

JOIN 4-H!

What is 4-H?

4-H is the largest youth serving organization in the country. It is a volunteer-led program that reaches youth in both rural and urban settings. Professional leadership is given by Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service. Local leadership is provided by 4-H Youth Extension Educators and 4-H Program Assistants. Support for 4-H programs is a joint effort of local county government, Purdue University, and the United States Department of Agriculture.

4-H programs are hands-on, age-appropriate, and university-based. 4-H helps youth improve their self-confidence; learn subject matter; and develop important skills including leadership, citizenship, communication, and decision-making that can be applied over a lifetime. 4-H is young people sharing, doing, and learning together in all kinds of projects, events and activities in informal situations with guidance of their families and other volunteer adult leaders. Members choose projects that fit them and the places where they live. Group activities and events such as talent contests, trips, camps, fairs, shows, and workshops provide additional opportunities and learning experiences.

4-H is open to all youth and adults whatever their ethnic background, race or personal creed. Most 4-H clubs have meetings for the entire membership once a month. During these business meetings, decisions are made concerning group-sponsored activities, community service efforts, project opportunities, fund-raising projects, etc.

The Purpose of 4-H

The purpose of 4-H is to . . .

Provide real life experiences for youth through a fun, action-oriented, and practical program.

Provide opportunities for parents and other interested adults to work with youth in their development.

The major focus of 4-H should be on the activities of your local 4-H club. Volunteers serve as 4-H leaders to plan and carry out organized learning experiences with youth. The many county and state activities are secondary. Their purposes should be supplementary support to reinforce what has been learned in local club programs.

The Origin of 4-H

4-H, as we know it, began around 1900 as a means of reaching parents with improved farm and home practices. American farmers had experienced poor economic times for 30 years. It was risky business for them to try a new recommended farm practice. In 1902, a few Midwestern school teachers developed some crop demonstrations with their students who in turn shared their successes with their parents.

These school projects developed small groups that covered a single topic such as: beef, corn, gardening, and canning. By 1909, some were called 3-H clubs and in 1911 the name 4-H was finally adopted.

What Can 4-H Offer Your Child?

Through the eyes of a youngster - a 4-H'er will:

- Learn by doing things that appeal and are meaningful to them.
- Make friends, belong to a group, and give and receive acceptance.
- Have a good time, which makes learning appealing and enjoyable.

Through the eyes of an adult, each 4-H'er will one day become a contributing and caring member of the community because of the knowledge and life skills they learned in 4-H. These youngsters will learn how to:

- Develop an inquiring mind and a desire to learn.
- Make decisions and solve problems.
- Relate to and work with others.
- Develop a concern for their community and the people in it.
- Build their self-confidence.
- Learn to set goals and reach them.
- Develop a sense of responsibility.

4-H Emblems and Symbols

Emblem: The national 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. These represent the training and development in which members participate. This meaning of the four "H's" is clearly given in the pledge below.



Pledge: 4-H members should learn the National 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.

Colors: Green and white are the 4-H colors. The white background of the logo symbolizes purity; the green 4-H clover represents springtime, life, and youth.

Motto: The national 4-H motto, "To Make the Best Better," should be the objective of every member and leader.

Slogan: "Learn By Doing"

Definitions of Some 4-H Terms

Achievement Resume - This resume/application is developed by a 4-H'er containing information covering all of their 4-H activities. These resumes are necessary to be eligible for some State and National 4-H scholarships and trips.

Clover Connection - This is the title of the monthly Posey County Newsletter mailed to every 4-H family. This acts as the source for communication on events and activities and general information for 4-H'ers. It is important to read this, to keep up to date on deadlines and activities.

Club Guidelines - Most 4-H clubs have a set of written guidelines for the operation of the club. Be sure you become familiar with your club's guidelines early in the year.

Completion - Achieving in 4-H means a member completes all membership requirements of the 4-H club for the year.

Enrollment Forms - You fill out an enrollment form at the beginning of the 4-H year to join a 4-H club. The individual 4-H projects that you select for the year are listed on this form.

Exploring 4-H - Exploring 4-H is a summer program designed specifically for youth in grades K-2. The Summer Assistant plans this program filled with hands on activities and several workshops. These children may exhibit items that they made at these workshops at the fair. Though they are not judged, they will each receive a ribbon for participating.

Fair Entry Tag - You list the specific project you will display at the county fair on the fair entry tag. Entry tags are to be placed on your project upon entering it at the fair.

4-H Achievement Point Card - This sheet is kept in your record book. You record the points that you should receive for participation in all different aspects of the 4-H program. The sheet is added to each year. Trips and awards are chosen from the points on this sheet. Please make sure you are accurate in recording the points each year!

4-H Enrollment - Youth may become 4-H members when they enter Grade 3 and may continue as a member through Grade 12, regardless of age, with a maximum of 10 years of participation. Grade is determined by the grade during the current calendar year. Any special situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis by the 4-H Council.

My Record of 4-H Achievement - You record your projects describing what you have done and learned on My Record of 4-H Achievement. You will also record the activities, meetings, and committees you have participated in during the year. This is kept in your record book, and is added to each year.

Project Manuals - Project manuals are guides written by specialists that lead you through activities and give suggestions to help you complete your projects.

Record Book - This book is given to first year members. Your achievement records, points sheet, and project record sheets are kept in this book. The book accompanies each project during the check in at the fair. You continue to add to this book every year you are a member of 4-H.

Trip Application - You must fill out a trip application to apply for 4-H trips. A 4-H Council committee selects the trip winners.

Who's Who In Posey County

Local Level:

4-H Member - Anyone who is in grades 3 - 12 within the calendar year, who participates in a local 4-H group or activity.

4-H Club Leader - A volunteer who is responsible for the organization of the club.

Junior Leader - A 4-H member who is in 7th Grade or older and is enrolled in the Junior Leader project. They take an active part in helping the younger members in their club. They attend Junior Leader meetings once a month. They participate in community service activities, fund-raising activities and learn leadership skills. There is a set of Junior Leader Guidelines for these members to follow to complete this project.

Parents - You are very important to the success your child will have in the 4-H Program. You are encouraged to attend monthly meetings with your child. All county-wide events are open and parents are encouraged to attend. Your key role is the support you can give to your children: support your child in the commitments he/she makes; help him/her think through decisions; and see that he/she reaches his/her goal. There are several ways for you to help: (1) Attending 4-H meetings and other special events. (2) Guiding your child's project work and encouraging completion without doing the work for the 4-H'er. (3) Supporting the local 4-H club leader and offering your services. (4) Making it possible for your child to participate in a variety of 4-H activities, such as camps, fairs, and contests.

County Level:

Project Superintendent - Project superintendents are volunteers who are willing to answer project or activity questions for other volunteer leaders or 4-H members. These volunteers are listed in the 4-H Handbook.

4-H Council, Inc. - This is the 4-H policy-making group, as well as the private funding source for many county level 4-H programs. This group meets on the first Thursday of each month.

4-H Junior Leaders - This organization is for any 4-H member in 7th Grade or older. The group plans social and educational events for its members. The meetings of this group are in addition to participation in a local 4-H club.

4-H Youth Extension Educators - They are the professionals who guide, teach, and administer the 4-H Program. They are staff members of Purdue University.

4-H Program Assistant - This person assists the Youth Extension Educator and plans all 4-H activities. He/she is an employee of Posey County.

Contact [Cheven Meyncke May](#) for information on joining Posey County 4-H!!!!