

# Welcome to 4-H!



## A New Member Guide to 4-H

Winnebago County Extension, 183 1<sup>st</sup> Ave, Thompson, IA

641-584-2261 | M-TH 9:00am – 3:30pm



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Extension and Outreach

# Contact Information

## The Extension Office Team

**Cassie Engstler Armstrong**

County Youth Director

[engstler@iastate.edu](mailto:engstler@iastate.edu)

**Cynthia Johnson**

Office Assistant

[ckj@iastate.edu](mailto:ckj@iastate.edu)

**Meg Sage**

Regional Youth Program Specialist

[msage6@iastate.edu](mailto:msage6@iastate.edu)

### **Winnebago County Extension Office**

Mailing: PO Box 47

Office: 183 1<sup>st</sup> Ave

Thompson, IA 50478

Phone: 641-584-2261

## Websites

Winnebago County 4-H

<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/winnebago/>

Winnebago County Extension on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/WinnebagoCoExt>

Iowa 4-H Website

<https://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/>



# Welcome

We are excited to welcome you as a new member in the world's largest youth organization – 4-H! We invite you to join us in making new friends and having fun!

Like any new adventure, there are always many questions. We hope this guide helps answer some of your questions and directs you along the way.

We are happy to answer all your questions. Just call the Winnebago County Extension Office at 641-584-2261.

## 4-H Motto:

**To Make the Best Better!**

## 4-H Colors:

**Green** —Symbolizes life, springtime, & youth.

**White** —Symbolizes purity

## 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.

## Promesa 4-H

Prometo usar mi mente para pensar con más claridad,  
mi corazón para ser más leal,  
mis manos para ser más servicial,  
mi salud para cuidarme más,  
por mi club, mi comunidad, mi país y mi mundo



# 4-H Member Information

## When youth enroll (sign up) in 4-H they will...

1. Select at least one project area in which to learn about for the year.
  - a. A project is a topic or interest area youth engage in learning about for the next year. Project areas include such things as Aerospace to Communication to Sheep to Wildlife to Sewing and Needle Crafts.
  - b. Families can request and purchase project literature, attend meetings specific to that project (if available), and find suggested activity fair exhibit ideas from the Iowa 4-H website.
2. Youth and their families select a 4-H Club in the county to join.
  - a. After enrolling in a club, a 4-H member (and family) attend monthly club meetings.
  - b. At these meetings, members plan club events, vote on items, swap ideas and information, and do fun and educational activities.

## What is expected of a 4-H Member?

County 4-H programs have basic expectations of members, such as:

1. Attend monthly club meetings.
2. Demonstrate skills you have learned for a group.
3. Participate in a community service project.
4. Record what you've done and learned through the year.

Beyond local club participation, 4-H families can participate in a variety of workshops, camps, county fair, and more!

Exhibiting at the county fair is a highlight of the year for many 4-H members. Youth are encouraged, but not required, to showcase what they are learning in their 4-H project work at the county fair.

Do you have other questions? A 4-H newsletter is emailed every month to alert families on upcoming events. Be sure to read it!

## What does a 4-H Club do?

- Most Clubs meet monthly with a year-long plan for their programs.
- Each meeting usually includes presentations by members.
- A 4-H club elects its own officers and conducts its own business.
- Meetings might also include presentations by leaders, parents, or a resource person, recreation/games, a family night, or a field trip.
- Most 4-H clubs do a variety of community service projects. Members should decide the type of projects their club will do.

## What happens at a 4-H Club meeting?

Here are some things that might happen at a 4-H meeting:

- Games of fun activities welcome everyone.
- 4-H members say the Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H Pledge.
- Roll call and share minutes of the last meeting.
- Treasurer's report of income and expenses.
- Committees share what they've planned or done.
- "Old business" or things talked about before are discussed again.
- "New business" or new ideas, activities, and plans are discussed.
- Presentations or Demonstrations are given by members.
- Food and fun are at the end!

## Did you know?

A 4-H Club typically elects youth from the 4-H Club to fill the following officers' roles:

- President – conducts meeting and appoints committees
- Vice President – is in charge of the program plans
- Secretary – keeps minutes and attendance records
- Treasurer – pays club bills and deposits funds received
- Recreation Leader – helps plan parties and leads games
- Reporter – writes newspaper stories about club events
- Historian – keeps a lasting record of the club's yearly story



# 4-H Vocabulary

Every organization has a vocabulary that seems familiar only to its members and 4-H is no different. Here are a few of those words:

- 4-H Enrollment – Annually sign up for 4-H. This includes your name, address, phone, health information, parent contacts, and project areas you have chosen for the year.
- 4-H Online – Internet based databased used to enroll/sign up in the 4-H Program.
- Code of Ethics – This form asks members to be responsible and behave in an ethical manner. Signed electronically in 4-H Online.
- Communication events –
  - **Educational Presentations** are talks or demonstrations, given in front of an audience, about a topic the 4-H is interested in
  - **Working Exhibits** are less formal. They involve a one-on-one type of demonstration technique, teaching others how to do something for about 30 minutes.
  - **Share-the-Fun** includes entertainment acts, like music, dance, interpretive speech, or skits. They can involve any number of youth - from one 4-H member to a whole club.
- Conference Judging – This method of judging is used for static exhibits at county fair. A 4-H member discusses their project work with a judge.
- Entry – How a 4-H member signs up for which exhibits they will bring to the County Fair. Some entries are completed online, others are paper copies turned into the Extension Office.
- Exhibits – Is an item resulting from project work the 4-H member has chosen to bring to the fair and be evaluated by a judge. For example: a 4-H member may enroll in the woodworking project area and choose to bring a birdhouse as their exhibit to the fair they constructed.
  - Static Exhibits refer to non-livestock project area items. These exhibits are typically all judged on one day at the beginning of a county fair week.
- Fair Entry – Online program used to register your exhibits for the County Fair.
- Livestock Identification (ID) – All animals part of a 4-H project must be identified. Market animals will have ID forms completed at their respective weigh-ins. All other animals are identified in 4-H online.
- Projects – A 4-H project is an area of emphasis in which a 4-H member enrolls, studies, learns, and keeps records

# If I Had Only Know...

## From a member:

- I can go to any county activity that is listed in the newsletter. I don't have to be signed up for that project.
- Read each issue of the newsletter very carefully!
- Keep ALL records of activities and presentations from 4-H, school, community, church and other organizations for later reference when applying for trips and awards.
- Any of my friends can join 4-H!! You DO NOT need to own an animal or live on a farm to join 4-H. (most projects don't have anything to do with animals).
- 4-H members may join at any age between 4<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade, not just as 4<sup>th</sup> graders. (K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade can be in Clover Kids)

## From a parent:

- Send a calendar with your child(ren) to meetings to mark down club and county events.
- Keep a drawer or shelf for all the 4-H newsletters, mailings and records.
- Youth are to keep adding to their records each year. It is not the physical method that is most important, rather it is that the records are accurate and reflect what youth have learned.
- Parent(s), guardian(s) and grandparents are encouraged to attend and participate in 4-H meetings and events with their youth.
- Read the newsletters and contact the Extension Office or club leader(s) or other 4-H parents with any questions (however small they might be).

## Did you know?

There are three levels for participation/categories in 4-H.

- Grades 4-6 are considered Junior 4-H members
- Grade 7-8 are considered Intermediate 4-H members
- Grade 9-12 are considered Senior 4-H members



# Families in 4-H

Following are some ways that parents and guardians can help their members in the 4-H program:

- Help member select the right project(s) for their interests. Be aware of the child's goals and encourage record keeping.
- Give encouragement and supervision but allow the 4-H'er to do their own work.
- Help locate or assist youth in finding financial aid for project work when necessary.
- Provide a place for records and other club and county materials in the home.
- Help members set standards of honesty, teamwork, and good sportsmanship.
- Be willing to help whenever possible for the club as drivers, chaperones, lunch committee, or as need arises.
- Encourage and support the member in attending club meetings. Host meetings at home or help host at another location.
- Help member complete club and county requirements for the year.
- Give input into the county program by participating in county meetings and serving on committees.
- Have fun with youth.
- Read the 4-H newsletter and help youth stay on top of dates, deadlines, and rules.
- Any 4-H project is for any gender. Sewing and baking doesn't have to be only for girls, woodworking isn't just for boys.
- 4-H exhibits can match the interests your child already has. Do they have a garden, help cook, like to draw, or take lots of photos?
- Helping your child to keep records of what they have done throughout the year will be helpful in completing any year end records and really helpful in the long run when completing for scholarships and awards.
- Seek help and ask questions from Extension Staff, Club Leaders, fellow 4-Hers, and experts in specific project areas.

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