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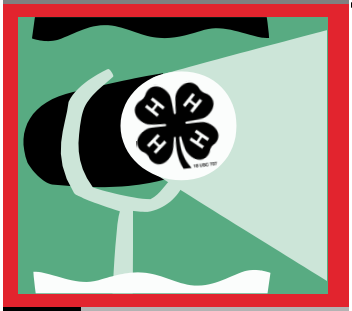


UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN EXTENSION

SPOTLIGHT ON 4-H!

HELP! I CAN'T DO THIS ALONE!

Many 4-H leaders may feel this way, but it is not necessary for leaders to be charged with sole responsibility of the club's activities and members. Before diving into tips for making your life as a 4-H leader easier, understanding your role and impact you have with the youth you work with is a good starting point.

4-H is a positive youth development organization in which programs and activities are aimed at being purposeful towards the development of each youth participating in the program. 4-H leaders serve a very important role in their club members' development – as a caring adult. According to the National 4-H Council, the caring adult can be described as an advocate, friend or supporter of youth in their club. This is significant role built into your title as "4-H Leader"!

For some, that may encourage you to give your best and for others, it may add more stress to you as the 4-H club leader! If you fall into the second category, here are some tips and ideas for avoiding burnout as a leader:

- Create an organized schedule at the beginning of the 4-H year; set dates, locations, topics, and hosts for each meeting. Having this done at the beginning of the year will allow you, as well as the families in your club plan better!
- Ask for help! Parents, Extension staff, other community members to provide an educational program, activity, or lesson during a club meeting. You may be surprised how willing others may be to help you if asked!
- Utilize youth as officers and committee chairs. At the beginning of the 4-H year, elect youth officers and ensure they are equipped with the knowledge and/or resources they need to run the meetings. Organize the club into committees, led by youth members with an adult (leader or parent) acting as a mentor or guide.

By implementing the tips above you will find yourself with a more reasonable workload as a 4-H leader. And, many of these tips encourage your club to head in the direction of meeting the club of excellent standards set forth by Nebraska 4-H.

EXTENSION

Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The 4-H Youth Development program abides with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Inside this issue:

Clover Kids - Creating Fun Club Time	2
Recycled Woodworking Projects	3
Preparing Houseplants for Exhibits	4
Junk Drawer Robotics	5
4-H Emergency Preparedness	6
4-H Diamond Clover	7
UNL - College Admissions	8

Special points of interest:

- *Wondering how to incorporate Clover Kids into your club? Check out these tips on working with our youngest 4-H'ers.*
- *It's not junk if you can turn it into a robot! Learn more about the Junk Drawer Robotics program!*
- *How can you become one of the special 4-H Diamond Clover program? Learn more about how to use your life skills through leadership and communities.*

Discover 4-H, Discover YOU!
4h.unl.edu

4-H CLOVER KIDS - THE PRE 4-H ADVENTURE

They are exploring, eager to be involved, and have boundless energy. Middle childhood, ages 5-7, is an exciting time for children. 4-H Clover Kids is age-appropriate, hands-on, and non-competitive. The primary goal of Clover Kids is to promote children's healthy development - mentally, physically, socially and emotionally.

Fair exhibits and events may be offered for Clover Kids; check with your Extension Office. Exhibit examples might be a poster, cookie, Lego, vegetable or plant, handmade craft of various medium/s, etc. Watch for that proud kid with a ribbon stuck in his back pocket (like the big kids) and that big, proud smile!

The 4-H Clover Kids program will give kids new experiences as they have fun learning and working together, build new skills and relationships, develop curiosity and creativity, enrich their learning and challenge their thinking. 4-H Clover Kids can be one of the most rewarding experiences for youth as they learn more about themselves and their world.

Youth may be organized into clubs or groups or may participate independently with their family. An optimum time to meet with Clover Kids might be prior to or during a 4-H club meeting. A ratio of 5 Clover Kids per volunteer would create a good learning environment. Fifteen to twenty minutes is a good length for the learning activity, followed by refreshments and recreation. Incorporating simple community service projects is a great concept to introduce, as they learn about their community and have fun giving back. Praise the kids, recognize their successes, talk and laugh with them. Resources may be available at the Extension Office, books, internet, etc. Website resources: http://4h.unl.edu/resourcelibrary or http://child.unl.edu/cloverkid.

Adult volunteers and parents are an important part of Clover Kids. Most are willing to help when asked - hosting a meeting, sharing a skill, making phone calls, providing transportation, etc. These adult volunteers will work with kids learning through simple, fun activities. Being a Clover Kids volunteer can be one of your most valuable learning experiences as you share with children. The amount of time, energy, and enthusiasm that you commit to the program is likely to impact its success. Volunteers must complete the DHHS Youth Protection 4-H Volunteer Screening, available at the Extension Office or online: http://4h.unl.edu

4-H teens who like helping younger children can add to their 4-H experience by giving leadership, support, friendship, and being a positive example. Teen mentors can benefit from this experience as they go on to future leadership roles. Children in the 4-H Clover Kids program are more likely to continue their commitment to 4-H. The Clover Kids program provides an opportunity for children to reach their highest potential because early life experiences affect future development. Clover Kids - Future 4-H members... Let the learning and fun begin!

RECYCLED WOODWORKING DISPLAY

In 2013 a new class was added to the Woodworking Project area under SET. Class H911006. Recycled Woodworking Display (SF91) allows youth to use recycled, reclaimed or composite wood to build their article.

Recycled wood can be used to produce unique eco-friendly furniture. Recycling old or damaged pallets prevents unnecessary landfill and reduces the need to chop down trees for new wood also gives you the opportunity to make an inexpensive project. For great ideas look at http://www.designrulz.com/product-design/2012/09/35-creative-ways-to-recycle-wooden-pallets/

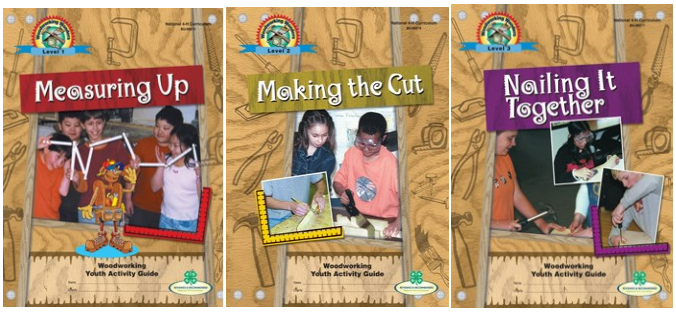
Most reclaimed lumber comes from timbers and decking rescued from old barns, factories and warehouses, although some people and companies use **wood** from less traditional structures such as boxcars, coal mines, pallets and wine barrels.

Composite lumber is a material that is a mixture of wood fiber, plastic, and some type of binding agent. These ingredients are put together to form a material that is denser, stronger, and heavier than wood alone, a wood-plastic composite. Additional composite lumber comes in a variety of colors which may give you more ideas for projects.

Project requirements include: a *woodworking plans* need to be included as well as a *one page report* answering these six questions. 1) State the problem (Why did you need this item?) 2) Generate possible solutions (How have others solved the problem? What other alternatives or designs were considered?) 3) Select a solution (How does your solution compare on the basis of cost, availability, and functionality?) 4) Build the item (What was your woodworking plan, and what processes did you use to build your item?) 5) Evaluate (How does your item solve the original need?) 6) Present results (How would you do this better next time?)

4-H'ers need to remember when working with recycled, reclaimed or composite wood, the same woodworking techniques including appropriate finishes are required.

State Fair Judging hints: One of the biggest issues woodworking judges see is insufficient sanding. 4-H'er should run their hand across all parts of the wood working project and when it feels smooth to the touch, sanding is complete. Finishes will not cover up poor sanding technique. Another issue judge's see is lack of information when plans have been modified. 4-H members need written documentation on where and how they changed the plans. This could be as simple as making notations of the original plans. Finished wood project should be free of pencil marks, chipping, dents, uncut fibers, hammer marks, splits and planer or sanding marks. Also Finishes should be uniform and free of blemishes such as dust, specks, brush bristles, runs and sags. Finally project will function well, is attractive and well-proportioned given its intended use.



PREPARING HOUSEPLANTS FOR EXHIBIT

Growing healthy houseplants is both challenging and enjoyable. Some houseplants are grown solely for their foliage while others are grown for their blooms as well as their foliage.

Growing houseplants successfully requires knowledge about good nutrition, correct pruning and/or pinching-back, adequate light and water requirements, and selection of the best plant for the available growing environment. Houseplants need to be turned periodically to encourage the plant to develop an even shape.

Plants grouped in containers (collections) should have similar sun, water, and fertilizer requirements. Foliage and flower color, texture, shape, and size are important aspects to consider when selecting plants for effective container grown collections.

For display, plants need to be healthy and vigorous with no evidence of nutritional deficiency. They should be symmetrical in appearance, compact, and bushy - not scraggly, leggy or top heavy. Plants should be mature enough to be a good representative of the species and variety. Select plants typical of the variety in color, shape, and texture of foliage, stems and blossoms. Avoid over-crowding plants in the container.

Keep plants well-groomed. Dead, wilted, faded or damaged blossoms and dead or damaged buds, leaves, stems or seedpods are best removed. Plants should be clean and free of soil, dust, or spray residue on leaves and flowers; free of insects or damage from insect; and free from disease or mechanical damage.

Houseplants need to have been grown in the display container for a minimum of six weeks in good quality soil. Plants grown as houseplants must be used. Container grown houseplants, dish gardens, desert gardens and terrariums should be in pots/containers no greater than 12 inches in diameter (inside opening measurement). Use a container that is in good condition with no chips or cracks. Use one that is clean and free of soil or salt build up on the rim or on the outside of the container. The container should be in proportion to the size of the plant with the color, texture and style of the container complementing the plant without drawing attention away from it. The soil surface should be clean and free of dead leaves or flowers, salt build up, mold or weeds.

Cacti and succulents should have no broken, damaged or missing spines. Remove dead or damaged blossoms, leaves or segments. Plants must be identified with the common name, for example: heartleaf philodendron, bunny ears cactus or polka dot plant.

Learning how to prepare indoor plant exhibits for a fair is an important skill that will instill lifelong appreciation of plants long after a 4-H career is over.

JUNK DRAWER ROBOTICS

Add engineering fun to your club meetings or after school workshop with *4-H Junk Drawer Robotics* curriculum. The goal of *4-H Junk Drawer Robotics* is to engage youth by making science, engineering and technology meaningful in their lives. The activities encourage youth to use the processes and approaches of science; the planning and concepts of engineering; and to apply technology to create their projects. It's also an easy way to enliven a club meeting and get participants engaged with others while they work together to solve the problem.

The activities in Junk Drawer Robotics encourage youth to use the processes and approaches of science; the planning and conceptual design of engineering; and the application of technology in each module.

As a facilitator, your role is to help learners develop their own knowledge and problem solving skills. This is done by bringing together a scientific inquiry and engineering design approach to learning. You assist youth in developing understanding by asking questions and prompting them to share and talk about their ideas, designs and results.

You may also work with a team of teen presenters who enliven the activities they lead with their own experience and enthusiasm. In that case, you will mentor or coach the teen presenters by providing support, training and guidance as they lead the activities.

The Junk Drawer Robotics curriculum has three books. In Book 1, *Give Robots a Hand,* participants explore the design and function of robotic arms, hands and grippers and build a robotic arm.

In Book 2, *Robots on the Move,* 4-H'ers design and build machines that roll, slide, draw or move underwater and explore robot mobility - movement, power transfer and locomotion.

Book 3, *Mechatronics,* is all about the connection between the mechanical and electronic elements of robots and you will explores sensors, write programs, build circuits and design

The activities are designed to work in club meetings, after school settings or independently. The items needed for the activities are available at most Radio Shacks or you can find packaged kits online at 4-H Mall.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR FAMILIES, HOMES , FARMS AND RANCHES

It's important that you and your family know what to do before, during, and after an emergency. This means understanding what emergencies are likely to happen in your area and specific ways to respond to each one. You should also understand the ways you can get information about potential threats, such as through text alerts, emergency sirens in your community, or other methods.

It is very important to know the different weather alerts:

- A watch gives advance notice that conditions are favorable for dangerous weather.
- A warning requires immediate action and is only used when severe weather is about to strike.

If a disaster strikes your community, you might not have access to food, water, or electricity for some time. You should have emergency kits for your home, office, school, and car. Steps you can take to help your family stay safer and healthier during and after a disaster can be found on the Red Cross website or the Emergency Management website. Below are just a few suggestions but depending on your circumstances the needs for your family will change:

Consider storing two weeks-worth of food supplies:

- Store at least a 3-day supply of water which means 1 gallon per person per day.
- Don't forget about pets; they'll need food and water too.
- Learn where your gas, electric, and water shut-off locations are and how to turn them off.

For a 4-H activity create a Family Communication Plan. You and your family may not be together when a disaster hits. It's important to create a Family Communication Plan to help you and your loved ones connect and get help. Complete a contact card for each family member. Have these cards handy in a wallet, purse, backpack or all three. Because of the convenience of cell phones many of us have not memorized the numbers, the cell phone may be lost or the phone may not be charged.

Family contacts are important, but identify an out-of-town contact, such as a friend or a relative, who family members can call to let them know all family members are safe. It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, because the phone lines can be jammed. An out-of-town contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members.

Always remember to review these plans with all members of your family and don't forget to consider what you would do with your pets.

Family Emergency Plan

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME:
TELEPHONE:

OUT-OF-TOWN CONTACT NAME:
TELEPHONE:

NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING PLACE:
TELEPHONE:

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

DIAL 911 FOR EMERGENCIES

Ready ®

GET YOUR 4-H'ERS INVOLVED IN DIAMOND CLOVERS!

The Nebraska 4-H Diamond Clover Program encourages 4-H youth to engage in a variety of projects and activities that will enable members to acquire the life skills necessary to lead successful lives as competent, caring, and contributing citizens. The programs overall goal is to provide 4-H members a rich and diverse learning experience.

To begin the **Diamond Clover Program**, a 4-H member must complete the Plan Portion of the Plan & Report form. This is a great thing to encourage and do at a club meeting. The Plan Portion is saved and attached to the Report Portion of the form that is filled out and turned into the local county extension office at the end of the year.

4-H members will obtain a certificate of achievement at the end of the 4-H year once they have completed a level. Levels 1 through 5 are awarded by the local county Nebraska Extension office. Level 6 Diamond recipients will be presented a certificate and a diamond clover pin by the Nebraska State 4-H office.

The program consists of six levels that require a 4-H member to plan and report a broad range of age-appropriate accomplishments. The program is designed to enable every 4-H member willing to exert the effort an opportunity to be recognized, regardless of how they are involved in 4-H.

Benefits of the Diamond Clover Program

For Youth:

- Recognition improves self-esteem of youth
- Enhance the progress toward self-set goals
- Develops life skills
- Encourages and supports lifelong learning
- Provides opportunities for youth/adult partnerships
- Resume building

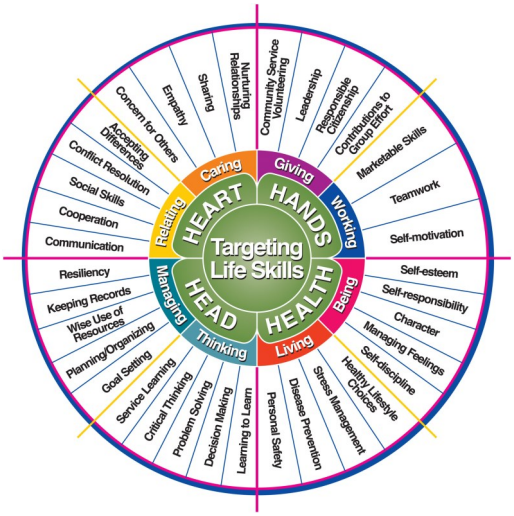
For Volunteers/Adults:

- Provide achievement opportunities to 4-H members
- Encourages positive and progressive leadership in youth
- Promotes retention and recruitment for 4-H membership
- Engages 4-H members in a variety of educational projects and activities
- For all members

For Communities:

- 4-H develops competent, caring and contributing citizens
- Prepares youth and adults leadership in the community
- Provides source of community pride

To learn more about how you can get your club members involved in the **4-H Diamond Clover Program,** visit https://4h.unl.edu/diamond clover.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

BE PREPARED TO MEET COLLEGE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

It is the time of year that High School students are selecting and enrolling in the classes that they will take for the 2015-2016 academic year. These decision may not seem very important, but in reality making out a four year plan and following will be helpful so that students are prepared for their future educational endeavors. All post-secondary institutions have requirements they consider when granting admission to their institutions.

University of Nebraska – Lincoln guarantees admission for college freshmen if they meet the core course requirements and at least one performance requirement. If a student does not meet the requirements, UNL strongly encourages potential students to apply anyways—admission will be determined by a committee appointed by the Director of Admissions and the student's complete academic profile will be considered.

Performance Requirements:

Freshmen applicants should:

- Score 20 or higher on the ACT, writing portion not required.
- Or, score a total of 950 or higher on the SAT Critical Reading and Math sections.
- Or, rank in the top half or their high school graduating class.
- All freshman applicants under the age of 23 are required to submit an official ACT or SAT score.

4-H! YOUR FIRST CLASS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA!