

# TODAY'S FUTURE

## 4-H Enrollment is Now Open

Enrollment for the 2018 4-H program year in Knox County is now open for members, clover kids and volunteers and must be completed by April 15. Visit <https://ne.4honline.com/Login.aspx?403D4050364539525371705375593D>

New and returning club members, as well as new and returning club leaders, must enroll through 4-H Online. Members who are re-enrolling will only need to update their profile (do not setup a new profile) and project listing. New members will need to create a family profile or if our family has already enrolled you only need to add a member.

If you need assistance with enrollment process please refer to the 4HOnline step-by-step instructions on our website [knox.unl.edu](http://knox.unl.edu) or contact the Extension Office.

## Code-a-pillar!

### Where Development Comes into Play

Written by: Ruth Vonderohe, Nebraska Extension Educator in Knox County

Preschool teachers, imagine turning your room into an obstacle course and preschoolers working together for 45 minutes problem solving and programming.

The Code-a-pillar inspires little learners to be big thinkers by encouraging preschoolers to arrange and rearrange the easy-to-connect segments. This learning toy helps children to learn that the arrows indicate different directions. This is a perfect time to introduce the difference between right and left by using the color-coordinated segments that hook together with USB ports. Every time a child changes or rearranges the segments the child is working on learning directions, how to problem solve, planning and sequencing and critical thinking.

Teaching preschoolers about coding and the binary system foster curiosity, experimentation and problem-solving. Allowing the children to become engineers and robots all at once allows a child to work in a fantasy world while learning. The binary system has only two numbers so preschoolers can learn and be successful almost immediately. The number 1 stands for stepping forward and 0 stands for turning right. While one preschooler writes his code on the whiteboard, another preschooler follows the directions given through the coding. The children learn very fast that they can navigate the entire room using only the two codes.

Bringing the preschooler's attention back to the Code-a-pillar is very easy. Their little brains are ready to arrange and rearrange the segments to get their Code-a-pillar to a particular place in the classroom. They soon realize adjustments (problem-solving) are

needed so they can navigate around the tables and chairs in the classroom.

Once the preschoolers understand what a sequence is or program a path, the sky's the limit. Thinking as they figure out how to get the Code-a-pillar to go wherever they want.

Coding is an excellent way to supports children's curiosity and develop children's inquiry skills by asking children to brainstorm solutions, or use open-ended questions like: How did you get that caterpillar to move?

Using open ended questions encourages children to listen, reflect, and then respond back how they made decisions or describe the actions they took to reach a specific goal. This is an important scientific skill to learn and develop because it will allow children at an early age to practice using the scientific method! (Predict, Collect Data, Describe, and Reach a Conclusion, then... TRY AGAIN!)

