



Iowa

# 4-H volunteer

## Northeast Area 4-H Update

belonging...generosity...independence...mastery



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### Mastering Project Skills and Knowledge is Essential

Youth rely on the joy they receive from interests, hobbies, and group participation to balance disappointments in other parts of their lives. 4-H offers opportunities to take on new challenges and learn new skills. Leaders can help youth experience an activity, share what happened, process what was important, generalize the experience to the real world, and apply what was learned to another situation. That's Experiential Learning.

Youth need to feel and believe they are capable. When they experience success at solving problems and meeting challenges, they develop self-confidence. 4-H'ers have the opportunity to build knowledge and skills, and demonstrate their use. The level of mastery they achieve depends on the ability or interest of the individual. It is a process that can evolve over a period of years. This element of mastery supports the 4-H concept of hands-on learning. By exploring 4-H projects and activities, youth master skills to make positive life and career choices. This represents the HEALTH of 4-H.

4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential working and learning in partnership with caring adults. Put simply, caring adults are a requirement for youth to learn their potential. As a leader, there are many things you can do to help members reach their full potential:

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### Instill Character in 4-H'ers

Character development is first and foremost the responsibility of the family. However, a 4-H club acts somewhat like an extended family, with leaders acting as "substitute parents." Character development should be an integral part of every club meeting or activity.

Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Being a 4-H leader is a privilege that carries with it a moral responsibility to contribute to the healthy character development of young people. You play an awesome role in shaping your 4-H'ers lives!
- Children will follow the examples they see. Your 4-H'ers learn a great deal by watching you in day-to-day activities. Do you accept winning or losing with grace? How do you celebrate success? How do you help those 4-H'ers who are having a tough time dealing with frustration? Does your language convey good character?
- Use the Six Pillars of Character promoted by CHARACTER COUNTS! as a foundation for discussion. An easy way to remember these is to think of the pillars as being TRRFCC (terrific)!  
**T**rustworthiness  
**R**espect  
**R**esponsibility  
**F**airness  
**C**aring  
**C**itizenship
- During club meetings, intentionally build in time to talk about components of good character. Use realistic situations as examples. Character traits should be deliberately **T**aught, **E**nforced, **A**dvocated, and **M**odeled (**T.E.A.M.** approach).
- Work with your 4-H'ers to brainstorm ways they can demonstrate each pillar of character. Ask them, "What can each of us do to show **trustworthiness**? Be honest, don't deceive, cheat, or steal. Be reliable—do what you say you will do. Have the courage to say the right thing. Build a good reputation. Be loyal to family, friends, and community. **Respect**? Follow the Golden Rule. Be tolerant of differences. Use good manners, not bad language. Be considerate of others. Deal peacefully with anger, insults, and disagreements. **Responsibility**? Do what you're supposed to do. Persevere—keep on trying. Do your best. Think before you act. **Fairness**? Play by the rules. Take turns and share. Be open-minded. **Caring**? Be kind and show you care. Express gratitude. Forgive others. Help people in need. **Citizenship**? Do your part to improve your community. Protect the environment. Cooperate. Be a good neighbor. Obey laws and rules. Respect authority.
- Offer both cooperative and competitive choices. Cooperative: planning yearly club meetings, working on a community service project, decorating a club booth. Competitive: going bowling as a club, judging exhibits, beef showmanship.
- Teach kids how to be a "good sport." Discuss what you've seen in national sports or other recent negative situations. You can shape attitudes toward competition in healthy ways by setting standards of behavior that encourage participation and downplay "winning at all costs."



### Mastering story continued from cover

- Help youth find resources to explore their 4-H projects and activities. Resources may include helping them connect with other adults who have expertise in their area of interest.
- Provide project learning experiences.
- Look for members growing in projects that capture their interest.
- Ask members with strong skills to assist or mentor other members in that project area.
- Encourage members to develop an exhibit or presentation to demonstrate what they have learned.
- Model and teach that failure and frustration is not a disgrace but a part of the learning process.
- Be fair and consistent when enforcing rules and giving feedback.



**A 4-H Breakfast Basics workshop found 13 Howard County 4-H'ers learning to make five breakfast delights. All members said they cooked breakfast for their family within a week of the workshop.**

#### ... and justice for all

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## ACTIVITIES

### Join the 4-H Food and Fitness Craze!

We all want our kids to be as healthy as possible and the 4-H Food and Fitness Craze Program has just what you need to build important wellness life skills with your club members. This hands-on, easy to use program is comprised of multiple learning activities that can be done at your club meeting in only 15 minutes.

Some of the topics covered in the engaging activities include the effects of super-sizing your fast-food meals, food pyramid race, portion overload, guessing game to align foods by nutritional content, measuring fitness, creating a rainbow of foods each meal, and dancing to get exercise. The program also includes roll call and discussion starters, community service activities, healthy snack recipes, and ways to get your group moving.

For more information about the Food and Fitness Craze, contact your local 4-H Youth Development Specialist or County Youth Coordinator.

### Plan a Club Visit to the Northeast Iowa Dairy Center

The Northeast Area Dairy Foundation, Iowa State University Extension, and the Northeast Iowa Community College at Calmar invite 4-H clubs to schedule tours of the Northeast Iowa Dairy Center. Iowa's Dairy Story, an interactive program, features multiple learning stations about the dairy industry, history, nutrition, and barn tour. You also can view the milking of cows from an elevated viewing area.

More than 4,000 youth have been reached through school enrichment efforts for third to sixth graders. Other youth groups and afterschool programs have experienced the fun, too. There is a minimal fee of \$2 per person to cover supplies and expenses of the tour. Self-guided tours are possible Monday through Friday hours 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Organized tours can be arranged by contacting Barb Sauser, Youth Development Specialist with Iowa State University Extension. You can email Barb at [sauser@iastate.edu](mailto:sauser@iastate.edu) or call the Clayton County Extension Office at (563) 245-1451.

### Consider Community and Parents for Project Help

4-H clubs often have parents with talents they would be willing to share if they were asked. At the beginning of the 4-H year, offer a parent survey to learn the interests of parents and community members. The survey could help your club offer project help to members.

The Clayton County Extension Office is located on Main Street in Elkader. In the same block is the Back Stitch Shop that offers classes for a variety of interests. One winter day, staff

stopped at the shop to ask if they would be interested in offering a needlepoint workshop for 4-H'ers. A group of interested embroiderers were meeting later that week and the idea was presented to them. It met with their approval and a date was set in April. A two-hour morning session was held with 12 youth and adults learning a new skill with one-on-one help. The group put together two simple projects for the participants, one that could be completed that morning and the other that could be started, then finished at home. The important lesson learned—you just need to ask.

