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**Agriculture &  
Natural Resources**

# Welcome to 4-H

A PUBLICATION FOR FAMILIES

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California  
**4-H**  
YOUTH  
DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM

TM & © 2017  
CITIZENSHIP  
LEADERSHIP  
LIFE SKILLS

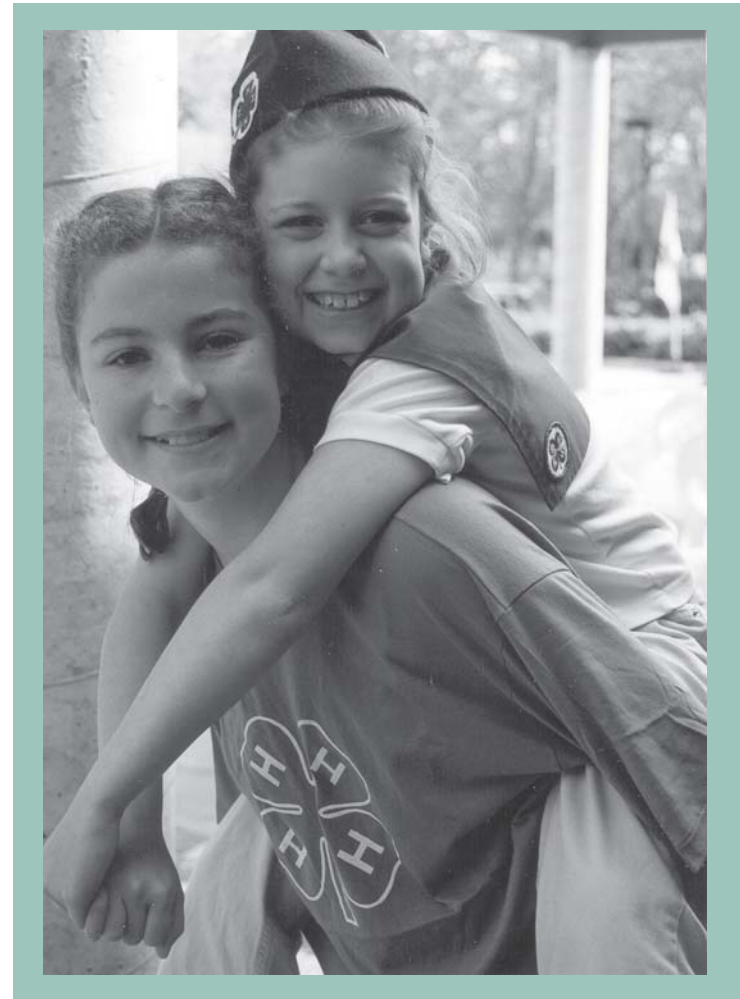
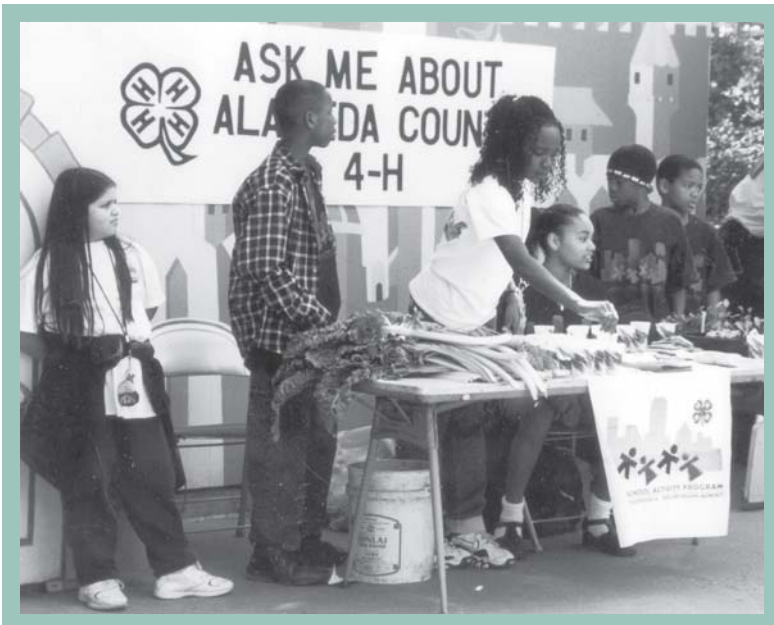
4-H-1057



*The 4-H Youth Development Program (4-H YDP) provides a wide variety of enrichment activities with the ultimate goal of engaging youth in reaching their fullest potential while advancing the field of youth development. The focus of all programs is the development of:*

-  *citizenship*
-  *leadership*
-  *life skills*

*through a variety of projects and activities.*



## INSURANCE

All 4-H members and volunteer leaders are covered by accident and sickness insurance. The volunteer leader in your club can tell you about this insurance. She/he can give you a leaflet that explains what medical costs are covered in case of an accident or illness that occurs during any 4-H work or while traveling to or from official 4-H meetings and events.

Liability insurance is a concern for all of us today. If you provide transportation or supervision for 4-H members other than your own child, you should apply to be a 4-H volunteer. As a 4-H volunteer, you are an agent of the University of California. The University of California maintains self-insurance programs for general and automobile liability that protect all employees and agents of the University while acting within the course and scope of University business.

Note: 4-H volunteers are University agents when actively engaged in 4-H business and, in the event of accidental damage to another's property, or accidental injury to another person during the conduct of this business, or as a result of negligence on the part of an agent, they are protected by the University's General Liability Self-Insurance Program. This insurance program does not provide coverage for the independent activities unrelated to duties as a 4-H volunteer leader, such as defects that exist in or on your premises, or liability that results from the acts of project or personal animals that cause injury. Personal property may include homes, arenas, and farms of 4-H volunteers or program staff. Those persons who utilize their personal property during the course of 4-H YDP activities should check with their insurance carrier and review their liability coverage. 4-H insurance does not cover personal property. Check with your county Cooperative Extension office for further details on insurance coverages and for a copy of *Insurance Coverage*, a special brochure explaining insurance for UCCE appointed volunteers. The brochure is available on the web at: <http://danr.ucop.edu/riskmanagement/brochure/FinalRiskBrochure.pdf>.

The purpose of the 4-H Youth Development Program (4-H YDP) is to help young people discover and develop their potential in partnership with a caring adult. 4-H encourages young people to set their own goals and make their own plans and decisions, helping boys and girls mature and build self-confidence. By being part of a group, 4-H members learn to understand and cooperate with others. These two basic skills help youth achieve a happy, useful life.

4-H is available through several different delivery methods including clubs, special interest groups, day camps, overnight camping, school and after-school enrichment programs, school-age child care programs, and individual study.

The 4-H YDP is a nonformal educational youth development program administered by University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE) as authorized by federal and state statutes. Each county has local Extension staff (County Director, 4-HYD Advisor, 4-HYD Program Representative) who administer the program in accordance with University and Extension policy. The Extension staff professionals provide the youth development framework for volunteers and cooperators who bring the knowledge, experience, and passion to work with youth in your community.

Youth are eligible to participate in 4-H as primary members if they are 5 years old or in kindergarten as of December 31 of the program year. Because programming varies from county to county, check with your local county 4-H YDP office to learn what is offered for primary members. If a youth is 9 years old or enters 4th grade by December 31 of the program year, he or she enrolls as a regular member. Please note that the grade criterion does not apply to home schooled children. Youth remain eligible for membership until December 31 of the year in which they turn 19 years old.



## GOALS

The goals of the 4-H Youth Development Program are to help young people:

- 4 Develop citizenship, leadership, and life skills.
- 4 Develop initiative and assume responsibility.
- 4 Develop the ability to live and work cooperatively.
- 4 Acquire knowledge and skills and explore careers.
- 4 Achieve satisfaction from work and accomplishments.
- 4 Make healthy choices and plan satisfying lives.
- 4 Develop positive self images.

## 4-H CLUB MEETINGS

The 4-H members in clubs operate under an established constitution and by-laws and elect officers. They plan, implement, and evaluate an annual Plan of Work. A volunteer leader coaches the officers and members in these activities and guides them as they acquire leadership skills. Any parent or adult volunteer leader may join the discussion during a 4-H meeting, but only 4-H members vote on matters that are brought before the club.

The meetings also enable members and parents/guardians to share experiences and interests. 4-H offers an opportunity to enjoy learning with family and friends.

## 4-H PROJECTS

*Learn by doing in an atmosphere where learning is fun* is a basic philosophy of the 4-H YDP. The project is where learn-by-doing, or the experiential education model, takes place. Within the project, members find things to learn, to do, to make, to explore, and then to receive feedback. A 4-H project is:

- 4 Planned work in an area of interest to the 4-H member.
- 4 Guided by a 4-H adult volunteer who is the project leader.
- 4 Aimed at planned objectives that can be attained and measured.
- 4 Summarized by some form of record keeping.

## COST

There is a minimal statewide program fee associated with 4-H membership. The program fee supports development of educational materials and covers the cost of accident and sickness insurance. There may also be a county or regional program fee.

It is rare that a club can do anything without funds. Money may be collected from members to cover the costs of project materials and 4-H events. The 4-H member must receive fair value in goods and/or services for any money collected. To prevent misunderstandings, it is a good idea for a parent/guardian to stay informed about any 4-H work that requires funds from a member. Local clubs raise money in various ways, but 4-H policy prohibits gambling, wagering, or raffles of any kind. Financial assistance may be available if you are unable to afford the fees. Check with your county 4-H office.



## UNIFORMS

A uniform cannot be required for 4-H membership. While caps and scarves and uniform items are available, they are never a requirement for membership. Some livestock shows and local fairs do require 4-H members to wear uniforms when exhibiting animals. When this is the case, check with your project leaders for the requirements.

## OTHER ADULT ROLES

4-H offers other opportunities for adult leadership including community club leaders, resource leaders, transportation, and support roles. Orientations are provided to each new volunteer leader. Background checks are conducted before a volunteer's initial appointment to the program by the UCCE County Director. Check with your local county 4-H staff for information.

## THOSE WHO CARE, SHARE

Part of the history of any organization is the philosophy of the people who help to guide its growth. The 4-H Motto is:

***To Make the Best Better***

The 4-H Pledge says:

***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.***

The 4-H Emblem is a four-leaf clover with the letter "H" on each leaf. The four H's stand for **Head, Heart, Hands, and Health**. The leaves of the clover are green and the H's are white.



The 4-H Creed says:

***I believe in 4-H work for the opportunity it will give me to become a useful citizen.***

***I believe in the training of my head for the power it will give me to think, plan, and reason.***

***I believe in the training of my heart for the nobleness it will give me to become kind, sympathetic, and true.***

***I believe in the training of my hands for the ability it will give me to become helpful, useful, and skillful.***

***I believe in the training of my health for the strength it will give me to enjoy life, to resist disease, and to work efficiently.***

***I believe in my country, my state, and my community, and in my responsibility for their development. In all these things I believe, and I am willing to dedicate my efforts to their fulfillment.***

Each year, a 4-H member enrolls in at least one project. Members enrolling for the first time should be encouraged to take on only one project. As members gain experience, they may increase the size of the project or select additional projects. With their project leader and parents/guardians as mentors, members should select a project that will be a challenge but not one that is larger than they can handle. Any project a 4-H member selects should be based on:

- 4 Interests and needs.
- 4 Resources available to support project participation (e.g. space and equipment needs, time available to participate, etc.)



A list of the 4-H projects can be found on the back of the publication, *4-H Member's Guide* (4-H-1052). Check with your county office to see which projects are currently being offered in your county. The availability of a project depends upon whether an adult volunteer is available to lead it.

Project leaders supervise 4-H projects with the help of parents/guardians, but it is the 4-H member who must do the work. Some projects (raising plants and animals) involve the production of items for sale. Where this is the case, a written agreement should be established between the 4-H member and his or her parents/guardians.

Some project groups meet once a week. Others meet once or twice a month. The purpose of these meetings is to guide the members in gaining knowledge, attitudes, skills, and habits needed to complete their work successfully.

Project manuals and guides, reports, and record forms are available to 4-H members for most projects for a modest fee. The volunteer who leads the project will obtain these for 4-H members. 4-H record forms help the members keep track of what they do in their project work.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROJECT LEADERS

Project leaders are adult volunteers, sometimes parents/guardians of members. They are interested in young people, and they:

- 4 Help members plan and organize their project work based on a proven experiential model.
- 4 Help members organize and conduct project meetings.
- 4 Obtain project literature and distribute materials.
- 4 Encourage members to set attainable, measurable objectives and develop their own standards for project work, according to their abilities and interests.
- 4 Keep members informed about project-related events in which they are eligible to participate; give members ideas on how to prepare for these events.
- 4 Give recognition for any kind of progress to encourage continued improvement.
- 4 Spend some time at the end of each year with each member showing them how to measure and evaluate the overall progress made in the project.
- 4 Talk with parents of members who need extra help or who have problems working with other members.
- 4 Participate in leaders' meetings, keeping the organizational leader informed of their own group's work and progress.
- 4 Work with junior and teen leaders to maximize their contribution to the project.



## RESPONSIBILITIES OF 4-H CLUB MEMBERS

4-H members work as individuals and as a team. They:

- 4 Select projects with guidance from a 4-H leader and parent or guardians, or join a special interest group.
- 4 Create and complete a plan for project work.
- 4 Keep a record of project work.
- 4 Attend 4-H meetings.
- 4 Participate in local and county 4-H activities and events.
- 4 Learn the 4-H Pledge and Motto.
- 4 Exhibit project work.
- 4 Participate in committee assignments.
- 4 Participate in community service activities.
- 4 Abide by the 4-H Code of Conduct.

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

As a parent/guardian, you can support the 4-H program in many ways. You can:

- 4 Support and guide the project work of your child.
- 4 Provide financial support for your child's project work.
- 4 Provide transportation.
- 4 Help your child secure needed materials or equipment.
- 4 Offer assistance to the project group and to the 4-H program.

You are vital in helping your child to get the most out of the 4-H experience. Please take an interest in 4-H projects and events and encourage your child to participate. If your child is taking part in an event, come and watch and visit with others. Interest and participation make 4-H strong.

Whenever possible, attend local 4-H meetings. As a parent/guardian of a 4-H member, you will have much in common with other parents/guardians. Keep in touch with project and organizational leaders, or become a leader or an assistant leader. If you want to help, ask the organizational leader what you can do. He or she will appreciate any assistance or support you can give.