

February 11, 2020

Dear 4-H Families,

First and foremost, I am very excited about your children's involvement in the Mini 4-H program in Newton County! This is the first year that we have opened our Mini 4-H program up to kindergarten and first grade students and we are looking forward to providing a meaningful program that can lay the groundwork for many great 4-H years to come. With this being a new initiative for us, we welcome your feedback as we fine-tune the program moving forward.

That being said, it was recently brought to my attention that there may be some confusion regarding the rules for Mini 4-H members (kindergarten, first, and second grade) and animal projects. Page 15 of the Periscope explains that:

Safety Policy for Mini 4-H members: "Mini 4-H members, in grades K through 2, will be allowed to show, work with, or care for animal projects after their parent or legal guardian has signed a liability release. Mini 4-H members may independently show, work with, or care for animals that weigh 300 pounds or less. Mini 4-H members may only show, work with, or care for animals over 300 pounds when they are assisted by a parent, legal guardian, or another adult designated in writing by parent or legal guardian." (The word assisted means that the adult has control of the animal at all times.)

However, the individual Mini Livestock projects specify that kindergarten and first grade students are limited to doing posters about their animals and only second grade students are allowed to actually show animals.

When opening up the Mini 4-H program, we restricted kindergarten and first grade students from showing livestock based on careful consideration and feedback from volunteers and parents. The safety policy on page 15 comes from the state office and had to be included.

We apologize for any confusion, but for the Newton County Mini 4-H program, to show an animal a 4-H member must be in at least second grade.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Newton County Extension Office at (219) 285-8620 ext. 2800.

Sincerely,



Dallas Howard
Extension Educator
4-H Youth Development