



## Douglas-Sarpy 4-H

The 4-H Youth Development Program of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is an informal, practical; learn-by-doing educational program for boys and girls ages 5-18. Your child can enroll as a 4-H member by starting their own 4-H club with a few friends or family members, by joining an existing club, or they can enroll as an independent member.

**4-H Clubs:** Families are encouraged to organize a new club – which is a lot easier than you may think! The 4-H staff can provide guidance and resource materials to start a new club. Clubs consist of five or more members from three or more families. Clubs are led (or co-led) by club leaders; often club members' parents. In most clubs, members complete several projects a year. Some 4-H clubs focus on one particular project area, such as rabbits, horses, home environment, science, etc. Members are encouraged to try a variety of projects and are **not** limited to their club's activities. Currently, there are more youth wanting to join existing 4-H clubs than there are clubs available. Starting a club to fit your child's specific interests often creates an ideal fit.

**Independent Members:** With increasingly busy schedules, more and more youth are becoming independent 4-H members. This means they don't belong to a formal club, but work on 4-H projects on their own with their parents support. The 4-H staff is available to guide you through their area(s) of interest. The Independent 4-H member can participate in all 4-H opportunities.

**Clover Kids:** 4-H members ages 5-7 are considered Clover Kids. These youth develop talents and self esteem in a setting that is educationally age appropriate and fun. Many clubs consist of a variety of ages together. This age difference provides a positive mentoring experience for the Clover Kids who learn from older 4-H members. Other clubs prefer to keep their Clover Kids with children in this age group. Clover kids can also participate in the county fair. Clover Kid exhibitors are not restricted to the guidelines of the fair book and may enter many age appropriate static or animal exhibits and participate in contests. Clover kids are not "judged" by the same standards as the older members. They do receive special Clover Kids ribbons but no premium money is awarded for this age group.

Please take a look at our website [www.douglas-sarpy.unl.edu](http://www.douglas-sarpy.unl.edu). Here you will find information for the Douglas-Sarpy 4-H Program including enrollment, contests and events that are offered throughout the year, both locally and statewide, 4-H resources and more.

The Pick Your Project <https://4h.unl.edu/resources> is an online project selection guide for finding 4-H curriculum. Users can search by keywords or browse by project area, curriculum area and experience level. Project resources and learning objectives are included with each project. The Project Resource Guide is the printable version that lists the 4-H curriculum and a brief description of each manual. These manuals are available online through [National 4-H Curriculum](#) and [Nebraska 4-H Curriculum](#).



4-H curriculum enhances the member's 4-H experience through hands on learning and are beneficial applying those skills to fair projects. Specific fair projects are listed in the Sarpy County Fair book which is located in the County and State Fair section of our website.

**The 4-H year runs from October 1 through September 30.** 4-H membership is available throughout the year. Keep in mind that youth wishing to participate in 4-H contests must be enrolled as a 4-H member prior to the contest. To participate in the Sarpy County Fair or the Nebraska State Fair, enrollment is due by June 15. Horse member enrollments are due in early May. The Sarpy County Fair falls each year during the first weekend in August. All 4-H members in both Douglas and Sarpy Counties exhibit at the Sarpy County Fair.

There is a \$10 yearly membership fee for youth which must accompany each enrollment. There is no membership fee for leaders. Membership allows the 4-H member to become eligible to participate in all county 4-H contests such as the Public Speaking Contest, Presentation Contest, Fashion Show, Rocket Launch Contest, Table Toppers Contest, Shooting Sports Competition, Dog Show, Cat Show, Small Pets Show, Livestock, Horse, Poultry and Rabbit Shows, and the Nebraska State Fair. For the Nebraska State Fair contests an additional fee may apply. 4-H events are updated on our local website as they become available. 4-H members are encouraged and welcomed to explore the many opportunities that are open to them.

4-H is a family affair! Parents and members will both be expected to participate in 4-H meetings, club events and activities. Becoming a 4-H volunteer demonstrates to your child that you want to be an active participant in their 4-H experience, and further strengthens the bonds within your family. Regardless of the manner of participation your family selects, your role as a 4-H parent is critical in determining your family's success in 4-H. You will get out of the 4-H program what you put into it.

The 4-H staff is here to help you get started and support your adventure. Let me know how I can help. Please contact the 4-H team with any questions at **402-444-7804**