. As a part of University of Vermont Extension, publicly-funded by state and federal governments, *4-H does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender,religion, age, disability, political beliefs sexual orientation, and marital or familial status.* Therefore, please be sure that the club name you select is not biased for or against certain groups in any of these categories. It is possible to overlook subtle insinuations that some club names might accidentally exhibit.

Creative or cute names for 4-H clubs are fine—but consider whether any potential club members might shy away from joining just because of a misleading name. To maintain a positive image for the entire 4-H program, club names should neither shock nor confuse the public.

Some Examples to Consider:

For a 4-H sewing or clothing club:

"The Sewing Susans" would obviously discriminate against boys, whereas "The Nimble Thimbles 4-H Club" might be a better idea. But, make sure such a "cute" name wouldn't be a turn-off to any members or potential members. Teens are particularly sensitive to cute names that may be better appreciated by younger kids.

Adapted from: Keith G. Diem, Ph.D., County 4-H Agent, Somerset County, NJ, 1990, revised 1994

For a 4-H gardening club:

"The Dirty Hands" would not be as appropriate as "The Green Thumbs 4-H Gardening Club" or "The Grow-Kids 4-H Club."

In Summary . . .

Most "violations" become obvious as you and your club carefully consider the club name. Just beware of the not-so-obvious possibilities! Therefore, when selecting a club name, think about it carefully, be creative, and use a little common sense. To avoid confusion, try not to select a name currently being used by another club. When in doubt about a duplication or acceptance of a name, contact the 4-H office for "approval" or suggestions.

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4-H

Devising a 4-H Club Constitution

Suggested Format

Written by: Keith G. Diem, Ph. D.,
County 4-H Agent, Somerset County, NJ, 1990, revised 1994

Why does a 4-H club need a constitution? For the same reasons our country needs one! By having fair and written rules, the rights of all members can be protected. The following is a suggested format for a 4-H club constitution. It may be adapted to meet local conditions. Be sure to send a copy of your club's approved constitution to your 4-H office. Include in the constitution when it was approved and most recently revised.

ARTICLE I - Name/Identity

Section 1 - Name
The name of this organization shall be _____.

Section 2 - Motto
The club motto shall be "To Make the Best Better."

Section 3 - Emblem
The club emblem shall be a green four-leaf clover bearing a white "H" on each leaflet.

Section 4 - Pledge
The club pledge shall be:

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, community, my country, and my world.

ARTICLE II - Mission and Purpose

Section 1 - Mission of 4-H
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.

This mission is accomplished by using the knowledge and resources of the land grant university system, along with the involvement of caring adults. (*This is part of the official mission statement of the 4-H program.*)

Section 2 - Purpose of Club
The purpose of this club shall be to improve ourselves, our homes, our club, and our community. (*Different or additional purposes can be used.*)

ARTICLE III - Nonprofit status

This club is a nonprofit organization and program of the University of Vermont Extension. Any funds received by the club for carrying out its purpose shall not accrue to the benefit of individuals, but to the benefit of the 4-H program.

ARTICLE IV - Membership

Section 1 - Eligibility
Any boy or girl in this region, ages 8-18 as of January 1st of current year, may become a member of this club by applying for membership in at least one of the approved club projects and agreeing to live up to the standards set by the club. (However, the size of the club may be limited due to space limitations or the leader's available time or ability to accommodate more members.) Youth, ages 5-7 as of January 1st of current year, may be 4-H Cloverbud members. Membership shall not be denied on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status..

Section 2 - Responsibility
Each member must attend at least 75 percent of the meetings during the year. If a member is unable to attend a meeting due to a valid excuse (such as sickness or an important school or family event), the member must contact the club leader, secretary, or president in advance to be excused. Each member should also complete an approved club project and keep a project record.

(Additional or different membership requirements may be used. However, the non-discrimination statement must be included exactly as printed in section 1. Club dues are optional and determined by the club's membership. Note that 4-H Cloverbud members are often members of separate Cloverbud clubs. Therefore, clubs will generally not have both standard and Cloverbud members. A constitution for a 4-H Cloverbud Club will probably differ from this example in several ways.)

ARTICLE V - Meetings

Section 1 - Dates (Note: Adapt to your club's needs)
The club shall meet regularly every _____(day/week) at _____(time) at _____(place).

Special meetings may be called by the president and 4-H leader as needed. Adequate notice is needed.

Section 2 - Quorum
A simple majority (one-half plus one) of members must be present to conduct official business of the club.

ARTICLE VI - Committees

Standing and/or special committees will be created as needed. Members are expected to volunteer for committee assignments. The president has the authority to appoint committee chairs and members.

ARTICLE VII - Officers

The officers of this club shall include: president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and reporter. Their duties shall be as follows:

- The president will preside at all meetings, uphold the constitution and adhere to parliamentary procedure. The president shall appoint committee chairs and members.
- The vice-president shall preside over the club in the absence of the president. The vice-president shall assist the president and serve as a link to all committees.
- The secretary shall write minutes of each meeting and report at the next meeting. The secretary will also keep attendance records and write club correspondence.
- The treasurer shall keep track of all club funds and property, along with the club leader. The treasurer will give a report of the club's finances at each meeting.
- The reporter shall collect newspaper and county newsletter clippings, photos, etc. for a club scrapbook/bulletin board/ history. The reporter writes club meeting reports and sends them to the county 4-H office, and also may write and send club news to local newspapers, radio stations, etc.

(*A club may have more or fewer officers. In any case, duties of each one should be written and included in this article.*)

ARTICLE VIII - Election of Officers

The officers of this club shall be elected at the first regular meeting in _____ (month). They shall hold office for one year. All active members are eligible to run for an office and to vote. Voting is by majority rule.

ARTICLE IV - Amendments

This constitution may be amended at any regular meeting by a two-thirds vote cast by those in attendance, providing notice has been given at the previous meeting.

ARTICLE V - Dissolution

If this club disbands, all club assets shall be assigned to the County 4-H Foundation, or the State 4-H Foundation if the county ceases to exist.

Reference:

Parts were adapted from a former New Jersey State 4-H publication, author unknown, dated 5/78.

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4-H

4-H Club Officers Make the Meeting

Good officers who know their jobs are the key to a solid, successful 4-H club meeting. Good officers understand and take pride in their jobs. They encourage all members to get involved in the club.

You, as leader, can help club officers and committee chairs to do their jobs successfully.

- Be sure the officers understand their responsibilities.
- Allow them to ***do*** their jobs with minimal supervision.
- Guide them when necessary to make sure their jobs are completed.

President

A good president helps everyone in the club work together. The president listens to ideas and judges when the group has agreed on an action, but does not dictate!

The president:

- presides at meetings. (Refer to *Running a Smooth 4-H Business Meeting, found on page 231*.)
- sees that the room is ready and that the meeting starts on time.
- arranges for the vice president to take over if the president can't be there.
- asks for volunteers and/or appoints committees with the help of the leader.

Adapted from: Judith S. Baillere, County 4-H Agent, Gloucester County, NJ, 1990, revised 1994

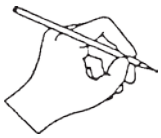
- works with members and the leader to plan a program for the year.
- meets with the leader and the other officers to plan the order of business for each meeting.
- casts the deciding vote in case of a tie.

Vice President

The Vice President is the president's assistant and:

- presides at meetings when the president is absent.
- handles other jobs in the club, such as serving as chair of the program committee.

Secretary



The Secretary keeps records of membership, club activities (minutes) and handles club correspondence.

The secretary:

- keeps minutes of all club meetings—what is done, not said. (Refer to *Running a Smooth Business Meeting*.)
- maintains a complete list of all members and calls the roll.
- reads letters to the club at meetings.
- reminds members of special meetings—by phone, postcard, or personal contact. Makes sure each member knows when and where the next meeting will be held.
- writes the club's correspondence, such as thank you letters and requests for information.
- turns a completed 4-H secretary's book over to the club leader.

Treasurer

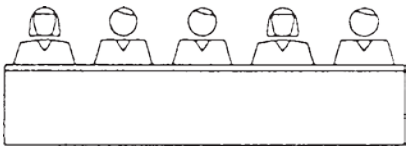
The treasurer is responsible for handling the club's money.

- Receives and keeps a record of money in the 4-H Treasurer's Book.
- Deposits the money in a special club bank account held at UVM.
- Assists, as appropriate, in preparing communication to pay out money only when approved by the club.
  (Refer to *Fund Raising and 4-H Club Treasuries, found on page 237*.)

Committees

Most 4-H clubs can benefit from committees. Committees help all members become actively involved in the club. Following are suggestions of club committees:

Program Committee finds speakers, films, and special resources for club meetings and activities. They always check with the leader.



Membership Committee helps the group grow by recruiting members and leaders for their own or other clubs.

Community Service Committee talks with parents, members, and neighbors to identify community needs and present the ideas for projects to the club.

Special Jobs

Club reporter and song leader are special job assignments for non-officers.

Nominating and Electing Officers

Nominations and elections are important club business. Tell the members about the election ahead of time. They can then be thinking about the kinds of officers they want. Make sure everyone knows the duties of each office.

Two ways to nominate officers:

Floor

One is to have members suggest someone for an office during the election meeting. The member says, "I nominate for." A nomination can be made to show support.

Committee

The other way is for the president to appoint a nominating committee. The committee chooses candidates for each office and asks them to run. The committee chair presents its nominations to the club during a meeting. Other nominations can then be made from the floor.

When there are no more nominations, a members says, "I move to close the nominations." If the motion is carried, the members then vote on the candidates.

Voting for officers is usually by ballot. It takes a majority—one vote over half—to be elected. If you have 17 members a majority is 9.

Reference:

Bulletin 609, Washington State University

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4-H

Running a Smooth 4-H Business Meeting

The Order of a Business Meeting

Minutes of a Meeting

Adapted from: Judith S. Baillere, County 4-H Agent, Gloucester County, NJ, 1990, revised 1994

4-H club officers conduct a 4-H business meeting with as little input as possible from you, the leader. This will happen if you have helped officers to understand their jobs and make an agenda in advance (refer to sample agenda following this information sheet), or decide if a business meeting is needed.

Business meetings follow a specific procedure:

- Call to order when the meeting opens—(president).
- 4-H pledge, pledge of allegiance, song, or other opening—(vice president).
- Roll call—(secretary).
- Reading of the minutes of the last meeting—(secretary).
- Treasurer's report—(treasurer)
- Correspondence—(secretary).
- Reports of committees.
- Old or unfinished business left over from the last meeting—(president).
- New business—(president).
- Next meeting date.
- Adjournment when the business meeting is over.

It is the secretary's job to keep the minutes of each meeting. The minutes should be a record of what is done, not what is said. They should contain:

- date and place of meeting.
- names of members and visitors present.

- approval of previous minutes.
- all reports and what was done about them.
- all motions, with the name of the person who made them, and whether the motion was carried or lost.
- the time the meeting was adjourned.
- any programs, refreshments, or recreation that happened after the meeting.

Making and Voting on Motions

A member who wants the club to vote on something makes a motion. That member raises one hand, or stands, and waits to be recognized. After being recognized by the president, the member says, "I move that...."

Another member says "I second the motion." This means that at least one other member thinks the club should consider it. (If the motion is not seconded, it is dropped.)

The president then asks for discussion. When discussion stops, the president asks, "Are you ready for the question?" If no one requests more discussion, the club is ready to vote.

The president states the motion so everyone can hear it. The members vote when the president says, "All in favor say 'Aye,'" and "All opposed say 'Nay.'"

The motion is passed if more members vote "Aye" than "Nay." If the president is in doubt about the vote, he should ask for a show of hands or a standing vote.

The president then says, "The motion is carried," or "The motion is lost," according to the vote.

Ways to Vote

- ***Voice Vote***. The president says "All in favor of the motion say 'Aye.'" "All opposed say, 'Nay.'"
- ***Standing Vote***. The members stand so their votes can be counted.
- ***Show of Hands***. The members raise their hands so the president can count their votes.
- ***Ballot***. The president and one or more helpers hand out blank slips of paper so the members can write down their vote.

- ***Roll Call***. Members vote, one at a time, as their names are called.
- ***Honor System***. All member close their eyes and vote by raising one hand.

Sample 4-H Club Meeting

President: *Will the meeting please come to order? John Jones will lead us in the pledge of allegiance and Maria Martinez will lead us in the 4-H pledge.*

Member John Jones: *Let's all stand and say the pledge of allegiance.*

Members: (vice president leads) *I pledge allegiance.....*

Member Maria Martinez: *Let's all say the 4-H pledge.*

Members: (vice president leads) *I pledge my head.....*

President: *The secretary will call the roll.*

Secretary: *Today we will answer the roll by telling what we did on our project last week.* (There are many different ways of answering the roll, which you place in the 4-H secretary's book.)

Member Nancy Tate: *I dyed different kinds of cloth and put the samples in my record book.*

Member Ken Washington: *I taught my dog to heel.*

Member Dick Lee: *I set out some tomato plants in my garden.*

Other Members: (Tell what they did.)

President: *Will the secretary read the minutes of the last meeting?*

Secretary: *The meeting was called to order by .....*

President: *Are there any additions or corrections to the minutes?* (Pause.) *If not, they stand approved as read.*

President: *We will now hear reports from the officers and committee chairs.*

President—reports on 4-H-related activities; ***Vice President***—reports on 4-H-related activities; ***Secretary***—reads letters addressed to the club; ***Treasurer***—reports on money received, money paid out, and the amount of money on hand; ***Committee Chairs***—report on activities of committees since last meeting.

After each report, the president asks if there are any questions. If there are no questions, the president says, "The report is accepted as presented." If there are questions and if the report needs something done about it, the president asks for a motion (a request that something be done).

Each motion must be seconded, discussed, and voted on before another motion can be made.

President: *Is there any unfinished business?* (Business left from the last meeting can be discussed at this time.)

Is there any new business? (Club members discuss new business—future plans for club activities, things to be done before the next meeting, etc.)

Are there any announcements? (Club members or leaders make announcements.)

If there is no further business, is there a motion to adjourn?

Member: *I move that the business meeting be adjourned.*

Member: *I second the motion.*

President: *All those in favor of the motion say "Aye." Those opposed say "Nay." The motion is passed* (if more members vote "Aye" than "Nay.") *The business meeting is adjourned.*

Reference:

Bulletin 609, Washington State University.

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4-H Club Meeting Agenda

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/4-H PLEDGE
3. ROLL CALL
4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING - Read by Secretary
5. TREASURER'S REPORT
6. CORRESPONDENCE - Read by President/Secretary
   Note: Important events from 4-H newsletter
7. COMMITTEE REPORTS.
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.
8. OLD BUSINESS
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.
9. NEW BUSINESS
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.
10. NEXT MEETING DATE: _____
11. ADJOURNMENT
12. PROGRAM (recreation, clinic, speaker, social event, presentation, etc.)

Adapted from: Laura Bovitz, 4-H Program Associate, Middlesex County, NJ, 1993

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4-H Leader Training Series

Fund Raising and 4-H Club Treasuries

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Many counties have specific procedures for club fund-raising and how to access support through the County 4-H Foundation. To find out about policies and procedures, contact your county 4-H staff. Here are some general guidelines about financial matters of 4-H clubs to help get you and your club on the right track.

1. **The 4-H Youth Development Program is a non-profit educational organization that receives its tax exempt status through the University of Vermont.** Therefore, your club should be concerned with money only to the extent that it is needed to provide supplies or cover expenses incurred in running an active group for youth. It is, therefore, a means to having a successful club—and not the end sought or a measure of a successful club.

2. **No membership fees are required to join 4-H.** Any fees charged for a 4-H program are designed to cover or defray expenses. Collecting club dues is **optional** and is decided by each club's membership. Members of the club should vote on the amount and how often dues are to be collected.

3. **All money raised by, or given to, a club becomes the property of that club and not any individuals in the club**. This is also true for any items donated to the club. All property of the club should be included in a written inventory and kept with the treasurer's permanent written records. Should the club fold, the treasury and any supplies will get turned over to either the County 4-H Foundation, or UVM 4-H and will support the county program.

4. **Any money owned by the club should be deposited into a safe account at UVM earmarked for the club.** Detailed money management procedures are found on our 4-H website. Clubs are provided a variety of ways to access those dollars in order to purchase necessary supplies or pay expenses.

Adapted from: Keith G. Diem, Ph. D., County 4-H Agent, Somerset County, NJ, 1990, revised 1994

5. **Clubs that plan on having dues, fund raising or any other money, should have a treasurer to account for this property.** Responsibilities for maintaining the club account are given to the treasurer, depending on the age and abilities of that member. Often, young and inexperienced treasurers simply collect and record dues paid, give the treasurer's report at meetings, and work with the leader on maintaining the club's account. Remember to help make the treasurer's role a *learning* experience!

6. Many 4-H programs have county or regional 4-H fund raisers to benefit the entire 4-H program in the county or region. **Your club should fully support these fund raising efforts before creating any of its own.** Not only do many county/ regional fund raisers often share a portion of the profits with each club which participates, but forcing 4-H families (and the neighborhood!) to participate in too much fund raising is not wise and may result in negative 4-H public relations. Like most things, it is probably better to do a few fund raisers very well than to attempt too many unsuccessfully.

7. **Fund raising should be done to meet a specific goal.** Such goals might be to help members pay for 4-H camp, purchase a 4-H/American flag set for the club, sponsor a club recognition banquet, or to fund a community service project. Whenever possible, however, people should "pay their own way." Examples are where each member pays for his or her own club T-shirt or brings a dish to a pot-luck club dinner. In other words, reserve *club* fund raisers for *club* needs and not for individual members'needs. Or, at most, the club might consider providing "incentive"—by paying a portion of a member's expense, such as for 4-H summer camp, or toward the cost of a club jacket. Whatever the goals for the fund raising event, the club should approve the goal and what event will be held. *Members* should work to carry out the club's goals, with the leader's guidance.

8. **Make sure your club fund raiser is appropriate and can be easily accomplished by the club.** It is probably better to start small and build on small successes. Fund raising can be a good way for members to learn organizational and business skills. It can also be fun. Consider whether to do fund raising as individuals (such as door-to-door sales) or as a total club (bake sale, car wash, etc.). Consider doing a fund raiser which doesn't require a great investment in advance. The less money your club must invest, the less money it can lose if the fund raiser isn't successful. Good examples are bake sales, car washes, service auctions (where members sell their services to clean garages, mow lawns, etc.). In any case, organize and publicize your event well!

9. **Consider safety and legality in planning fund raisers.** To ensure safety for 4-H'ers and leaders, no one should solicit door-to-door. Individual solicitation should be done from family and friends, and only under the direct supervision of adults. Also, make sure that fund raising activities meet the legal requirements of the local municipality, county, and state.

10. **Inform the 4-H office of your fund raising plans in advance.** The 4-H staff staff can then confirm that your event is *truly* a 4-H fund raiser if someone from the public calls to ask. Also, the 4-H County staff can work with UVM development office to further your efforts and ensure there are no concerns with your outreach.

11. As mentioned, a club should not raise money just for the sake of raising money. Although it is wise to save a little money "for a rainy day" (emergency), a good rule of thumb is that money raised during the course of a 4-H year should be spent that same year unless the fund-raising goal is long-term. **Members should see and reap the benefits of the money they worked to raise.** Some clubs approve a budget to help them spend what they raise each year (not more, not less). Again, remember that all fund raisers should have specific ***goals***.

13. **If your club disbands, all money in the club treasury and any other club property** will be turned over either to the County 4-H Foundation, the State 4-H Foundation, or the UVM 4-H program earmarked for the county in which the club resides. The club constitution or bylaws should indicate this dissolution clause.

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Vermont 4-H

Planning a Yearly Calendar

Planning ahead is the key to a successful 4-H club. It provides a structure that your members can depend upon and allows flexibility throughout the year.

Through the planning process, members, leaders and parents can share their ideas and resources to create a year of fun learning activities. When a yearly calendar is developed cooperatively everyone

- has something to look forward to
- can save dates in advance,
- is aware of their own responsibilities.

(A suggested format follows this information sheet.)

Listing Possible Activities

An effective way to begin is to **brainstorm** a list of possible activities. In brainstorming, the goal is to produce a long list of ideas without making comments about their possible success or failure. Crazy ideas are welcome and stimulate laughter and more ideas. Setting a time limit for the brainstorming process of 5 - 7 minutes can help you get a good list. Write down all ideas on a chalkboard or a newsprint pad and be sure to get **everyone's** ideas up on the board. This will give everyone an overall feeling for the current interests of the group. As the leader, you should be part of the process and include some of your ideas.

Filling in the Yearly Calendar

There will be some activities that are scheduled at the same time each year, such as the fair and public presentations. (Your county/regional 4-H office may have an annual printed calendar or can tell you which months these events are usually scheduled.) These can be put on the calendar first. Then you can set aside club meeting time to prepare for them, or choose to hold separate committee meetings that will allow the club to get ready.

Adapted from: Rose Mary Bergmann, County 4-H Agent, Morris County, NJ 1994

When beginning to fill in the calendar, keep these things in mind:

- Is there a balance between fun activities and learning experiences that support progress in each member's project?
- Does your 4-H Club Calendar include activities that help teach your members personal development skills as well as focus on your club project(s)?
- Have a variety of members' ideas been included that most of the club members will support?
- Have you included any field trips or outside resource persons to come to the club? As the leader, have you considered the workability of each activity such as making transportation arrangements, finding the right size meeting place, etc.?
- Do most activities involve little or no cost to members? If there is a cost, have you considered fund-raising activities?
- Are there any community service projects included?
- Are the responsibilities for carrying out the activities shared among the club, or are there one or two members who are responsible for 80% of the program?
- Do the activities included provide opportunities for members to develop new leadership skills?
- Have you considered adequate preparation time for activities or events that your club has never experienced before?
- If your club has refreshments, have you included this responsibility in your plan?
- Can you, as the leader, see where the plan is flexible so that unexpected and spontaneous events can be accommodated?

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_____ 4-H CLUB CALENDAR FOR _____

(Name of 4-H Club) (year)

Month	Activity or Program	Materials or Help Needed	Members Responsible for Program	Refreshments (Member responsible)	County/Regional/State Activity
September					
October					
November					
December					
January					
February					
March					
April					
May					
June					
July					
August					

4-H

What Makes a Good 4-H Club Meeting?

Business leaders say that one-third of the time spent in business meetings is unproductive. Here's how 2,000 business leaders* ranked the four most important ingredients of a good meeting.

- Adequate preparation
- Agreement on followup action
- Having an effective moderator
- Staying on track

These are good points to consider about your 4-H club meetings. This also shows why learning how to run a good meeting in 4-H now will help later in life. Meetings are held in all careers. Good meetings help to get things done. Poor meetings don't.

If your club would like help in getting organized and running meetings, contact the 4-H office. The following information should also help.

A Regular Meeting Day, Time, and Place

A 4-H club needs to meet regularly at a regular place and time. Moving a meeting date to meet the whims of the group may help get more members to a meeting in the short run. However, in the long run, members may become confused about meeting dates. Irregular meetings can also make it difficult for new members to merge well into the club.

The best way to set an acceptable meeting schedule is for the club to vote and to abide by majority rule. This is generally done at the first (organizational) meeting of the new year. Obtaining parental support for the meeting schedule is helpful in maintaining member participation.

Written By: Keith G. Diem, Ph. D., County 4-H Agent, Somerset County, New Jersey, 1990, revised 1994

**Reference: Harrison Conference Services/Hofstra University survey, as reported in USA Today, March 27, 1989.*

Meetings Are Held Often

A club can't accomplish its goals if it doesn't meet often enough. How often is enough? This depends on the club, its members, and their projects. However, all clubs should meet at least once a month. Many clubs meet as often as once a week. Often 4-H clubs do not meet in the summer. Summer meetings are optional.

A Balance of Work and Play

Every meeting should have several parts. The order of these parts isn't as crucial as having *each* part. Each meeting should include:

- a chance for members to interact socially.
- business session. The officers should run this part of the meeting, with leader guidance. A business session doesn't have to be part of every meeting, but probably should be held at least once a month and other times as needed.
- educational program/project work. This is generally guided by the leader. The program portion could be work on 4-H projects, a guest speaker, an educational videotape, and/or public presentations given by members.

Variety and Member Involvement

Vary the kinds of things done throughout the year. Encourage officer/member involvement. Help them decide what they want to do most. As an adult leader, your primary duty is to guide the members in making sound decisions and following through with their decisions.

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