



# Spotlight on ... 4-H!



## LEADER LETTER

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### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Kids are active. Keep them busy with **YOUTH in Motion** club activities!
- Learn about the 4-H **ATV Rider Course** for safe ATV driving skills!
- Leadership is a natural development from involvement in 4-H!

## INVOLVING FAMILIES IN 4-H

One of the great attributes of 4-H as a youth development program is the involvement of parents and other family members with the youth in the program. Spending enjoyable time together is one of the six characteristics of strong families according to research by Nick Stinnett and John DeFrain. Their research showed families need quality time in great quantity. This quality time has three components – enjoying each other's company, simple good times, and sharing fun times.



As 4-H leaders and staff we are aware of the benefits of family involvement in 4-H, but how do we get families of youth who are traditionally "dropped off" for meetings and other activities involved in 4-H? Let's start with the last component – sharing fun times.

Many 4-H clubs have annual 4-H fun days after the fair was over and there are no projects to worry about. Some examples in Northern Nebraska included tubing the Niobrara, touring Fort Hartstuff and eating at local restaurants. You might plan a picnic at a local attraction. What is available in your county or nearby? Plan one day trips from your county.



Involve the planning with the 4-H members and parents. Try to take a day to have fun with your 4-H whole families, including siblings, 4-H members, parents and occasionally an aunt, uncle or grandparent.

Simple good times can be a part of every meeting if families are required to take turns providing a "fun time" for each meeting. It may be roasting hot dogs over a fire pit, playing a game for 15 minutes, or doing a simple 4-H project from a manual or off the 4-H website.



<http://4h.unl.edu/kids/>

The rule should be to keep it simple, it has to be planned ahead of time at home and at least one parent or older sibling needs to be there to assist young 4-H members with their part of the program.

Community service projects can also be a way to encourage families to spend enjoyable time together. Rather than take on a major holiday decorating project at the local nursing home as a club leader, assign each family a door and let them use their creativity to decorate a door size sheet of paper. If the parent is working when the doors are decorated the paper is ready to go and easy to put up. A parent and a 4-H'er can work together at a lunch stand or assisting with fair events. It may be easier for them to schedule one day to work and they will learn that "working together" can be an enjoyable experience.



## INCORPORATING EASY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROJECTS INTO YOUR CLUB MEETINGS

You don't have to be a health expert or even someone in tip-top shape to incorporate physical activity into your club meeting. The YOUth In Motion project manual has many simple and inexpensive ideas for you to use.

Listed below are two exercises that are simple and fun to compliment the Goal Setting for Physical Activity Lesson on Page 10.

### Physical Activity Pyramid (Page 11)

To make the Physical Activity Pyramid, have students bring old magazines, news paper ads, or other printed material not needed anymore. You supply poster board (14 x 22 size works the best) and markers.



Have each youth draw a large pyramid on their poster board, divide the pyramid into four sections and label each section (refer to page 11). Then, have the youth look through the magazines and other materials for graphics or words that show that they would like to place in a particular section. If you do not have pictures, you can have the youth hand write words into each section.



If your club members like to complete fair projects at club meetings, a fair project with YOUth In Motion would be

**Department E Division 300 and Class1. YOUth In Motion Poster, scrapbook, or photo display.**



### Activity Goal Setting (Page 14)

Another activity that is fun to do is the Activity Goal Setting Exercise on page 14. You would need to supply the youth with pencils and a blank calendar. To make a blank calendar, you can use an easy template in Microsoft Word or photo copy a blank page of a calendar you have at home.

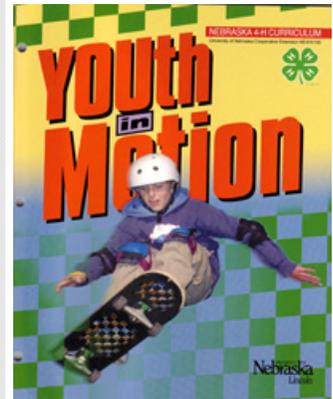
Have the students work in groups and have them write an activity goal for each day. Activities can be simple such as doing jumping jacks during a TV commercial, walking around the house, or others. Activities do not have to require a lot of thought, the goal is to increase your heart rate a bit, which helps heart muscles grow strong.

This activity sheet is also something families can do together. Encourage the youth to take the calendar activity home and make up an activity calendar for their family.

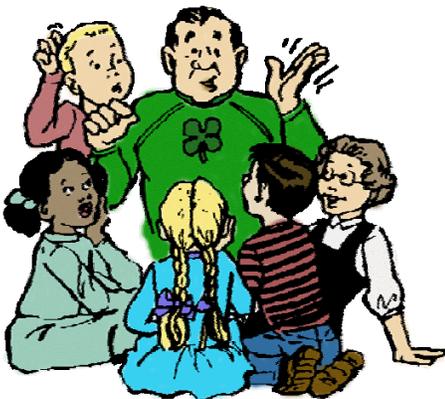


As a club leader, read through the instructions on page 10 for each activity. Walk through the activity with the youth and talk to them about the objectives and applications listed on page 10.

It may be helpful to have a Jr. Leader make up an example or two of each activity ahead of time for the younger members to see. Jr. Leaders are great resources for club leaders, so take advantage of their enthusiasm and creative ideas.



The YOUth in Motion project book is a great resource for club activities!

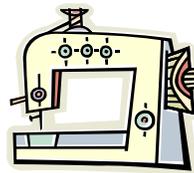


## INVISIBLE ZIPPER THE HIDDEN ZIPPER

The invisible zipper is different from a conventional zipper in both appearance and application. Invisible zippers make the zipper look like a seam and is often substituted for conventional zippers especially longer zippers in the center back or front of a garment. Once you feel comfortable with putting in an invisible zipper you will find that you actually prefer invisible zippers to conventional zippers. Unlike a conventional zipper an invisible zipper is inserted into a fully open seam.

When inserting an invisible zipper, it is helpful to use a foot with a groove on the underside that makes the zipper coil stand away from the tape while stitching (You may use an invisible zipper foot or pintuck foot.

Some zipper companies' make their own invisible zipper feet that you purchase where you get your zippers.) However you can also use a regular presser foot or zipper foot and these work best with metal teeth invisible zippers. A zipper foot is required for the final application step. Using a regular presser foot over the zipper coil may keep the foot from being lowered completely—preventing the tension discs from being engaged on some machines, causing looped or skipped stitches. In that case, use a zipper foot (their conventional or invisible.



Mark the stitching lines on each garment piece by pressing under the seam allowances or basting along the seamline where the zipper will be inserted. Open the zipper and press it flat from the wrong side so the coil stands away from the tape.

Pin the right side of the zipper to the right side of the fabric, coil on 5/8" seamline and top stop of zipper 3/4" below the cut edge of fabric. (see diagrams)

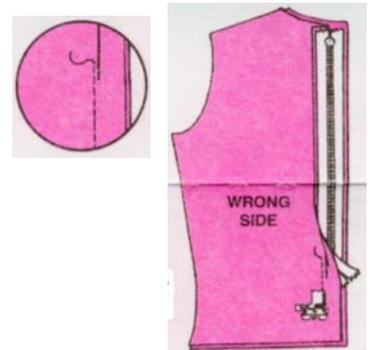
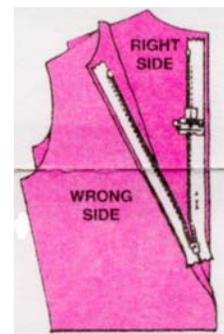
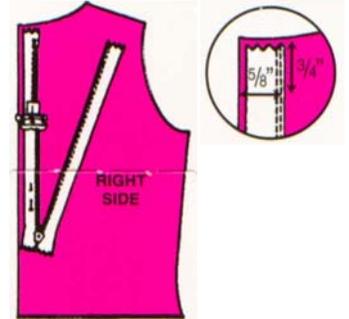
With right groove of foot over coil, stitch until foot touches slider. As you begin to sew, the coil will automatically unfold. Stitch next to the coil but not on top of it. Stitch from the upper to lower edge. Backtack. Repeat to sew the other side to the remaining garment piece right side. Close the zipper.

To finish the seam below the zipper, use a conventional zipper foot, and pin the garment right sides together along the seamline. Lower the needle into the seam exactly where the zipper stitching stops. Without backstitching begin sewing (you may need to use the hand wheel), while pulling the zipper away from the seam to keep it clear from the stitching. (see diagram) Sew the seam, pull the thread ends through to one side of the seam and tie. The result should be a smooth seam with no puckers where the zipper ends. Tack free end at bottom of each zipper tape to seam allowance only to hold the zipper in place and make it easier to zip.

### SPECIAL TIPS

Puckering may occur when sewing fabrics with a permanent press finish and some sheers. To avoid this, hold the fabric and zipper firmly behind and in front of the zipper foot and keep them taut as they pass under the needle. Let the feed dog move fabric: do not pull it.

For average-weight fabrics, the needle should stay in the center of the needle hole on the invisible zipper foot. It may be advisable, to move the foot so the needle is off-center—*closer* to the coil for lightweight fabrics and *farther* away for heavier fabrics.



**ONCE YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE WITH PUTTING IN AN INVISIBLE ZIPPER YOU WILL FIND THAT YOU ACTUALLY PREFER INVISIBLE ZIPPERS TO CONVENTIONAL ZIPPERS.**

## 4-H ATV SAFETY TRAINING



All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) safety is an important issue in Nebraska. Bob Meduna and Dave Varner, UNL extension educators based in Lincoln and Fremont, respectively, are coordinating a new Nebraska **4-H ATV RiderCourse** training program.

In recent years ATV accidents have been the leading cause of Nebraska agricultural fatalities. In Nebraska from 2001 through 2007, 30 people died from ag-related ATV accidents. From 2004 through 2007, one-third or more of the total ag fatalities involved ATVs, with as many as 67 percent involving youth under age 21.

Children's size, maturity and skill level should be considered before allowing them to operate an ATV and even then it should be a smaller vehicle. Families give careful consideration to the size of the bicycle they select for their children but when purchasing an ATV they often overlook considering the appropriate sized ATV. For example, children ages 12-15 should not operate an ATV with an engine size larger than 70-90 cubic centimeters.

ATV injuries can include bumps, bruises, broken bones and severe leg burns. To avoid injury and death, ATV operators should wear proper attire, which includes closed-toe shoes, long pants, gloves, a proper-fitting helmet and most important is adequate ATV safety training.

Operators should know the rules of the road: the ATV operators should be the only person on the vehicle and should drive slowly for the terrain and conditions. ATVs should not be driven at all on pavement or gravel roads, although they can legally be operated on public roads if they are used for farming or ranching activities.

Extension has received a grant from the National 4-H Council, in conjunction with the ATV Safety Institute and local dealers, to train people to provide ATV safety training. Thirteen extension staff and volunteers now are trained to teach the **ATV RiderCourse** to interested youth and adults. The training will help to provide the educational training needed to develop critical thinking skills and good decision-making skills, resulting in a change in ATV-related behaviors that will reduce the number of ATV-related injuries and deaths in Nebraska.

Participants can use their own ATV, but if they don't have one of the appropriate size, they can make specific arrangements or request an ATV of the appropriate size be made available at the training site, although instructors cannot guarantee equipment availability. Participants must bring a DOT-approved motorcycle helmet, goggles or face shield, high-top shoes or boots, gloves, long pants, and long-sleeve shirt or jacket.



From 2004 through 2007, one-third or more of the total ag fatalities involved ATVs, with as many as 67 percent involving youth under age 21.

**For information on scheduling training you can contact your local University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension office.**

**EXTENSION HAS RECEIVED A GRANT FROM THE NATIONAL 4-H COUNCIL, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ATV SAFETY INSTITUTE AND LOCAL DEALERS, TO TRAIN PEOPLE TO PROVIDE ATV SAFETY TRAINING.**



**DOG AGILITY**

4-H Dog Agility is designed to be fun for both the 4-H'er and the dog. It gives a nice break from the more structured obedience and showmanship competitions, yet still requires a well-trained dog and informed handler.

Agility is a timed obstacle course of 6 to 16 obstacles, depending on the class and skill level. Scoring is done by making deductions for faults such as jumping off an obstacle, running the wrong course or taking too much time to run the course.

To be successful in agility the 4-H'er must become partners with their dog – the dog cannot succeed without a good handler. Obstacle training is the foundation of all agility – with a good foundation there is nothing a 4-H'er cannot achieve. Agility is a very exciting sport. Many times handlers want to rush onto the next step or obstacle before they are ready. The best thing to remember is to take your time, learn the obstacles and learn them correctly. It is much easier to learn each obstacle correctly the first time than to relearn it later. The obstacles for the beginning agility course consist of jumps, tunnels, a dog walk and a pause box.



Dog agility can be a fun experience for both the 4-H'er and the pet!!

**General Agility Rules:**

- All dogs must wear a flat collar. No other type is allowed.
- Each dog may be exhibited by only one handler in agility competition.
- Dogs can work on either the left or right side of the handler.
- Dogs must be 18 months old or older at competition time.
- All obstacles are spaced 15 to 18 feet apart.
- No baiting, toys or training devices are allowed on the course during competition.
- 4-foot to 6-foot leash if required.

**JUMP HEIGHTS:**



- 6 inches for dogs up to 12 inches tall
- 12 inches for dogs 12 ½ inches to 18 inches tall
- 18 inches for dogs 18 inches or taller

**HOME-MADE AGILITY EQUIPMENT**

You can always use your imagination to create home-made obstacles to begin training your dog. Begin by trying some of these ideas, but remember the safety of your dog comes first:

- Pause Box** – A sheet or blanket laid on the ground.
- Bar Jump** – Two chairs back to back – with a space in between and a broom laid across them.
- Tire Jump** – Hula hoop or a tire. These can be held or secured.
- Dogwalk** – Boards supported by cement blocks.
- Tunnel** – An old barrel – cardboard or metal. Bench seat covered by a sheet or blanket.
- Weave Poles** – Wooden stakes or dowels pounded into the ground.

**TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN AGILITY THE 4-H'ER MUST BECOME PARTNERS WITH THEIR DOG – THE DOG CANNOT SUCCEED WITHOUT A GOOD HANDLER.**

To learn more about 4-H Dog Agility ask for 4-H Dog Shows: Guidelines for Nebraska (4-H419) at your local Extension office!



## SPOTLIGHT ON 4-H!



### DEVELOPING LEADERS IN 4-H!

Research shows us that leadership is a set of skills and attitudes that can be learned and developed that will help individual influence the actions of others. All youth have leadership potential. You at any age can begin to develop leadership skills at home, school or in their 4-H clubs. They hold the capacity through their leadership abilities to make a difference in others' lives, their communities, their country and their world.

Knowing that all youth have the potential to develop leadership skills it is imperative that 4-H Leaders have resources available to help with these skills. The 4-H Project, Step Up To Leadership! Is an interactive experiential curriculum that uses lots of activities to teach youth life skills that are important to be an effective leader?



“Step Up To Leadership” is a 4-H project manual which consists of five different manuals:

**Leadership 1:** My Leadership Workbook, Grades 3 - 5

**Leadership 2:** My Leadership Journal, Grades 6- 8

**Leadership 3:** My Leadership Portfolio, Grades 9 – 12

**Mentor Guide, Grades K – 5**

**Mentor Guide, Grades 6 – 12**



As a mentor, YOU are key to valuable experiences 4-H members will have as they work through many opportunities using this curriculum to mentor youth as they grow cognitively, emotionally and socially towards becoming successful leaders.

Additional resources have been developed and are available at [4h.unl.edu](http://4h.unl.edu). These one page “fact sheets” can be found under the curriculum area: Personal Development & Leadership/Citizenship (<http://4h.unl.edu/programs/leadership>).



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

4 - H ! Y O U R F I R S T C L A S S A T T H E U N I V E R S I T Y O F N E B R A S K A !

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