EXTENSION
4-H Youth Development

Volunteer

SPOTLIGHT ON 4-H

Nebraska Extension 4-H Newsletter — July 2020

Why 4-H in 2020 - By Melisa Konecky

As we move into 2020, we will continue to find that as we engage people with conversations about getting involved with 4-H, we will still find ourselves fighting for time in people's lives when time is their most precious commodity. How can 4-H compete against the likes of school, sports, club teams, precious free weekend time, etc.? But what if instead of competing, we worked in cooperation with these things, and do people really even understand what modern 4-H looks like?

We know that 4-H has long since moved past the days of requiring a cow or pig to participate, so let's continue to show people what modern 4-H looks like. Today's 4-H programs looks like:

- 4-H focuses on the areas of STEM, Agriculture, Healthy Living, and Civic Engagement.
- 4-H of today will reach kids through school programs, 4-H clubs and 4-H camps.
- 4-H is one of the most inclusive programs, welcoming all with a focus on hands-on opportunities to learn and build life skills.
- 4-H'ers are 4 TIMES more likely to give back to their community (Tufts University)
- 2 TIMES more likely to make healthier choices
- 2 TIMES more likely to participate in STEM activities
- 600 million total participants; 1.8 million rural youth, 1.6 million suburban youth, and 2.6 million rural youth.
- 500,000 volunteers and 3,500 4-H professionals.

Looking at these, it aligns with a lot of goals of those other organizations and things that we find 4-H competing with, so why not just work together for the same goal? Maybe it's having the sports team work on a community engagement or leadership project and enter it at the fair. Maybe we find a way to have our schools and clubs or extension staff work together on a program or curriculum. While it is hard to compete with people for their free time, we do know that what sets 4-H apart from other organizations is the great support of our local, statewide and national communities who work hard to make sure opportunities are available for youth in any area that is of interest to them. 4-H works best through the commitment of great parents and volunteers who work to help our youth develop into successful adults. So as we move into 2020, let's remember that 4-H is still as relevant as ever, we may just need to know what it looks like in people's lives.

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Jennifer E. Hansen, Stacey Keys,
& Samantha Beutler

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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.

Thriving Kids in Thriving 4-H Clubs

By Tammy Stuhr

"*We know, there are a great many things that contribute to high quality 4-H programs- programs that promote youth thriving. But belonging is the essential, number one, most important, critical, if-you-do-nothing-else-do-this, ingredient in what we do. Creating a place to belong is so important, that without it, the rest of the positive things we try to do in our programs will make little difference*."

-Dr. Mary Arnold, 4-H Specialist, O.S.U.

Dr. Arnold loves the impact 4-H had on her life. She is providing research on how to make the 'magic' happen when a child is active in a 4-H club. So far, her research team has found these ingredients: express care, challenge growth, and share power. What can these look like in a 4-H Club?

Express Care – start by using the youth's name. Be able to recognize them when they arrive and greet them. Learn about their *SPARK*. A spark is the thing that gives a youth's life purpose. This spark may be a future career, a cause they are passionate about, a skill or talent they are building, or a quality they possess and use for carrying out the 4-H Pledge (ex. Empathy).

Challenge Growth – Find out a young person's plans or goals. Challenge them to take the next step. If they shoot archery, encourage them to shoot the county contest. If they are a teen, encourage them to receive their instructor certification. The next step may be to carry out their goal in a wider area. If they plan to help their school recycle, challenge them to help the neighboring district to start the program.

Share Power – Train your club's officers so they can do their job well. Ask parents for help in mentoring club members so they master their duties. For non-officers, let them share an expertise, make and discuss motions, and have a vote. One thing Arnold encourages is letting them determine the club's purpose. You can have them fill in these blanks:

- In our 4-H club we: _____
- In our 4-H club we avoid:_____
- In our 4-H club when we feel _____ we will _____

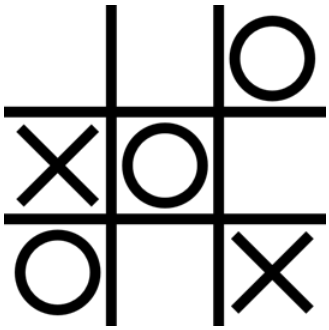
For more information on Thriving, visit Arnold's blog at http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/youththriving/.

Animal Science—Grab & Go Lesson

By Rhonda Herrick

Animal Science, how can we teach our 4-Hers about this project, especially in those times live animals aren't around? Let's have some fun together!

Animal Squares



This animal science activity is a spinoff of the television show "Hollywood Squares" and can be used with a variety of different animal science topics.

Break the group into two teams. Designate one team as O and the other as X. Now assign individuals a number on each team starting with 1, so that on each team you have a 1 and 2 and 3 and so on until all members have been assigned a number.

Place nine chairs so that you have three rows and three columns of chairs. The chairs make up your "Tic Tac" game board.

The two teams line up on each side of the board. You call out one number and the two individuals with that number from each team race to take a seat on the board and hold their arms up over their head to form an X or an O. Now you ask the first team member that just took a seat to name the livestock term you describe. If they answer it correctly they maintain their symbol. If, however, they give an incorrect answer their competitor has a chance to answer. Incorrect responses get back in line.

Supplies Needed: A list of livestock terms and descriptions and Nine Chairs.

Possible Topics: Animal Breeds, Nutrition, Genetics and Reproduction, Animal Health, Quality Assurance, Management Practices.

For a list of possible questions contact rherrick1@unl.edu

The Match Game

In this animal science activity you will need the livestock term on one 8 ½ by 5 ½ sheet of cardstock and the description on a similar sheet. Randomly number the back with an individual number so that each piece has an individual number from 1 through how many you have. You should always end in an even number.

Lay out pieces with numbers up. Break your group into two teams. The object of the game is for each participant on each team to have an opportunity to find a match by calling out two numbers to be turned over and attempt to match a livestock term with a description.

Supplies Needed: A list of livestock terms and descriptions. You can also do this activity with breeds and breed descriptions.

Two pieces of 8 ½ by 5 ½ card stock for each livestock term.

Building Social Emotional Skills

By Chandra Giles

Ten year old Fredrick was frustrated because his lamb kept stepping on his toes. He calmly set his lamb up and looked at the judge through teary eyes, keeping his emotions under control. What he wanted to do was cry, quit, and go take his boot off. What was the thing that kept Fredrick from doing what he wanted?

Social Emotional skills are taught in 4-H. These skills including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making can be incorporated into every interaction with youth.

Self-Awareness is the ability to identify one's feelings and know how thoughts and feelings influence what we do. Allowing youth to share their thoughts and feelings on a subject help develop this. When working on a 4-H project ask questions like, what part of making this did you like the most? What part was the most difficult? What did you do when it was difficult?

Self-Management is the ability to manage feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in a variety of contexts. Taking turns, following instructions, and controlling emotions, thoughts, and actions can be taught in club meetings, project meetings, and every interaction with the youth.

Social Awareness is the ability to understand and empathize with others. Waiting for their turn to speak, debating issues respectfully, and working in teams on projects, trips, or committees are all great opportunities for teaching social awareness.

Relationship Skills are the ability to communicate and connect with a range of people in a healthy way. 4-Hers are often very comfortable interacting and communicating with people from all generations because there are opportunities in 4-H for this interaction.

Responsible Decision Making is the ability to make positive choices about how one behaves. Whether it be to choose to let others go first, or to work through a group decision making process, there are plenty of chances to teach youth how to work through a process of choices and consequences.

Fredrick's social awareness made him understand that the show ring was not the place to throw a fit and stomp off. His self-awareness helped him know that while he was tired and injured, that the appropriate response in the show ring was to have grit and continue to show. His self-management and responsible decision making skills put that grit into action as he set the lamb up, blinking the tears from his eyes, and looked at the judge. A purple ribbon and a compliment on his showmanship from the judge applauded his social-emotional skills he developed in 4-H.

Nebraska *FIRST* Robotics

By Julie Kreikemeier

Are you looking for a creative way to introduce STEM in to your clubs, school enrichment or afterschool programs? Robots, robotics programs and FIRST robotics competitions are your answer! *FIRST* (**F**or **I**nspiration and **R**ecognition of **S**cience and **T**echnology) is a not-for-profit organization devoted to helping youth discover and develop their passions for science, engineering, technology, and math. *FIRST* has partnered with the LEGO Group to create what they call the Ultimate Sport of the Mind, *FIRST* Robotics. In Nebraska, *FIRST* robotics programs are arranged by Nebraska 4-H.

Every year Nebraska 4-H works to provide *FIRST* robotics competitions for three age levels through *FIRST* LEGO League (FLL) competitions. Jr. FLL, for youth in kindergarten thru third grade, show their knowledge by completing four tasks. Completion of the tasks prepares them to complete challenges at the Jr. FLL Showcase. FLL competitions, for youth in grades 4-8, challenge youth to build a LEGO-based robot and complete themed challenges each competition year. Completing a challenge with the LEGO-based robot is only one part of an FLL competition. The other two components of the competition are focused on team work and a team project centered on the yearly competition theme. Teams of 4 to 10 youth have the opportunity to compete at a qualifying competition in hopes of qualifying for the Nebraska State Robotics Expo, typically held in February. The third age level of robotics competitions in Nebraska, is *FIRST* Tec Challenge (FTC), for grades 7-12, where youth are in charge of creating their own robots and compete in an alliance format with other teams. FTC robot kits are designed to be reused from year to year and to be programmed using several different computer languages. Nebraska 4-H holds an FTC scrimmage and competition for teams in Nebraska. Each level of competition challenges youth through different tasks and obstacles.

The robotics competition season in Nebraska starts in December with FLL qualifying competitions and ends in February with the State robotics competitions. A great way to learn about the *FIRST* competitions is by getting involved with them. Lending your time to helping at a competition as a volunteer is an excellent way to understand how the competition works and a glimpse into the preparation needed to participate. For more information about robotics competitions in your area contact your local Extension Office or http://4h.unl.edu/nebraskafirstrobotics.

This article comes from a series of resources developed by 4-H Youth Development professionals in the Eastern Nebraska Extension District. Learn more about 4-H at 4h.unl.edu!

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FIRST Robotics Nebraska

Could this be Grief? Loss, Disappointment, and Cancellations

By Dr. Holly Hatton-Bowers & Dr. Amy Napoli

Many of us have experienced major changes in our daily routines and activities. We have experienced loss of social connections, normalcy of routine, and a sense that life is forever changed. For youth, they have experienced these changes and losses too. Abrupt school closures, not being able to participate in ceremonies and cancellations of summer camp or family vacations can bring feelings of sadness, disappointment, and frustration.

It's important to know that youth may be experiencing ***grief.*** According to the National Institute of Health, grief is defined as a reaction to a major loss of someone or something. It is common for young people to feel ***grief*** during this time of great uncertainty. For some, this will be their first major encounter with grief; therefore, it can be helpful to understand the experience of grief: the emotions, behaviors, and/or reactions. Grief is universal and also personal.

Grief is normal and can be shown in different ways. Some youth may withdraw and become quiet, some will cry more easily, some will be more argumentative and irritable, push people away or become clingier. Sometimes feelings of grief will lead to physical symptoms, such headaches or stomach aches. Grief can be overwhelming, confusing, and particularly challenging during a pandemic. Furthermore, grief is cyclical in nature. Unfortunately, it is not something you experience once and then it is over.

What can caring adults do to help young people experiencing grief? Support them by helping them identify their experience as grief. Learning about grief can help youth understand their experience, name their experience, and give them some ideas to be in control of their feelings. It is important to remember that youth are resilient. Research finds that in difficult times and changes, having a caring and supportive adult can help young people.

Here are some ways adults can support youth:

- **Be available, present, and patient to talk about grief**. Youth may not be ready to talk about their grief, loss, and disappointments right away. Be available and patient when they are ready to talk. It may take time to go through the process of grief.
- **If youth are ready to talk, simply listen.** Empathize with them and actively listen through eye contact, limit interrupting, and demonstrate interests through verbal and nonverbal communication. A head nod, gentle pat on the shoulder, or saying "I appreciate you sharing this with me or I am here to listen to you, is there anything else?" are ways to show active listening.
- **Help youth understand that we all have times when we experience grief.** You can say, "I understand this is difficult. You seem disappointed. It is really hard to miss out on this. Do you want to talk about it?" When you see youth are upset, it is best to first acknowledge these feelings and offer some understanding. Listen and accept their thoughts and feelings unconditionally and refrain from judgement.
- **Try not to go into a "I need to fix this" mindset.** Seeing youth experience strong feelings, like disappointment and grief, can be difficult. Avoid minimizing or reassuring them that "it will be ok" or "it is fine." These types of statements can feel dismissive. Create a safe space for youth where they can be heard.
- **Acknowledge that everyone responds to grief in different ways**. Some youth may be angry, some will be stubborn, sad, or silent. These are all common ways of responding. Let youth express these strong feelings in safe ways.
- **Be a good role model**. Youth observe how adults handle disappointment, frustration, sadness, and anger. When you feel upset, model mindful breathing or share your feelings with others, this shows youth it is safe and okay to feel their feelings.
- **Help youth reflect to find meaning in these experiences**. It may be helpful to support them in helping others and finding gratitude. When they are ready, ask them what they are learning through this experience.
- **Find moments to laugh and express joy**. Help youth understand that it is common to experience different feelings and emotions at the same time.

These resources can provide additional support and help:

- Visit https://griefsjourney.org for workshops and support groups to help youth.
- The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) provides free and confidential support 24.7.
- Crisis Text Line (text 741741) is free from anywhere in the U.S. and provides support for those in crisis 24/7.

These are difficult and painful times. Youth experiencing grief need a caring, available adult who is there to help them gain skills to be more resilient. Learning healthy ways to cope with these difficulties and strong feelings are important lifelong skills.

More information and resources about youth social-emotional development in difficult times can be found at http://disaster.unl.edu/families or by contacting your local county Nebraska Extension office.

Youth Mentoring

By Megan Hanefeldt

You might have heard of youth mentoring, but what exactly is it and what is the importance of it? According to the National Mentoring Partnership, youth mentoring is 'a development strategy for a youth's successful path to adulthood'. In many of our communities, youth mentoring takes place in both formal and informal settings.

An informal mentoring setting is a naturally occurring adult/youth relationship. These types of mentoring settings can be found in our communities in the form of church or civic associations. This can also be a trusted adult in a young person's life. These trusted individuals can make a huge impact on a young person's life by instilling a positive future for the child.

A formal youth mentoring program is a structured adult/youth relationship where a mentor is matched to a mentee. The TeamMates mentoring program in Nebraska has been providing an avenue for youth mentoring since 1991 when Tom Osborne felt the athletes in his program could make an impact on middle school students in Lincoln. The TeamMates program today has nearly 170 chapters serving over 10,000 matches. The program is based on three fundamental pieces: Hope, Engagement and Well-being. Hope allows students to have hope for the future and make the future better than the present. Engagement allows for students to do their best every day by engaging them. Well-being allows students to examine how they currently feel and how they feel their life will be in the future.

We know the different types of mentoring avenues, but why is it important? "Research through the National Mentoring Partnership confirms that quality mentoring relationships have powerful positive effects on young people in a variety of personal, academic, and professional situations. Ultimately, mentoring connects a young person to personal growth and development and social and economic opportunity."

I would encourage you to seek local youth mentoring programs already in place in your community. Turn an hour here and there into time to make a positive impact in the life of a young person. 90% of those mentored want to become a mentor for others, so the ripple effect goes on and on.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July

July 1 - Deadline - All Livestock affidavits, DNA due to Extension Office
July 7 – Registration Deadline – Cupcake Decorating Summer Workshop
July 7 – 4-H Council Meeting, Courthouse Meeting Room, 7:00 p.m.
July 8-11 – Fremont 4-H Expo (CANCELLED)
July 12-16 – State 4-H Horse Show (No in-person, virtual format)
July 13 – Deadline – Presentations Contest Entries
July 13 – Practice Presentations (by appointment) Courthouse Meeting Room
July 14 – Cupcake Decorating Summer Workshop, Beginners (9:00-11:00 a.m.)
Advanced (1:00-3:00 p.m.), Country Kitchen at Fairgrounds
July 16 – Presentations Contest, Courthouse Meeting Room, 5:00 p.m.
July 24 – Horse Level Testing Due for County Fair Only Youth
July 31 – Deadline – Dress Revue

August

August 3 – Deadline – Cuming County Horse Show Entries
August 7 – Deadline – County Fair Livestock Entries
August 7 – Dress Revue Judging, West Point High-School, 9:00 a.m.
August 7 – Life Challenge Contest, West Point High-School, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
August 8 – Cuming County Fair 4-H Horse Show, 3:00 p.m.
August 13-16 – CUMING COUNTY FAIR

Pandemic promotes new six-college collaborative course

By Craig Chandler

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln has launched a six-college interdisciplinary course exploring the world's current circumstances due to COVID-19 through different disciplines and perspectives. Offered as a five-week, online class beginning July 13, it includes more than 30 faculty and staff — the most involved in teaching one course in recent university history.

"The COVID-19 Pandemic: Effects on Industries, People and Society" will help students process the coronavirus pandemic and analyze its effects on their own lives and others'. The faculty and staff providing their expertise in topic-driven modules represent 13 departments and academic units in the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources, College of Architecture, College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business, College of Education and Human Sciences, College of Engineering and University Libraries.

Open to students of any major, the pass/no pass course runs July 13-Aug. 13. When enrolling in MyRED, students can choose to take it for one credit hour or no credit. No tuition is charged if taken for no credit. No prerequisites are required.

"We're hopeful this will provide a unique opportunity for students throughout the university to learn about the pandemic through a variety of lenses," said Erin Burnette, director of the Nebraska Business Honors Academy, who coordinated the course and is an instructor. "We also want them to experience new ideas and faculty outside of their primary major, minor or college."

Through short, recorded lectures, brief readings and online discussions via the Canvas learning platform, students will examine topics such as the science of viruses like COVID-19, economic and financial implications, global and domestic political challenges, the food supply chain, impact on the educational system and ways to engineer a solution.

Students interested in "The COVID-19 Pandemic" course should enroll now in MyRED.

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