

SPOTLIGHT ON 4-H

Nebraska Extension 4-H Newsletter

March 2016

Do's and Don'ts of being a 4-H Parent

Thank you for enrolling your youth in the nation's largest youth development organization! 4-H is a very rewarding program for your whole family and is what is referred to as a family affair organization. This means the youth and the adults learn from each other by trying new things, meeting new friends, and having fun together. The greater the parent/guardian involvement, the greater and stronger the 4-H program will be. The following lists of Do's and Don'ts of Being a 4-H Parent/Guardian is adapted from the 4-H Leader Training Series from New Jersey, to help maximize your effectiveness as a caring and supportive 4-H adult.

DO'S:

- **DO** take time to learn about 4-H, what it stands for, and how it operates
- **DO** advise your son or daughter in selecting 4-H projects. Help them select a project they are interested in, have the ability to accomplish, and one for which you can help furnish needed materials, facilities, financing, and guidance.
- **DO** keep in mind that the most important goal of 4-H is personal growth of the individual.
- **DO** help your youth see the progress they have made and knowledge they have gained and not just focus only on the end result. Give them encouragement when they succeed and even more when he/she fails. Judging events are all about learning, not the awards. Whatever ratings are given or scores received, help your child to see progress made, things learned, goals that have been reached and areas to focus on in the future.
- **DO** volunteer your hobbies and talents to 4-H leaders and 4-H youth.
- **DO** keep informed of 4-H deadlines, activities, and events by taking the time to read the monthly newsletters, emails, facebook posts, or whatever method of communication between your local Extension Office is with the families.
- **DO** help youth by guiding and supporting them, not by doing their project for them so they can develop their own life skills. This may include some bumps and bruises along the way, but in the end the 4-H member will be better off if they know that the 4-H project was their own work!
- **DO ASK QUESTIONS!** 4-H has its own culture and language, so don't be afraid to ask questions.

DON'TS

- **DON'T** do your child's projects for them, even though you may be able to do it faster, better, simpler, and with much less mess. Remember 4-H is Learning By Doing.
- **DON'T** discourage a child's enthusiasm by providing too much corrective influence or criticism.
- **DON'T** let the desire to win overpower your child's ability to learn. Do keep in mind that the 4-H experience should be an educational one.
- **DON'T** schedule family outings which constantly conflict with your child's 4-H schedule.
- **DON'T** view your child as an extension of yourself. Don't view his/her success or failure as a reflection of your ability or worth.
- **DON'T** assume your child is always right.
- **DON'T** be disrespectful to the judges when your child didn't get the award or color of ribbon you thought they should have received. Remember, the judge's opinion is just one person's opinion.

Remember that 4-H is learning by doing. The most important thing for a parent or guardian to do for a 4-H youth is support and encouragement. There is no failure in 4-H just learning from mistakes. Be a supportive parent and help your child and 4-H leader to "Make the Best Better!"



In the Spotlight for March!

- Volunteer Code of Ethics
- Coaching Young 4-H Members
- 4-H Career Explorers
- Youth Corn Challenge
- Smart Snacking
- Positive Youth Development

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.



4-H Code of Volunteer Ethics

The primary goals of the Nebraska 4-H Youth Development program are to help youth develop competency in their projects, confidence in themselves and others, connections in their community, life skills, and sound character. Adults are to help youth do what they are capable of doing, promote teamwork and leadership while helping 4-H members learn, and have fun. Everything an adult says and/or does should be consistent with positive youth development.

In order to help remind the adults involved in our program of these guidelines, each year volunteers are asked to sign of Code of Ethics. This code stands as the guiding principles we expect volunteers to follow when working with youth. By signing the document volunteers are agreeing to meet these expectations. Any volunteer who breaks this code, will be asked to step down in their role with the 4-H program for the safety and wellness of the youth involved.



This Volunteer Code of Ethics sets forth expectations of 4-H volunteers. As a Nebraska 4-H Volunteer, I will:

- Act to encourage and justify trust. Teach 4-H'ers the meaning and importance of trustworthiness.
- Treat members, parents, volunteers, Extension staff, judges and others with respect, courtesy and consideration. Avoid and prevent put-downs, insults, name-calling, yelling and other verbal or non-verbal conduct likely to offend, hurt or set a bad example.
- Be informed about youth and their positive development. Fulfill responsibilities by striving to improve my performance as a volunteer and a mentor of young people.
- Attend volunteer training sessions, seek out and use research-based resources and educational materials.
- Teach and model kindness and compassion for others. Recognize that all youth have skills and talents that can be used to help others and improve the community. Teach and demand teamwork and discourage selfishness.
- Teach and model fair-mindedness by being open to ideas, suggestions and opinions of others.
- Make all reasonable efforts to assure equal access to participation for all youth and adults regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin or disability. Make all decisions fairly and treat all youth and adults with impartiality.
- Teach and model the importance of obeying laws and rules as an obligation of citizenship. Obey the laws of the locality, state and nation.
- Promote the responsible treatment of animals and stewardship of the environment.
- Do not use alcohol or any illegal substances while working with or when being responsible for youth. Do not be under the influence while working with or when responsible for youth. Do not allow youth to use alcohol or any illegal substances while under your supervision.
- Not harming youth or adults in any way, whether through sexual harassment, physical force, verbal or mental abuse, neglect, or other harmful behaviors.
- Provide a safe environment for youth to learn.



4-H club meetings and activities provide a safe, positive and caring environment for youth members. In addition, 4-H provides a sense of belonging for its members. It is also an ideal arena for leaders and adult volunteers to see their important roles as coaches for their youth members. Whether on the basketball court or during a club meeting, caring coaches are able to **SPARK** the interest of their team members, **WATCH** for their passions, **TAP** into their strengths and **PRAISE** their accomplishments.

SPARK their interest by offering a variety of 4-H topics. This can be done by seeking out expertise in the community or from adults in the club. Taking a survey of hobbies, professions and special expertise from the adults associated with your club, will reveal many subject areas that could be taught such as robotics, sewing, photography, entomology or engineering. Excellent community connections may include 4-H alumni or even retired teachers who would be willing to lead a session in their area of expertise. Introducing a topic area could ultimately be the spark that it takes for a 4-H'er to find their true passion.

WATCH for passions and interest as 4-H activities unfold. Youth who ask for more information or want to repeat a topic area are signaling their above average interest. Providing additional hands on activities or attending a workshop help solidify an interest area. Seeking out higher level opportunities such as job shadowing, company tour experiences or even short term internships for older 4-H'ers can turn their passions into a career path.

TAP into their strengths. Give 4-H'ers opportunities to try their wings by assigning a leadership role when a 4-H'er shows willingness to be responsible. The social butterfly can be in charge of an ice breaker. Once their interests are expanded and their skill level is increased, they will be ready to teach and lead others. Providing 4-H'ers opportunities to tap into and use their strengths will get them on their way to becoming a confident leader.

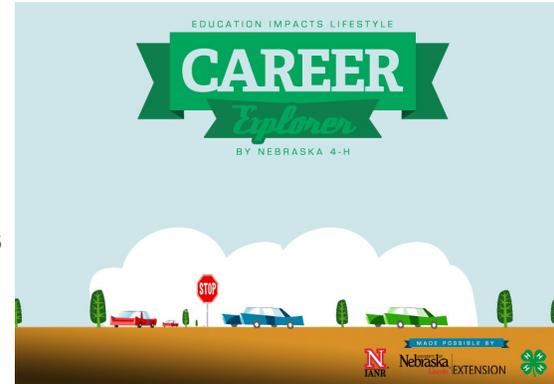
PRAISE and acknowledge the accomplishments of 4-H members. Personal hand written notes, making announcements during club meetings or notifying the local newspaper about recent award winnings gives other members positive role models to follow. This also solidifies the winner's willingness to set another goal and increases their confidence.

Taking time to be a coach for 4-H youth has many rewards. Successful coaches spark the interest in their members, watch for their passions, tap into their strengths and praise their accomplishments. The reward comes with watching the 4-H'ers grow and mature into outstanding leaders.



4-H Projects = Future Careers

Our 4-H members are busy youth in their schools and communities, so it should be a priority of 4-H leaders to ensure their club meetings and events are relevant, interesting and educational. Some 4-H leaders may struggle with how to ensure their club meetings and events are truly relevant, interesting and education. One of the ways to achieve this is to incorporate career exploration into club meetings and events. The goal of including career exploration into club meetings is for members to understand their current 4-H project can lead them to a future career!



By nature of the 4-H club, this may be easier than others. For example, if the club has a focus on equine, livestock, or foods and nutrition, it would be somewhat of an easy task to pair a career and/or company from the community or region with interests of the group. However, if youth in the club have a wider range of interest, pairing future careers to their interests may be more challenging.

Here are some ways to incorporate careers exploration into your club meeting or activities:

- Invite a careers speaker to your club meeting that would link a 4-H project to a career in the community. Ask the members of your club what kind of careers they are interested, then work to identify a community member or parent to speak about that career. Make sure they highlight their college experience too!
- Take your club on a tour of a local or regional business. Ask presenters on the tour to highlight their career, what their duties are, and what kind of education is needed for their career.
- Take or make an opportunity to have your students play on the Nebraska 4-H Career Explorer website or app. This can be downloaded onto a mobile device or viewed online at careerexplorer.unl.edu.
- Encourage your club members to participate in the regional 4-H interview contests held in the spring each year in each Nebraska Extension district. Hold mock interview practice during club meetings. Ask your Extension staff in your county for more details on this contest.

Career exploration can be the highlighted program for a club meeting if you have a speaker or go on a tour, for example. Other examples from above can be used as a time filler or as a follow up activity during club meetings. Encouraging youth to think about future career paths tied to their current 4-H projects – the possibilities are endless!



Eight percent of the 3.2 million U.S. farms are operated by millennial generation farmers (34 years of age or younger), however as the older generation of farmers retires that could change. There is not only tremendous opportunity for youth to return back to the farm, but a huge need for youth to obtain a career in agricultural field. As the population continues to grow, new technologies emerge and amount of farmland decreases, there is a huge need to increase food production on less land.

The 4-H agricultural projects have traditionally focused on livestock, however in recent years, there is a couple of engaging crop-related programs for youth to consider. In its fifth year, the **Innovative Youth Corn Challenge** program offers 4-H clubs or FFA Chapters to teach youth agronomic principles by increasing yields using a novel or innovative practice. **Nebraska Extension** and the **Nebraska Corn Board** have teamed up to provide this contest, open to 4-H members (age 10 & older as of Jan. 1st) or FFA members (in-school members). This program guides participants through all aspects of corn production, as well as agricultural careers related to corn production. Not only does this provide youth and leaders, a great hands-on project, but also there are cash incentives, as \$2,000 in prize money is awarded annually. If interested, the sign-up date is March 15th. Details can be found at cropwatch.unl.edu/youth.



The second opportunity for youth to practice teamwork related to crops is the **Third Youth Crop Scouting Competition** held August 2, 2016. Youth interested in crops have the opportunity to learn about crop growth & development and basic crop scouting principles. This contest will be held at the ARDC near Mead and includes indoor and outdoor events. Teams of junior high and high school students (those completing 7-12th grades) from across Nebraska are invited to participate. Clubs or other organizations may enter a team composed of three or four participants. An adult team leader must accompany each team of students. Team leaders could be FFA advisors, crop consultants, extension staff, coop employees, etc. Top-scoring teams win prizes: \$500 for first, \$300 for second, \$250 for third and \$100 for fourth place.

More information about the crop scouting competition and instructions on how to register a team are available online at cropwatch.unl.edu/youth. Click on the link that says, "**Crop Scouting Competition**". Teams must be registered by July 15th.

For more information on either of these programs, contact Brandy VanDeWalle at brandy.vandewalle@unl.edu or (402) 759-3712.



Snacks That Satisfy

There are many mixed messages about snacking: Snacks are part of a healthy day. Don't eat that, you will spoil your appetite!



In reality, if the right foods are offered at the right times, snacks can play an important role in managing kids' hunger and boosting nutrition. Snacks can keep younger children from getting so hungry that they become cranky, and they can keep older kids from overeating at larger meals. And for picky eaters of all ages, snacks can be added insurance that they're getting the necessary nutrients.

But it's not just about what you offer as a snack — it's how much you serve and when. Pay attention to portion sizes and timing of snacks so they don't interfere with a child's appetite for the next scheduled meal. Snacks should be about 100 calories.

Kids who are allowed to graze all day long often have a hard time figuring out when they're truly hungry — one key to maintaining a healthy weight in childhood and later in life. Structured meals and snacks are one solution. As kids get older, you can't always police what they eat, but you can encourage healthy snacking by keeping nutritious foods at home.

Snacking well can be a challenge, especially once kids are old enough to make independent food choices. But if you've set the stage right from the start — offering mostly nutritious choices at home and encouraging good alternatives when away — they're more likely to reach for something healthy when hunger strikes.

- Pick foods that are low in added fat and sugar and high in fiber and water. This means an apple is better than a bag of chips.
- Aim for fruits, vegetables, whole-grain snacks, and low-fat dairy.
- Naturally sweetened is better than foods and drinks that contain added sugar.
- Fresh fruit is a healthier choice than a fruit-flavored drink. Foods and drinks that list sugar or corn syrup as one of the first ingredients are not healthy snack choices.
- Pairing protein and carbohydrate will help the snack to keep you fullest for the longest. Examples include having apple and string cheese, whole wheat crackers with peanut butter, carrots and hummus, or plain yogurt and fresh fruit.



At a 4-H meeting, come up with ideas for healthy snacks. Have ingredients on hand so the 4-Hers can each invent a trail mix. Use popcorn, pretzels, snack crackers, raisins, or other dried fruit. Think of a variety of textures, flavors and colors.

The right snacks fit into the overall meal plan for the day. A good snack helps a child stay focused so they can “make the best better.”



Positive Youth Development

The field of Positive Youth Development is embedded with Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (1943), which was concerned with what individuals need in order to thrive or do well in life. According to Maslow, in order for healthy development to occur, human beings need to meet foundational needs such as basic physiological needs (food, water, and shelter) and safety. The needs have expanded from the five to eight needs today. Human beings thrive when the following happen:

- **Biological/Physiological Needs:** air, food, drink, shelter, warmth, sleep, etc.
- **Safety & Security Needs:** Protection from elements, security, order, law, stability
- **Love & Belonging Needs:** Friendship, intimacy, affection and love from work, family, friends, & romantic relationships
- **Esteem Needs:** self-esteem, achievement, mastery, independence, status, dominance, prestige,
- **Cognitive Needs:** knowledge, meaning
- **Aesthetic Needs:** appreciation and search for beauty, balance, form
- **Self-Actualization:** realizing personal potential, self-fulfillment, seeking personal growth and peak experiences
- **Transcendence Needs:** Helping others achieve self-actualization

From research we know that children and youth who don’t have their foundational needs met struggle throughout life and do not reach self-actualization. Recent brain research indicates that belonging is another essential need for children and youth. If their basic survival skills are not met, they are unable to focus on learning and engage in social situations. Positive youth development programs model their programs after Maslow’s research. The latest trend from 4-H to help youth becoming healthy and contributing adults need the following core areas:

Belonging

- Positive Relationships with a Caring Adult
- Youth Need a safe emotional and physical environment
- Inclusive Environment

Mastery

- Encourage Engagement in Learning
- Mastery Develops Confidence

Independence

- Youth need to see themselves as active participants in the future
- Self-Determination-Important step toward adulthood

Generosity

- Service to Others

The research from Karen Pittman about the 5 C’s of Positive Youth Development correlates with Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs.

Pittman’s 5 C’s of Positive Youth Development

- **Confidence** - a sense of self-worth and mastery; having a sense of self-efficacy (belief in one’s capacity to succeed)
- **Character** - taking responsibility; a sense of independence and individuality; connection to principles and values
- **Connection** - a sense of safety, structure, and belonging; positive bonds with people and social institutions
- **Competence** - the ability to act effectively in school, in social situations, and at work
- **Contribution** - active participation and leadership in a variety of settings; making a difference

Lerner has added one more C in 2007, “caring”

- **Caring** - a sense of sympathy and empathy for others; commitment to social justice

Maslow’s research has laid a foundation for Positive Youth Development programs in the future. There is a need for quality programs to focus on the Eight Needs and include the latest research from Pittman, Lerner, 40 Developmental Assets from the Search Institute and many others to help children and teens become contributing members in our society.





CALENDAR OF EVENTS



SCIENCE WITH A PURPOSE IN CASNR!

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln (UNL) is a place where students can be challenged, where their story starts and where their personal legacy begins.

In the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, or CASNR for short, students will find an education with a goal. CASNR focuses on science with a purpose and is a place where students find people are concerned with their futures beyond their time on campus. Study in science positions students well for future jobs that address real-world problems, and a wealth of opportunities await students as they find their area of study to match their career dreams. CASNR has first-class faculty and staff which offer the opportunity for students to create their own businesses through the Engler Entrepreneurship program, get involved in an incredible line-up of clubs and organizations, conduct cutting-edge research with faculty mentors, or experience the world in far-flung locations through Education Abroad.

CASNR assists students as they discover their unique passions and talents and helps them find their place in the world. With 30 diverse academic programs, students are prepared for tomorrow's great challenges through hands-on learning experiences. They will be taught by internationally recognized faculty who are conducting research and sharing valuable information from the lab or field to the classroom. Scholarship awards totaling more than \$1 million are given to CASNR students each year.

For more information on any of the programs in CASNR, contact Sue Ellen Pegg at 402-472-0615 or spegg2@unl.edu.