

SECTION 6

CLUB LEADERSHIP

Club Leadership Roles
Standards of Behavior
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Involving Parents

CLUB LEADERSHIP TEAM

Many people can help make up the 4-H club leadership team. Members and parents fulfill most of the job responsibilities; other people may be willing to serve on the team when asked to do specific jobs. The team begins with the 4-H members - boys and girls who belong to the club. The entire 4-H program is designed to provide "experiences for learning" for 4-H members. Parents are a part of the 4-H club leadership team. If they provide support, encouragement and counsel to 4-H members, the 4-H member is more likely to have a good 4-H experience. There are three categories of adult leader responsibilities in 4-H clubs - manager, project and activity. In addition, some leaders may serve as specialized leaders at the county level. Older 4-H members serve as Junior and teen leaders.

The Leadership Team

The 4-H club leadership team can consist of a combination of the following people:

Organization Leader - The organization leader gives leadership to the overall organization and management of the 4-H club. The organization leader serves as the coordinator for all the team members and provides general guidance to the 4-H club unit.

Assistant Organization Leader - The assistant organization leader assists the organizational leader by taking responsibility for one of the major duties and assisting the organization leader as needed.

Club Officers - The 4-H club officers are elected by the club each year and have the responsibility of planning, implementing and evaluating all club meetings and activities. They work with the organization leaders to form an executive committee that gives overall guidance to the club. At the beginning of the year, the executive committee staffs the 4-H club leadership team by recruiting adult, Junior and teen volunteer leaders and appointing club members as chairmen and committee members.

Committee Chairman - 4-H committee chairmen give leadership to club committees in accomplishing their assigned tasks.

Advisors to Committees - Advisors to committees assist the 4-H club committee chairmen and committees in accomplishing their assigned task. Parents of a committee chairman or member can easily serve as an advisor.

Project Leaders - 4-H project leaders provide structured learning experiences, personal guidance and counseling for new 4-H members enrolled in their project.

Teen Leader - A teen leader is a youth age 14 to 18 who takes total responsibility for a project, activity, or event with the assistance of an adult.

Junior Leader - A junior leader is a 4-H member age 13 to 18 who assists adult 4-H volunteers in any aspect of the 4-H program.

Activity Leaders - These leaders provide structured learning experiences and/or personal guidance for new members and/or other 4-H members involved in a 4-H activity such as presentations, share the fun, judging, exchange programs, community service or fund-raising.

Project Leader Coordinator - When there are six or more project leaders in the club, it may be a good idea to have a project leader coordinator that helps project leaders get information, provide extra training or information on teaching, and/or coordinates all project meetings and activities. This leader role could be one of the organization leaders.

Assigning Leadership Team Roles

The executive committee (organization leaders and officers) would review the club needs each year and staff the club with the leadership team that is needed during the coming year. For example, some years the number of officers will need to be increased because of the large number of experienced and older members. Other years, the number of project leaders will need to be decreased according to the size of the club. Using the criteria of providing the best possible opportunity for each club member to achieve the 4-H goals will result in the best possible team for each 4-H club.

It is possible for a single person to assume all of the adult leadership roles in a very small club, but it's not recommended. Being part of 4-H should be as much fun for adults as it is for kids. It's better to spread the chores. The number of adults you'll need depends upon the scope of your planned program and the number of 4-Hers in your club. By this point, you should have worked with the 4-H staff to determine the basics: what you want to offer, who your 4-Hers will be and how many you can work with.

ORGANIZATIONAL LEADER

An organizational leader provides guidance in leadership and management to a 4-H club unit. An organizational leader involves 4-H officers, parents, leaders, and members in promoting the goals of 4-H and serves as the contact person between the club and the county Extension office. In a volunteer management system it is very important that a good, active communication system exists. Since organizational leaders are the key leaders in the 4-H club, they need to be informed at all times.

Organizational leaders also need to have a thorough understanding of the 4-H program, knowledge of what a good 4-H club experience is and how to provide it to their members and families.

An assistant organizational leader assists the organizational leader by taking responsibility for one of the major responsibilities and/or by assisting the organizational leader as needed. It is recommended that an organizational leader serve as an assistant organizational leader before assuming the role of organizational leader.

VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
Volunteer Service Position Description: 4-H

Position Title: 4-H Club Organizational Leader VCE Contact: Extension Agent

Purpose: Provide guidance in leadership and management to a 4-H club.

Qualifications:

- A knowledge of and interest in youth and youth programs.
- A willingness to devote time and energy to the task.
- A willingness to participate in training for the task.
- The ability to share decision making and responsibilities with youth and adult volunteers.
- The ability to organize and manage a team effort.
- Knowledge of the 4-H program, at its' mission, core values and policies.
- A knowledge of the community and its' resources.
- Organizational skills
- Courteous manners and language
- Good sportsmanship

Responsibilities:

- Service to members and leaders within the club.
- Follow all 4-H policies and regulations.
- Enroll members and volunteers using 4-H enrollment forms, Code of Conduct forms, and 4-H Health History Report forms
- Act as a liaison between the club and the Extension Office
- Support project leaders
- Support club officers
- Provide six hours of educational experiences to 4-H members within the 4-H year

Training and Support:

- Fauquier County 4-H Leader's Training
- Fauquier County 4-H Leader's Association
- VCE – Fauquier County Staff

Supervisor:

- 4-H Extension Agent

Benefits:

- Satisfaction of significant contribution to growth of members.
- Respect and friendships of members, officers, parents/guardians.
- Recognition of accomplishments.
- Opportunity for continued personal growth.
- Opportunity for increasingly responsible leadership roles.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

PROJECT LEADER

The next step is to determine what projects your club will offer during the year. The project literature section lists all of the subjects and materials available from the Extension Office. Each project includes a leader's guide, which suggests step-by-step progress through the course requirements.

A project leader does not have to be an expert in his or her subject, and can enjoy the learning-by-doing as much as the kids do. If you have access to an expert, all the better.

The project leader now becomes a teacher. The Project Meeting Plan sheet will help to set up the series of lesson plans in advance.

VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
Volunteer Service Position Description: 4-H

Position Title: 4-H Project Club Leader VCE Contact: Extension Agent

Purpose: To enhance and introduce the skills of youth in a particular project area.

Qualifications:

- A knowledge of and interest in youth and youth programs.
- A willingness to devote time and energy to the task.
- A willingness to participate in training for the task.
- The ability to share decision making and responsibilities with youth and adult volunteers.
- The ability to organize and manage a team effort.
- Knowledge of the 4-H program, at its' mission, core values and policies.
- A knowledge of the community and its' resources.
- Organizational skills
- Courteous manners and language
- Good sportsmanship

Responsibilities:

- Introduce project area.
- Follow all 4-H policies and regulations.
- Oversee project skills and individual goals.
- Act as a liaison between the club and the Extension Office.
- Provide six hours of educational experiences to 4-H members within the 4-H year.

Training and Support:

- Fauquier County 4-H Leader's Training
- Fauquier County 4-H Leader's Association
- VCE – Fauquier County Staff

Supervisor:

- 4-H Extension Agent

Benefits:

- Satisfaction of significant contribution to growth of members.
- Respect and friendships of members, officers, parents/guardians.
- Recognition of accomplishments.
- Opportunity for continued personal growth.
- Opportunity for increasingly responsible leadership roles.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

GUIDELINES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERS TO ORGANIZE PROJECT LEADERS AND GROUPS

The first task is to identify parents or individuals who are willing to lead a project group. It is important to determine the 4-H members' needs and interests and then identify potential leaders who have skills and are interested in the same areas. Once the projects and leaders have been selected, then the organizational leader should plan a training meeting for those leaders. The purpose of the meeting will be to help them become familiar with what is expected of them as project leaders.

The following responsibilities should be covered at this meeting:

1. Fill out volunteer enrollment forms.
2. Project leaders should plan the overall goals and types of activities they plan to do with the project groups.
3. They should decide when, what time, and where the project group will meet and the approximate number of meetings planned. Depending on what goals are expected to be accomplished and their schedule, at least one and probably two project meetings a month are recommended.
4. At a regular club meeting, the project leader should give a short (2 min.) presentation of the goals and activities, when, what time, and where the project group will meet. Also, if there are specific requirements or limitations for their group (such as having a sewing machine or computer at home, or the number of youth in their group), they should be explained. Then the group will split up into project groups. The project leaders will discuss with parents and 4-Hers any questions they may have. It is recommended that each 4-Her choose one project group. First year members should take only one project group. Second year and over members should choose one or two project groups or one project group and one or two projects to work on individually.

After the club meeting, the project leaders will be sent the names, phone numbers, and addresses of 4-Hers in their group. A project organization meeting would be held in October or early November. Give each project group member a call for the first meeting. Parents should be requested to attend the first project meeting and invited to attend other meetings.

Before the first project meeting, using the leader project guides, project leaders should plan the goals they want the 4-Hers to accomplish for the year. Also plan the learning experiences they will be doing each meeting. At the first project meeting, the leader and 4-Hers can finalize the plans for the project meetings. The project leader should give a copy of their final plans for goals and activities. The members should also be given a copy.

Planning the Project Meeting

1. Project group meetings are generally held separately and at different times under the leadership of the project leader with the help of resource leaders and teen leaders. They may also directly follow your business meeting.
2. The majority of the time at these meetings is devoted to project instruction. A variety of educational methods may be used, such as demonstration, presentations, record keeping, tours, field trips, judging, workshops, and recognition. Any educational sessions would be related to the particular project area. Project meetings are important because 4-H projects are important. Project meetings will be interesting and relevant if club members have chosen their projects wisely.
3. Project group meetings should be planned in advance. Meeting plans should be based on the amount of help youth need to complete their projects. There should be a balance of instruction and hands-on activities to keep their interest and be fun.
4. Require members to bring a three-ring notebook with paper, their project book and a pencil to each meeting.
5. Use some type of activity sheet for each meeting. A certain part of each meeting should be planned for the members and leaders to fill out the sheets together. This will help them review what they have learned and know what they are to do at home. This will help parents know what their children are expected to do. These should be put in their notebooks and kept to be turned in with their record books.
6. Some time should be spent working on project record books, so they are up to date. More training on record books will be given during the year. The last project group meeting of the year should be spent on finishing project record books. They will be due in the Extension Office in October.
7. Members are required to attend project group meetings, complete their project requirements as set by the leaders, and complete their project record books in order to complete projects. Members who complete a project record may receive a completion certificate, ribbon, or medal. Also the number of members completing their project work determines whether or not the club receives a charter or seal.
8. Members should be required to give a presentation for their project group during the year. They should be encouraged to give one for the county Presentation Day.
9. Members should be encouraged to enter their projects in the County Fair in July.

ACTIVITY LEADER

This person should gather and study the information about the activities chosen, and become familiar with the requirements, deadlines, etc.

At each club meeting, the activity leader should update members about what's coming up and how to prepare for it.

For things like "Share the Fun", the activity leader may become "coach" for the 4-H'ers who choose to perform, and may lead them through the entire activity.

VIRGINIA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION Volunteer Service Position Description: 4-H

Position Title: 4-H Activity Leader VCE Contact: 4-H Extension Agent

Purpose: Understand, support and create an educational experience that supports the positive growth and development of each youth involved; develops important life skills and creates opportunities for youth to learn, lead and serve; and involves youth in becoming competent, caring, connected, citizens of character in their community.

Qualifications:

- A knowledge of and interest in youth and youth programs.
- A willingness to devote time and energy to the task.
- A willingness to participate in training for the task.
- The ability to share decision making and responsibilities with youth and adult volunteers.
- Knowledge of the 4-H program, at its' mission, core values and policies.
- Courteous manners and language
- Good sportsmanship

Responsibilities:

- Act as a liaison between the club and the Extension Office.
- Follow all 4-H policies and guidelines.
- Assist members in selecting age/developmentally appropriate activities.
- Assist members in reflection on their development of life skills through this activity.
- Identify community resources and connections for this activity.
- Participate in volunteer development opportunities to stay current with information, learn new skills and maintain our 4-H standard of quality experiences for youth.

Training and Support:

- Fauquier County 4-H Leader's Training
- Fauquier County 4-H Leader's Association
- VCE – Fauquier County Staff

Supervisor:

- 4-H Extension Agent

Benefits:

- Satisfaction of significant contribution to growth of members.
- Respect and friendships of members, officers, parents/guardians.
- Recognition of accomplishments.
- Opportunity for continued personal growth.
- Opportunity for increasingly responsible leadership roles.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

INVOLVING PARENTS: A GUIDE FOR 4-H LEADERS

4-H is a family affair, offering many opportunities where both child and parent can participate with common interests. The success of the 4-H program experience depends greatly upon parent support and involvement. By being involved in 4-H, parents can ensure the best growth experience possible for their child.

Benefits to the Child

When parents participate in 4-H, their child benefits from their support. In clubs where parental support is present, members receive more personal attention and guidance. Through this support, the child gains confidence and a feeling of security.

Benefits for Parents

Participation in the 4-H program can help parents feel they are contributing to the development of their own child as well as other children. Involvement in 4-H can promote a sense of adequacy, self-worth, and self-confidence in parents. Parents gain new skills and interests as well as ideas for helping youth learn as they help out.

Parents often develop or strengthen a positive rapport with their own child and other youth involved in 4-H. Through involvement in 4-H, parents strengthen their social networks with other parents and youth in the community.

Benefits to the Family

Not only does your child benefit from your involvement in 4-H, families benefit by sharing learning experiences and developing common interests. Through 4-H, family members support each other creating a sense of togetherness. Families are linked to other 4-H members and parents providing a connection with the community.

Benefit for Leaders and 4-H Staff

4-H parents can save leaders and 4-H agents time and work. They can offer skills and connections that the leader or 4-H Agent may not have. Having active parents involved utilizes all the talents of the group and increases manpower supporting the club or program. When parental support is positive, the club is likely to become stronger, and more active.

Barriers to Involvement

It's important to recognize that parents might not be involved for many reasons.

The most common barrier to parental involvement is that no one directly asked the parent to get involved. Parents may be informed or understand how they can help. Even if newsletters or announcements are sent home, the parent might not have received it from their child. Parents might not know how to sign up or get involved to help with 4-H. They might not think they have much to offer 4-H or might not realize how their talents could fit into the 4-H program.

Parents who have been involved in the past might not have been given the credit or recognition for their contributions. Worse yet, they might have been reprimanded for not doing something a certain way. Finally, parents might have been given the "dirty" work to do in which they can't see how it really helps the 4-H member or club.

Before You Involve Parents

Parent cooperation depends to a large degree on the expectations of the 4-H volunteer, 4-H Agents and members. When parents are only asked to help via "non-personal" ways and are not informed about club activities, little cooperation and help will arrive.

It's important that parents understand 4-H and can see avenues to become involved. Parents need to have information and an understanding of what 4-H is about. It's important not to assume just because a person was involved in 4-H in another state or parish that they are well informed about the way 4-H is in your community.

When looking at parents, 4-H club leaders and Extension staff should not assume all parents are alike or will take an active role in their child's 4-H experience. Being aware that differences exist, and knowing why, can help Extension staff and volunteers select the best way to approach parents about helping their child succeed. It's important to make the volunteer opportunity family-friendly.

When deciding on how to involve parents, find out what talents, interests, and skills they have. It's important to be specific about what you ask parents to do.

Parents should be offered opportunities that are meaningful. Prior to asking them for help, find out when they might be available to help and if they have any issues that might keep them from being involved.

Finally, parents will get involved if avenues for involvement are made easy and convenient.

Ideas for Parental Involvement

Active parents can make an exciting 4-H club experience for the members. When you think about involving parents, you need to think broadly. Parents can help in many settings including home, club, field trips or events. It's important to keep these settings in mind as you begin to try to involve parents as volunteers. Here are some ideas to promote parental involvement:

- ✓ Hold a Special Parents Meeting to talk about how they can support what the 4-H club or program is doing.
- ✓ Have a Special Parent's Night that can be a fun dinner, fun meeting, family night or recognition program.
- ✓ Exhibit the attitude of wanting parents to help, rather than expecting them to volunteer.
- ✓ Establish a Parent Advisory group to provide key feedback to support the 4-H club. The Leader might consider meeting at the same time and place as the club for the convenience of the parent.
- ✓ Use the Proud Parents Participate Survey which identifies what talents or interests the parent might be willing to share.
- ✓ Use a club news sheet that 4-H members can take home. The sheet can include want ads for parents to get involved.
- ✓ Provide parents with an informational packet and club calendar so they can plan in advance to get involved.
- ✓ Create parent job descriptions and ask them directly for specific roles.
- ✓ Involve parents in the program planning process. People care about things they are involved in.
- ✓ Communicate with the parents through a variety of sources including newsletters, phone calls and personal notes. It's important to find out how the parents like to be communicated with.
- ✓ Invite the parents to host or bring refreshments to meetings or events.
- ✓ Offer a prize to children who recruit their parent to volunteer.

- ✓ Ask the parent to chaperone a field trip or provide transportation when needed.
- ✓ Make sure parents know they are encouraged to attend workshops and club events.
- ✓ Have a suggestion box or ways that parents can provide feedback about different club projects and activities.

Parental Involvement at Home

With many parents working these days, it might be hard to imagine having the time to help your child. Parents can play an important role at home in supporting their child's 4-H experience by helping them prepare for 4-H club meetings, a 4-H event or contest. They can help their child with 4-H project work and record keeping.

Acknowledge Parent Support

Parents as well as their child should be recognized for their contributions and accomplishments in 4-H. A study by Culp and Associates showed that most volunteers prefer to be thanked by the 4-H members that they touched. Recognizing parents can either be formal during a ceremony or informal with a simple thank you. When parents feel recognized for their contributions, they are more likely to feel a close connection to 4-H program thus spurring on future involvement.

Here are few ideas for recognizing parents:

- ✓ Have the 4-H member select a parent of the month.
- ✓ Recognize parents who get involved in a public way.
- ✓ Have a bulletin board with club pictures including the leaders and parents who help out.
- ✓ Invite parents to club planning meetings.
- ✓ Put up a volunteer suggestion box or provide avenues for parents to provide feedback.
- ✓ Post a parent honor roll recognizing parents when they give their time.
- ✓ Send impromptu fun cards for everyday occasions as a thank you or during parent holidays such as Mother's or Father's day.

LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents:

Congratulations! You now have a new 4-H member in your family. We know that you are interested in learning more about the organization your son or daughter has joined.

The 4-H program is open to all youth ages 5 through 18 and is based on the concept "learning by doing." Each 4-H member learns by conducting a project with instruction, training, guidance and encouragement from volunteer leaders, parents, and the County 4-H Extension Agent.

You as a parent can help your child be successful in the following ways:

- Help your child select a project that will meet his/her needs or interests.
- Help your child with his/her project work (but do not do the work for the child). You can better help your child understand what to do, when to do it, and how to carry out the various parts of the project. Your child will better benefit by doing the project work his/herself.
- Encourage your child to participate in local 4-H meetings and activities.
- Provide your child's transportation to 4-H functions, if possible.
- Encourage your child to take part in 4-H public speaking, exhibits, camp, share-the-fun activities, and other events.
- Help teach your child the six pillars of character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.
- Encourage your child to complete his/her 4-H project(s), record books or portfolios.
- Complete the PROUD PARENTS/GUARDIANS PARTICIPATE form and return it to the local 4-H leader.

We, as leaders, hope we can help your son or daughter to have a challenging and fun experience with a project and in our 4-H club.

Sincerely,

Organizational Leader

PROUD PARENTS/GUARDIANS PARTICIPATE

4-H is a family program involving parents or guardians as well as youth. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to help their child and the 4-H club according to their abilities. Your cooperation and help will be greatly appreciated.

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Please check the things you would be willing to do to support your child's 4-H club:

_____ Lead or assist with a project (List project area): _____

_____ Help coordinate a community service project.

_____ Chaperone a club or county 4-H field trip or educational event.

_____ Provide transportation to club functions, or other events (occasionally).

_____ Help with public relations for the club.

_____ Help identify fundraising opportunities.

_____ Help provide light refreshments.

_____ Lend a living area, basement, backyard, etc. for an occasional meeting.

_____ Help with 4-H activities such as a tour, picnic, demonstration.

Please list your hobbies or interests:

Please list your occupation:

Other volunteer interests:

_____ 4-H committees

_____ Crafts

_____ 4-H camp

_____ Recreation

_____ Assisting at County Fair

_____ Natural Resources

_____ Program Planning

_____ Arts

_____ Club Leadership

_____ State 4-H Events

Thank you for caring! Your 4-H Leader will be in touch.