

SPOTLIGHT ON 4-H

Nebraska Extension 4-H Newsletter

April 2020

Nebraska 4-H Response to COVID-19 - By Stacey Keys

Over the past few weeks and months we have seen the world change, as COVID-19 has influenced all of lives in one way or another. Your work life may look different, your school life may look different, your home life may look different, but we are all shifting to a new normal. Be patient, feel the feelings, reach out, and care for those around you. As we adjust to this changes thrust upon us know that Nebraska Extension and Nebraska 4-H are always here for you.

Nebraska 4-H takes the health and safety of our community very seriously. From March 30-May 9, Nebraska 4-H programming will be delivered in a virtual format (subject to change). This includes all scheduled educational programs, competitive events, and 4-H Club/Council meetings hosted by Nebraska 4-H. We are continuing to plan for summer events and will make determinations one month in advance of the event and continue to monitor the situation up to the event.

While life may look different, 4-H is still here and available anywhere you are! Check out these great options for virtual and at-home 4-H experiences. Go to <https://4h.unl.edu/virtual-home-learning> for more and keep updated with all the offerings from Nebraska 4-H.

• Live Experiences

- ◇ Living Room Learning (3rd-5th grades)

- ◇ Boredom Buster Challenge (6th-9th grades)
- ◇ Virtual Field Trips (9th-12th grades)

• Self-Paced Opportunities

- ◇ Activity Videos
- ◇ A Beautiful Day! (ages 1-8)
- ◇ Cat Club

• Activity Guides

- ◇ Healthy Living Activity Guide
- ◇ Inspire Kids to Do Activity Guide
- ◇ STEM Lab Activities
- ◇ National Youth Science Day Activities

Contact your local Extension Office and staff if you have questions or ideas that could be used across the state. While some staff maybe working remotely, know that goal of Nebraska 4-H is still to prepare young people for successful futures, no matter how uncertain they may seem. The life skills, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, social skills, communication, responsibility, citizenship, and leadership can be taught and cultivated anywhere. Continue to inspire kids to do with 4-H.



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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.

Clubs of Excellence

By Kim Bearnese

In Nebraska, we have outstanding 4-H Clubs all across the state. Your club can be recognized for its outstanding accomplishments every year. Here is some information on how to become a “Club of Excellence”.

The overall goal of 4-H Clubs is to develop enthusiastic young people who boldly take action to demonstrate life skills as capable, caring, competent kids of character thus contributing to the improvement of themselves, their family, their club, their community, and their world. One way clubs might choose to measure their success in meeting that goal is their ability to gain status as a Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence.

To receive the designation as a Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence, clubs must meet a certain set of criteria and document how this criterion was met. Clubs meeting the requirements will initially receive a certificate. In subsequent years clubs successfully meeting the requirements will receive a special insignia to place on their certificate. Clubs must apply annually to receive this recognition.

Requirements

To receive the designation as a Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence, clubs must meet the following:

- Have at least five members from at least three different families.
- Recite the 4-H Pledge at meetings.
- Meet at least six times per year.
- Choose/elect youth officers.
- Have youth serve in leadership roles.
- Have one club project, related to curriculum, which they do together.
- Have an adult role model involvement.
- Be facilitated by organizational and project leaders who have successfully completed the volunteer screening.
- Have members who perform a presentation or public speaking at the club level or above.
- Complete one community service project.
- Have members who participate in county, district or state events.

Celebrate member and club achievements.

Application

To apply for the Club of Excellence recognition, complete the Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence Report of Activities. The completed form should be turned into your local Extension office by September 15 or earlier as designated by your county.

If the Club meets all of the requirements, they will get a certificate and a seal the first year and an additional seal in subsequent qualifying years.



Clover Kid—Grab & Go Lesson

By Tessa Hain

Clover Kids are 4-H members ages 5-7 years old, and are the future generation of 4-H. To keep those young minds busy and learning try out this activity to introduce them to life skills, hands on learning, and the world of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM)

A House for the Little Pigs

Time Frame: 60 minutes

Book: The Three Little Pigs

Supplies: Flat toothpicks, portable table fan (hair dryer), extension cord, pennies

Groups 2-3

Breakdown of Time Frame:

10 minutes to read book

5 minutes to explain

20 minutes to build and test first house

15 minutes to build and test second house

10 minutes to discuss and reflect

Situation: Turns out the brick house, although strong and sturdy, is quite cramped. The third little pig got sick of his lazy brothers leaving their slop all around, so he kicked them out. You would think they learned their lesson, but they bumped into the magic bean guy who happened to be selling magic toothpicks. The two pigs, never ones to turn down a great deal, spent their money on the toothpicks, and well, now they need a place to live.

Challenge: Help out the little pigs by building them a house of toothpicks (this is their stick house). You can also have them build a house out of straws (plastic or paper) for the straw house and Legos for the brick house.

Constraints: You may only use toothpicks on your house (No glue or adhesive)

Successful: Your toothpick house should be at least 2.5 inches high. Hold at least 5 nickels and withstand the wind from the fan.

Imagine: Different house designs and shapes. Think of different ways that you can use the toothpicks to build a house.

Create: Every house will be different. We're not cheating if we use the same principles. And always...try, evaluate, adjust, and redesign!

Reflect:

- Think about successes and failures
- Was your latch successful? How could you tell?
- Which designs worked best?
- Why is it important to have designs that fail?
- What was the most challenging?
- Were there any surprises?



Communicating Clearly

By Lauren Stohlmann

When youth are asked to share examples of communication channels they use every day, many mention digital platforms such as “TikTok”, “Snapchat”, or “Texting.” More often than not, face-to-face is one of the last communication methods they identify. Youth rely more on their technology to communicate with their friends and family, than they do any other communication method. If youth continue to depend on technology to communicate, what will be the long-term outcome? Will they be prepared to walk into a meeting and present a pitch? Will they feel comfortable standing in front of a school board? Will they be confident enough to speak up when they’re faced with a particular situation?

Basic communication, no matter the platform, requires a sender, a receiver and a channel. The channel could be an email, a letter, the radio, a Facebook newsfeed, or face-to-face. Included in the communication model is also noise and feedback. Noise could be anything from actual noise like students talking in class while the teacher is instructing. Noise could be that the WiFi is down, so the TedTalk isn’t streaming well. Noise is anything that could disrupt or impact a message that is being sent. No one likes to talk to a brick wall; and that’s where feedback plays a crucial role in the communication model. This could include raising a hand in class to say “Mrs. Thompson, I don’t understand how you came to that conclusion.”

Feedback could also be a head nod during a 4-H meeting that assures a speaker that the audience is following along, or a scrunched eyebrow which might imply confusion. This is considered nonverbal feedback. Nonverbal communication includes body language such as facial expression and gestures, as well as tone of voice. The following activity uses tone of voice to show how nonverbal communication can impact a message.

“She is my friend” Activity

You will need four pieces of paper for this activity.

- One slip of paper that reads: “SHE is my friend”
- One slip of paper that reads: “She IS my friend”
- One slip of paper that reads: “She is MY friend”
- One slip of paper that reads: “She is my FRIEND”

Ask for four volunteers, and hand out one slip of paper to each. Have them stand in order from left to right according to whichever word is in all caps on their piece of paper. Have each of them read the sentence emphasizing the word that is in all caps.

Questions to ask the youth after the activity might include:

- What did you notice?
- How did emphasizing a different word change the message?

- Did the speaker read the message using gestures or facial expressions without being instructed to?
- To speakers – Why did you use that body language?

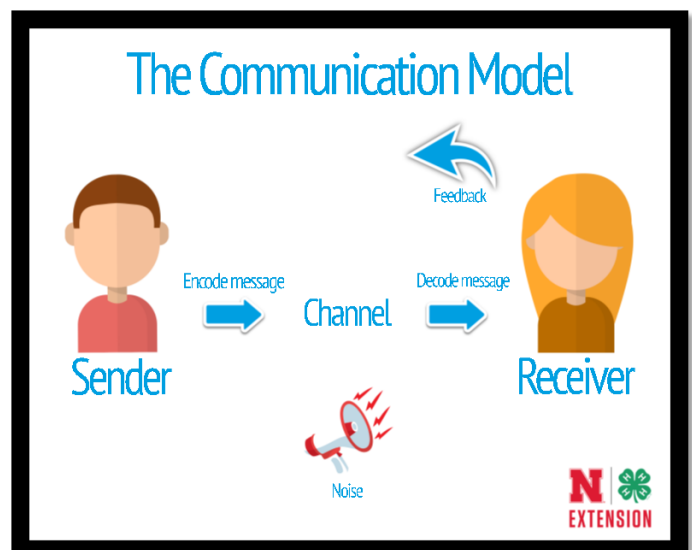
Effective communication skills will continue to be essential for success in the workplace, and in life in general. So what does “effective communication” mean? Elements that are necessary in effective communication include: active listening, eye contact, providing verbal and nonverbal feedback. The following activity reinforces what happens when an element is missing from communication.

Golf Drawing Activity

Have the youth partner up with someone. Each person gets a piece of paper and a pencil. Create a nine-hole golf course on the piece of paper. Draw circles for the holes and label them 1 – 9, and place an X where the course will begin. Next, add in some obstacles such as lakes, trees, and other hazards. The pairs will take turns guiding their partner through the nine-hole golf course. One person will take a pencil, close their eyes, and they cannot talk. Their partner will take out the course they drew and verbally guide their partner through the course. The goal is to get through the course as fast as possible. The partners will switch roles after they get through the course.

Questions to ask the youth after the activity might include:

- How easy was it to follow the instructions your partner gave you?
- Would it have been easier if the person drawing could talk?
- Was the course you drew more difficult or easier than your partners?
- Which role did you like better – the drawer or the navigator?

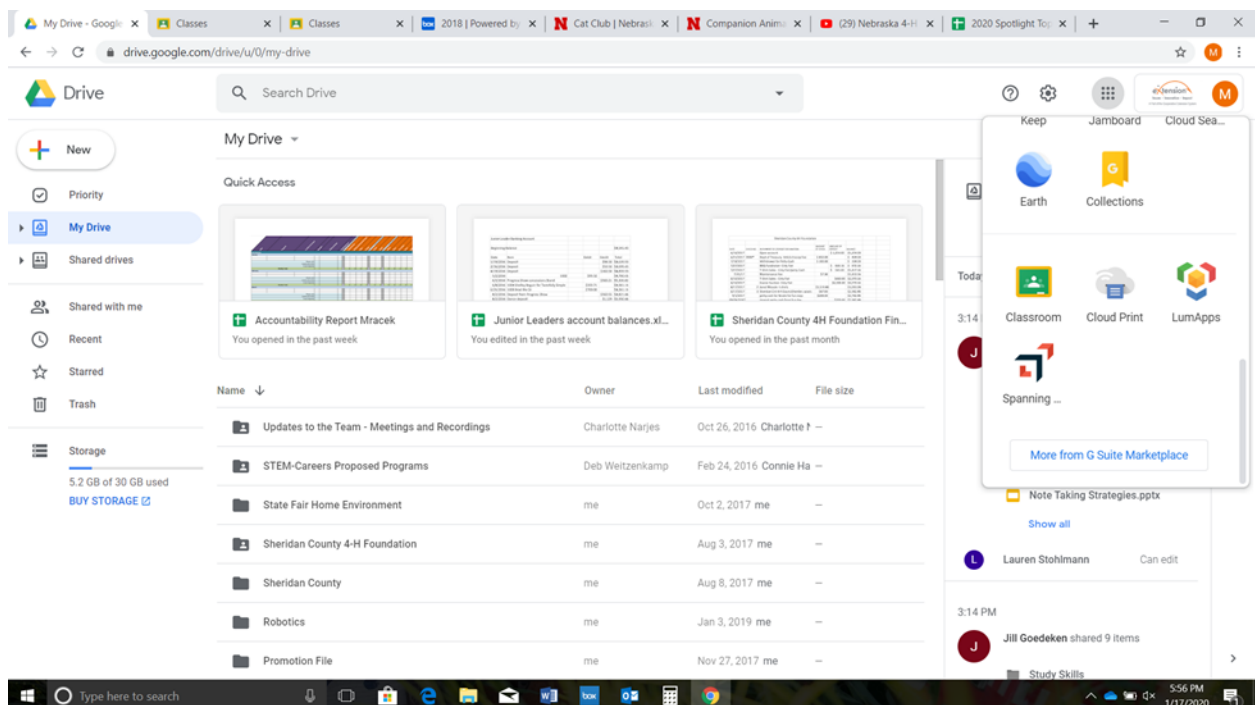


4-H Virtual Cat Club

By Melissa Mracek

Does your child or club have a passion for felines? The Online Cat Club is a great tool for anyone who is planning to show cats in 4-H, has a cat, or is interested in learning more about cats. It has great resources with activities for youth to learn more about caring for their cats. The Online Cat Club recently changed formats to an online self-paced portal instead of having to zoom in once a month to the webinars. Youth, families, or clubs can login to any Google Drive account. Once logged into Google Drive, select the nine square dots in the upper right hand corner, called Google apps. Scroll down until the Classroom app is located and click on it. Once selected, click on the + sign in the upper right hand corner, and select join class. Next the youth will need to enter the class code: 1hq89c. Another option is to visit <https://4h.unl.edu/companion-animal/cat-club>. After entering the code, a message may pop up saying the code is invalid, try a different Google account. Once in the class, select the Classwork at the top bar. The youth will then be able to select a variety of modules from history and breeds to nutrition and cat care. There are three subtopics underneath each lesson. Youth will click on the lesson name to view the material. The youth will watch a couple of entertaining, short videos in each lesson and then complete an online game to test their knowledge. If the youth cannot remember what lesson they ended on, they can click on the View Your Work link at the top to see all the modules they have completed.

These videos can easily be used in club meetings. These short videos would work well with long agendas but the club leader still wants to have an educational component. With some of the games, clubs can even have multiple players playing at once. Club leaders can also take the information from the videos and create their own games. For the breed's lesson, club leaders can create a matching game for the youth to play. Another option would be to create a pin the part on a cat relay race. Club members could also create a poster or model about the information they learned in the videos to create a Veterinary Science project. Clover Kid members could create a poster labeling the cat parts or a poster on breeds. For more information about companion animal events and projects, visit <https://4h.unl.edu/companion-animal/>.



Get Your Kids in the Kitchen

By Hannah Guenther

Do you have a picky eater at home? Or maybe a child who is only willing to eat certain things? Or maybe a child who will spot a green leaf from a mile away and boycott dinner because of said green? There comes a time in life when youth become very aware of what is on their plate and feel very strongly about what they like and what they don't like. It can be a struggle for those feeding these young ones because they are at a time where they need adequate nutrition for their growing bodies, but it is also a time where you want to expand their palette and encourage a love of nutritious foods.

Getting your kids in the kitchen is one of the best ways to get your child to become a more adventurous eater and teach them the basics of cooking. Not only does cooking begin knowledge on basic math and motor skills, but children are more likely to sample things they have helped make. To begin including your child in the kitchen, start small with tasks they can easily accomplish to build confidence and abilities. Great examples of starting tasks include: mixing a fruit salad, measuring flour, adding ingredients to a pizza, or mixing vegetables prior to roasting. When your child is ready, equip them with an easy recipe that they can make on their own for an afternoon snack like this easy *Blueberry Banana Parfait*.

Blueberry Banana Parfait

- ½ cup whole grain cereal of your choice
- ¼ cup low fat vanilla yogurt
- ¼ cup blueberries, fresh or frozen
- ½ banana, sliced

Wash hands, surfaces, and fresh fruit. Peel and slice banana with a butter knife. Place in a bowl. Top with yogurt, followed by cereal. Add blueberries on top and enjoy.

Although cooking with kids may lead to a few more messes in the kitchen, by including them you are expanding their palette, teaching them lifelong skills, and fostering a healthy relationship with food.



Family Tree Treasure Hunt

By Lori Swanson

Heritage is the unique history of a family. A family heritage leads present day family members to be inspired by the past. All too often, a family's history is lost. The heritage of a family can be regained through research, interviews and record keeping. 4-H allows opportunity for youth to learn about family heritage through documenting family trees, keeping scrapbooks and exploring family traditions.

While seeking the treasure of a family heritage, 4-H youth will gain research skills, increase knowledge of personal identity, and improve family communication. The treasure hunt begins with you. Start making a map or pedigree chart working backward from one name to parents, grandparents, etc. Include full names, birthdate, death date, maiden names and siblings. A conversation with living relatives will lead to clues about your family treasure. Take notes of who was interviewed and the information given.

The clues from a family interview lead to new sources of information. Handle family documents such as birth and marriage certificates, old photographs, family Bibles or diaries with tender loving care. Photocopying helps to organize documents. Expensive certified copies are not needed. Documenting sources is an important part of researching family history. Do not skip this important step. Revisiting a source may be needed in the future.

Family recipes yield an uncommon bit of family history. Investigate the traditional foods and festivals of a culture. Preparing food or a celebration creates lasting connections with the past. One may decide to incorporate this gem of the past into current family celebrations.

If the treasure hunt leads to a dead end, do not give up. Dig deeper through a genealogy library or website. Several free genealogy websites exist such as American Memory Project, Family Search, Find-A-Grave, and Castle Garden. The growing amount of online information may lead to conflicting facts. Start with confirmed names and dates before opening an online search.

Families come in all shapes. A modern family may consist of adopted or biological children, single parents, step-parents or other alternative combination of members. Regardless of relationship, the modern family's history is a treasure. The treasure of family heritage grows with the addition of new members to the family.

Preserve the treasure you find. Designed for a variety of families, templates of family trees are at familytreetemplates.net. A record of each family member or family group sheet summarizes a family unit. Organizing family history and sharing the treasure of heritage is priceless. 4-H youth routinely share family trees, family traditions, and scrapbooks. Preserving and learning the treasure of family heritage builds confident, creative, and community driven youth.



HERITAGE 4-H



Renovations to Transform UNL East Campus Library

By Carly Horstman

The C.Y. Thompson Library (CYT) on UNL's East Campus is getting major updates as part of the revitalization of East Campus. The CYT was built in 1966 and has seen little updates until now. The way students study and learn has changed dramatically as well. Students now are more interactive learners who are accustomed to having technology available 24/7, communicating via social media and engaging in collaborative learning.

The renovation of C.Y. Thompson will reflect students' increasing use of digitally accessed research and information and will enhance interdisciplinary connections through spaces where students gather. The updated CYT will feature individual and collaborative study spaces, learning technology, multi-media displays, and meeting rooms as part of a learning commons. The learning commons, to be named the Dinsdale Family Learning Commons, will be on the main floor and will also have a fireplace and a coffee shop.

Alongside the learning commons will be a multi-disciplinary book collection, with between 20,000 and 30,000 volumes of the most recent, noteworthy and active parts of the library's current print collection. A small testing center for students is also being added to CYT. Renovations are set to be completed by the end of 2020.

If you are a prospective student who would like a tour of the University of Nebraska's East Campus, please contact UNL at 402-472-4445.

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