

MADISON COUNTY FAMILY HANDBOOK

University of Illinois Extension

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What is 4-H?

The 4-H program is the largest informal youth-serving organization in the country. The Madison County 4-H program is part of University of Illinois Extension. Through U of I Extension, 4-H programs are conducted statewide. The 4-H program is known all over the world, with clubs in every county of every state in the United States, and in more than 80 countries around the world.

The 4-H program is organized into clubs throughout the county, based either on where members live, or projects they choose to take. Volunteer adult leaders help to lead the clubs, provide organization, and provide adult supervision for the various club activities. They also help to provide educational opportunities for the members, and chances for leadership and citizenship development.

History of 4-H

The 4-H program did not start at any one time or place. It is the result of the work of many people in different parts of the United States who were concerned about young people. From its inception, 4-H tied both public and private resources together for the purpose of helping young people.

Two forces generated the idea of 4-H work. One was the concern for education in rural areas. The seed of the 4-H idea of practical or applied educational principles resulted from concern for the relevance of public schools to country life. The second was a need for advancing the new agricultural technologies produced by research at experiment stations of the land-grant college system. The farming community did not readily accept these new ideas and techniques.

When Congress created the Cooperative Extension Service at USDA in 1914, it included boys' and girls' club work. This soon became known as 4-H clubs - Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.

As 4-H neared its 50th anniversary, it began to experience several trends. In 1948 a group of American young people went to Europe and a group of Europeans came to the United States on the first International Farm Youth Exchange. Out-of-state trips and international exchanges have been highly educational for hundreds of young people in 4-H. The 4-H program began to extend into urban areas in the 1950's. Later, the basic 4-H focus became the personal growth of the member. Life skills development is built into 4-H projects, activities, and events, to help participants become contributing, productive, self-directed members of society. The organizational coordination changed in the 1960's, combining 4-H groups divided by gender or race into a single integrated program.

Today, after 100 years, 4-H is the largest out-of-school youth program in the US - both in rural and urban areas throughout the country. It offers youth opportunities in communications, leadership, career development, animal and plant science, home improvement, technology, and much more to nearly seven million American youth. The program promotes life skills development through an expanding number of delivery modes:

4-H community clubs, special interest groups, EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program), nutrition programs, school enrichment, camping, and more. The 4-H program will continue to grow and develop with the head, heart, hands, and health of youth.

The 4-H Clover and the Four H's

Originally, the symbol of the Boys and Girls Clubs was a three-leaf clover with the words Head, Heart and Hand. The words Head, Heart and Hand were used in Nebraska as part of the statement of purpose. That statement read, in part "to educate the youth of the county, town and city to a knowledge of their dependence upon nature's resources, and to the value of the fullest development of hand, head and heart..." The words were possibly taken from a poem by Rudyard Kipling. The phrase "hand, heart and head" became a popular way for educators and others to express a commitment to learning and the development to young citizens.

Today, the 4-H Emblem is protected under Section 18 US Code 707 and belongs to the Congress of the United States - the term "18 USC 707" appears to the right of the 4-H clover stem. The official clover is Kelly green with white H's. The 4-H colors are the same green and white. The white symbolizes purity. The green represents nature's most common color and is emblematic of youth, life, and growth. The use of the name and emblem gives individual members a sense of belonging to an organization that reaches beyond their immediate area.



The 4-H Family Tree

Partners at each level

- Federal – United States Department of Agriculture
- State – Land Grant University (University of Illinois) and the state legislature
- Local – County government, local donors, supporters, and boards/councils

Adult and Youth Volunteers

- 4-H Club Leaders
- Committee Members
- 4-H Members and Families

Membership Policies

Youth who are five through seven years of age on or before September 1 of the current 4-H year may enroll in 4-H Cloverbud groups.

Youth who are eight years of age and have not reached their nineteenth birthday on or before September 1 may enroll in 4-H clubs.

A youth who enrolls in a 4-H club must attend at least four meetings to be called a 4-H member. Youth that do not comply are not eligible to take part in 4-H exhibitions, receive 4-H premiums, or other 4-H awards and recognitions that are available to 4-H members.

College students can be enrolled when they live away from home and should make efforts to attend meetings when they are home on breaks or virtually.

There is a \$20 fee for all youth enrolled in the Illinois 4-H program; however, the Madison County Farm Bureau has been gracious enough to cover \$10 of each fee so that youth only need to pay \$10 for the entire year. This \$10 fee is paid to the club as soon as you register.

Joining a 4-H Club

The 4-H year starts on September 1 and ends on August 31.

In order to exhibit a project in 4-H Shows, a member must be enrolled in *4-H Online*: <https://v2.4honline.com> by **January 1**.
(Special Interest (SPIN) Clubs may have different deadlines).

Projects can be *added* up to this deadline, but addition of projects are not accepted online after this date.

New members may enroll at any time during the 4-H year, however doing so after January 1 will not allow for eligibility to exhibit a 4-H project.

As workshops, classes, livestock tattooing, and other opportunities are planned, invitations will be sent to those who are enrolled in the corresponding projects. *It would be to your advantage to enroll sooner rather than later.* The sooner you enroll, the sooner you will receive your project book(s), the 4-H newsletter, and any correspondence relating to your project.

Do not enroll online until you have settled on a club you would like to join. A list of Community and SPIN Clubs can be found here: <https://extension.illinois.edu/mms/4-h-madison-county>. Please contact the Extension office to find out how to visit clubs to see which one(s) will fit your interests.

4-H Community Clubs meet monthly and members are required to attend *at least* four meetings per year and choose at least one project listed in the *Illinois 4-H Project Guide*. The project(s) that you choose should be exhibited at a 4-H Show.

Special Interest (SPIN) Clubs such as Shooting Sports, Robotics, etc. meetings vary depending on the time of the year. The leader will work with families to inform them of meeting dates/locations. Please contact any of these club leaders listed if you would like more information about their club or to attend one of their meetings.

Members who belong to clubs in more than one county must decide which county they will exhibit their projects and collect premiums and other awards.

If a member crosses county lines (joins 4-H in a county other than their county of residence), they pay the higher of the two fees if one of those counties' charges more than \$20. (*Currently all neighboring counties are planning to charge \$20.*)

No child will be denied participation in 4-H due to the inability to pay. The Extension office may be contacted for scholarship information. Scholarship forms are due to the Extension Office along with your enrollment forms. Clubs may choose to do fundraising or collect donations to offset 4-H Program Fees for their members. Sibling discounts will not be offered.

Enrollment Procedure

- Members must enroll each year. Just because you were in 4-H last year, does not mean we know that you plan to enroll in 4-H again this year or which projects you would like to take.
- At the beginning of the 4-H year, leaders will distribute an *Illinois 4-H Project Guide* for 4-H members to review and select a project(s).
- A copy of the previous year's Showbook: https://extension.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/madison_showbook_2020.pdf give you an idea of what the specific exhibit requirements will be for shows.
- SPARK sheets are single page informational guides that will give you an overview of each project and these are available here: <https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/project-spark-sheets>
- 4-H members should enroll in ONE learning level per project area.
- Members should remain in a project learning level for two to three years (depending on age) before moving up to the next level. If a member enrolls in the same project more than one year, a new project book is not needed. Exceptions may be when new books are printed.
- If a project book is needed, you will receive an email after your enrollment is approved allowing you to select your books.
- Project books will be distributed through your leader after enrollment is completed. Please be patient as it may take a month to receive.
- All new members are required to complete an **Emergency Medical Form** and an **Agreement to Assume Risks and Fully Release All Claims Form** the beginning of the 4-H year and give to their 4-H leader.

4-H Project Selection

All 4-H members are required to enroll in at least one project each year.

Often, 4-H members will select more than one project area to work on throughout the 4-H year.

Project selection is very important to members, parents, and leaders. Thought and consideration is needed during project selection. Various factors should be considered which can lead to a successfully completed 4-H project.

Young people vary in their individual capacities, interests, needs and environment. When a member selects a project that meets his interests and needs, he has a better chance to enjoy a satisfying, useful experience in 4-H.

Consider the following factors when assisting 4-H members in selecting projects:

- *What are their interests?*
- *Do they have or can they get the necessary equipment?*
- *Are their parents interested enough to help them fit the project into their family plans?*
- *What previous project experience have they had?*
- *Have they considered the costs involved in the project?*
- *Does the 4-H club have a project leader for this project? If not, is there another adult that can assist the member with this project?*
- *All livestock projects have specific dates in which the animal must be in the member's possession. Is the member able to meet the deadline?*
- *Project requirements, judging and exhibiting requirements differ with each project. Leaders, members, and parents should review them.*

The **Illinois 4-H Project Guide** is the complete listing of projects offered on the state level. The suggested ages in the *Illinois 4-H Project Guide* are just that – suggested. Choose the project level that best matches your knowledge and skill in that area. If a project has multiple levels (example: Photography I, II and III) you can be enrolled in the same project level for more than one year, but not more than one project level.

SPARK sheets are single page informational guides that will give you an overview of each project and these are available here: <https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/project-spark-sheets>

Additional Requirements for Livestock Projects

- Members planning to exhibit livestock at a 4-H show must turn in their 4-H enrollment form by January 1.
- Livestock ownership dates and policies will be printed in the 4-H newsletter and found on our website:
https://extension.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/madison_livestock_showbook_2020.pdf
- Livestock health requirements for the 4-H Fair are listed in the 4-H Showbook. Read carefully and plan appointments with your vet accordingly. Many species require a certificate of veterinary inspection for entry into the fair.
- **Quality Assurance & Ethics Certification (QAEC)** – Members exhibiting any animal projects (including poster projects) at the Madison County 4-H Shows or the Illinois State Fair are required to complete a Quality Assurance and Ethics training . Participants are required to only take the training once in their 4-H career. Training is done via the Quality Assurance & Ethics website at:
<https://web.extension.illinois.edu/qaec/>
Training must be completed May 1.
- **Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA)** – Members exhibiting Beef, Dairy, Goat, Sheep and/or Swine at County, State or National livestock shows are required to take the YQCA training either with a Veterinarian or online at:
<http://yqca.org/>
Training must be completed May 1 of each year that member is enrolled in one of the above listed projects.

4-H Show Information

There are several 4-H Shows held during the summer months for 4-H members to exhibit what they have learned about in their project areas: **Public Presentations Show, Horse Show, Dog Show, Food and Clothing Show, and County Fair.**

A 4-H Show is the highlight of the year for many members. This is the opportunity for members to have their 4-H projects judged and put on display for the public to view.

- All exhibitors must be currently enrolled in the project for which they are exhibiting.
- 4-H members are responsible for exhibiting ALL the projects that they are enrolled in.
- All exhibits must be products of the current 4-H year, excluding livestock.

Project Registration

All projects that a member wishes to exhibit in a Show should be registered in the *Fair Entry* system: <https://fairentry.com/> prior to the Show. Registration details will be provided in the 4-H Newsletter and by 4-H Staff.

What do I bring to the Show?

The 4-H Showbook contains all the policies and procedures for the shows. It is very important to read and follow the rules. Read the General Rules and Livestock Health Requirements carefully. Then read the specific requirements for your project area. Some projects require a written report in addition to the display. **READ CAREFULLY!!** If you have questions, contact your leader or the Extension office for help.

How is my project judged?

Judging is a learning experience from which you can learn what you did well and how you could improve in the future. An exhibit does not measure all that you have learned, but it is an example of what you have done. During conference judging, the judge will encourage you to talk about your project exhibit. You will be asked some questions about your exhibit, so you should be prepared to explain what you were trying to do in your project and what you did to make the exhibit. The interview will last approximately three to five minutes.

What Are the Judges Looking For?

- The exhibitor's goals: What was your goal for the project? How did you work toward your goal? What important things did you learn?
- Requirements for project are met to the best of the exhibitor's abilities.
- Evidence of learning, workmanship and techniques, appearance, and design.

What Do Ribbon Colors Mean?

Illinois 4-H uses the Danish system of judging—rather than competing against someone else, youth challenge themselves to create exhibits that represent their best.

- **Blue:** Exhibit meets all requirements well.
- **Red:** Exhibit meets some requirements well but could use improvement on other requirements.
- **White:** Exhibit needs improvement on many requirements or is missing information critical to evaluation of the exhibit.
- **Purple:** If a purple ribbon is awarded at a General Project show, it means the exhibit is one of the best of the blues and has been selected to advance for exhibition to the Illinois State Fair.
- **Pink:** If a pink ribbon is awarded at a General project show, it means the exhibit is one of the best of the blues and has been selected as an **alternate** to advance for exhibition to the Illinois State Fair.

What are Premiums?

Members receive premiums (monetary awards) as an incentive to do well on their projects. Premiums are based on the color of ribbon awarded to the project. Premiums in Illinois are paid through the Agricultural Premium Fund, which is authorized

under the Agricultural Fair Act and administered by the Bureau of County Fairs, State of Illinois Department of Agriculture. The Illinois legislature must approve the Ag Premium Fund each year. The amount of funds provided to the county to pay premiums is based on the previous year's 4-H club enrollment. "County Projects" are not eligible for premiums through the Agricultural Premium Funds and are therefore paid with local funds. Premium checks are mailed to members after funds have been received by the Extension office. Premium checks must be cashed in a timely manner – checks are good for only 60 days and are not reissued.

The Department of Agriculture shall use its best efforts to secure sufficient appropriations to fund premiums. In any year for which the General Assembly of the State of Illinois fails to make an appropriation sufficient to pay such premiums, premium amounts may not be funded as in previous years.

Tips for 4-H Judging

- ✓ Be well groomed. That includes clean hands, hair, and fingernails.
- ✓ Do not chew gum.
- ✓ Use good posture. Sit/stand straight and tall.
- ✓ Be polite and use your best manners.
- ✓ Be prepared to talk about your project. Know what you did, how you did it, what you learned, and what you might do differently the next time.
- ✓ When answering the judge's questions, speak clearly and loud enough for the judge to hear your answers.
- ✓ During the interview, look at the judge. Give him/her your full attention. Do not be distracted by other people or noises around you.
- ✓ Thank the judge when the interview is finished. Remember, the real purpose of judging is sharing and learning.
- ✓ Be pleasant and confident. Smile! Be enthusiastic!

What happens if I cannot come to project judging?

Because the 4-H ribbon awarded to an exhibitor is based on both the exhibit (poster, display, etc.) and the knowledge of the exhibitor (interview with the judge), exhibitors must be present at time of conference judging. Make-up judging will not be scheduled for exhibitors.

4-H members who cannot be present for the 4-H show are still encouraged to exhibit their project at the 4-H show, however the exhibit **MUST** be accompanied by a brief written report prepared by the member. The report should state how the exhibit was made, what they learned, any challenges, likes and dislikes.

Absent 4-H exhibitors in livestock projects are exempt from such a report.

4-H members are required to be present during a county 4-H show to be eligible for State Fair.

4-H members must follow the project requirements as stated in the 4-H Showbook to be eligible for State Fair.

Remember, exhibiting at the 4-H Show is just a part of completing your project. Hopefully, you have been working on activities throughout the year to learn about the subject you selected. You can still “complete” your project by showing your exhibit to club members at a meeting or club tour. Not being able to exhibit at the 4-H Show does not mean that you did a lot of work for nothing – you should have learned a great deal along the way and hopefully had fun while doing it. You may also have a new rocket to play with, a new piece of art for your room or new fishing lures to use.

4-H Livestock Show

- 4-H members should have 4-H Livestock Records up-to-date and show their records to their Leader at their June club meeting. **Records should be completed by September 15** and turned into the Madison Co. Extension office. **Records can be found here:** https://extension.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/livestock_record_writable.pdf
- All projects that a member wishes to exhibit should be registered in the *Fair Entry* system: <https://faireentry.com/> prior to the Show. Registration details will be provided in the 4-H Newsletter and by 4-H Staff.
- 4-H entries are separate from Open/Junior entries.
- All cattle, swine, goats, sheep, poultry, rabbits, and horses shown are subject to the same health regulations as stated for the Open Classes.
- During the Madison County Fair, all 4-H members must abide by the general rules established by the Fair Association.

Illinois State Fair Junior Livestock Shows

- Junior Livestock Exhibitors must have a signature from a 4-H or FFA representative on their livestock entry forms to exhibit.
- All animals must be registered in the name of the 4-H exhibitor only EXCEPT horses, which can be leased.

4-H Traditions

The 4-H Pledge

The 4-H Pledge summarizes what 4-H is all about. The 4-H program has as its goal the four-fold development of youth: Head, Heart, Hands and Health. Most 4-H members learn and try to live up to the promises they make in the 4-H Pledge.

The pledge was adopted by the delegates to the 1927 National 4-H Club Camp in Washington, DC. State club leaders voted for and adopted the pledge for universal use. The phrase "and my world" was added to the pledge in 1973. The saying of the pledge has a prominent place in 4-H activities at regular 4-H meetings, achievement days, and other club events. When recited at 4-H events, actions are added to the pledge.

I Pledge...

My Head to clearer thinking,

My Heart to greater loyalty,

My Hands to larger service, and

My Health to better living,

For my Club, my Community, my Country, and my World.

4-H Colors

Green represents life, youth, nature, and springtime. White symbolizes purity.

4-H Emblem

The green four-leaf clover has a white "H" on each leaf to represent one of the four H's – Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.



4-H Slogan

"Learn by Doing"

A phrase that sums up the educational philosophy of the 4-H program. Derived from educational theory and philosophy of the times, the term exemplifies the experiential nature of the learning experiences in 4-H. Young people learn best when they are involved in their learning. The intent is to do, reflect, and apply.

4-H Motto

"To Make the Best Better"

The motto was adopted at about the same time as the 4-H Club Pledge. Its intent is to inspire young people to continue to learn and grow, to make their best efforts better through participating in educational experiences.

4-H Songs

Songs written for 4-H were introduced at the National 4-H Camp in 1927, when the 4-H Pledge was adopted. Most of those songs reflect the rural, agricultural society of the times

The 4-H Club Meeting

Why conduct club meetings?

The purpose of 4-H meetings is to help members:

- ❖ Acquire new information
- ❖ Learn creative use of leisure time
- ❖ Develop social skills
- ❖ Acquire desirable leadership and citizenship traits
- ❖ Understand how to conduct a business meeting

Members are given the opportunity to learn and practice decision making in group situations by using the knowledge and skills acquired at these meetings. Club members are expected to attend the club meetings on a regular basis.

Parents are encouraged to attend 4-H Club meetings with their 4-H'ers. The 4-H program is a family affair.

How often do clubs meet?

Clubs are required to meet *at least* six times each year, however, most clubs meet monthly either for business meetings, educational programs, or fun activities. Clubs are free to establish their own schedule based on what works best for the membership. Most clubs set a regular meeting night, such as the 2nd Tuesday of the month.

*Special Interest (SPIN Clubs) may have very different schedules, i.e. meeting 2x/month, meeting only 4 months out of the year, etc.

What is a club meeting like?

The 4-H meeting is balanced between *business, educational program* and *recreation*. Meetings normally do not last over one to one and a half hours with time divided between the three parts.

What is the Business Session like?

The business portion of the meeting should be short and snappy. It should be a small democracy in action. Members can discuss and decide upon club activities. This is also an opportunity to find out what is happening on the county and state level.

What is an Educational Program?

This part of the club meeting program is designed to help members learn more about the subjects of general interest in the 4-H program. 4-H teaching is unique – it is “learning by doing”. Good 4-H teaching employs seeing, hearing, and doing. Generally, the educational program will include talks and demonstrations by the 4-H'ers. Outside speakers may present programs for 4-H meetings as well.

Demonstrations

Demonstrations are “show and tell” type presentations where the 4-H'ers share some of the fun things they have learned in their 4-H projects. Actual articles are used to show the steps necessary for a finished product. Most demonstrations consist of three parts:

- 1) **introduction** explains the purpose of the demonstration.
- 2) **body** outlines the process step-by-step; and

3) **summary** reviews important points and gives opportunity for questions.

Illustrated Talks

Illustrated talks differ from demonstrations in that they **tell** how rather than **show** how. Charts, models, and other visuals are important for illustrated talks.

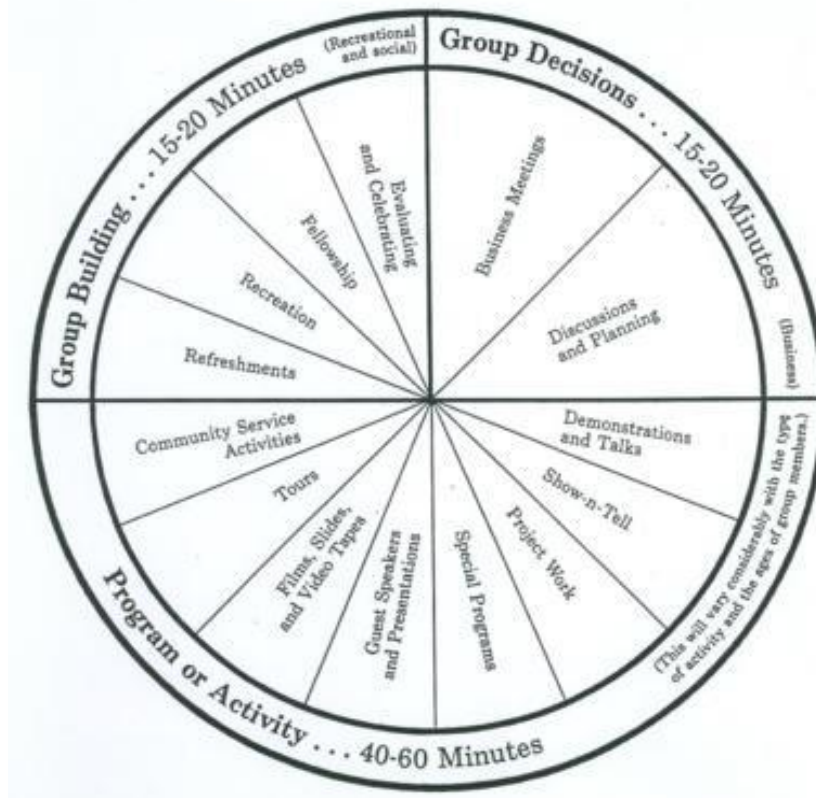
Demonstrations and Talks should follow this basic guideline of time:

- 8-11 y/o: 1-2 minutes
- 12-15: 3-4 minutes
- 16-19: 5-6 minutes

Recreation and Refreshments?

The recreation portion of the meeting is a fun time involving all members. Recreation will vary from challenges, relays, guessing games, table games or other group activities.

Many clubs serve refreshments at meetings, although it is not essential. Most often, different members host each meeting. The learning experience for the members to select, prepare, and serve refreshments is the prime concern. Club members should learn how to select simple, nutritious, and inexpensive refreshments. Parents can and should help by giving suggestions and guidance



Expectations of Members

It is the responsibility of the 4-H member to get involved and to take advantage of the opportunities provided in 4-H. Some things members should do:

- Select a 4-H project(s) with the help of parents or leaders.
- Read the 4-H project book and do the activities in the book.
- Attend a *minimum* of 4 meetings per year and participate in 4-H club meetings and activities.
- Attend and participate in county, district, and state activities, workshops, and programs when possible.
- Help plan and support 4-H club activities – community service, fundraising, etc.
- Read the 4-H related emails with parents/guardian. The 4-H Newsletter is a great resource filled with upcoming events and past highlights. It is distributed by email and also posted to the county website at <https://extension.illinois.edu/mms/4-h-madison-county>
- Keep a current and up to date 4-H calendar of meetings and activities.
- Ask parent, relative, or another adult to serve as a 4-H helper.
- Serve as an officer of the club or on a committee when asked.
- Take an active part in the 4-H club meeting.
- Share a hobby, skill, or interest with other 4-H club members during a meeting or workshop.
- Keep parents/guardian informed about 4-H club meetings, projects, and activities.
- Complete at least one **Madison County 4-H Award Application** by September 15: https://extension.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/madison_county_4-h_award_application_2020_1.pdf
- Since most groups or clubs are judged by the behavior of individual members, it is the responsibility of the 4-H member to conduct himself/herself at all times during 4-H meetings and activities in a manner that would be a credit to the individual, the family, the 4-H club, the county, and the state.



4-H Youth Behavior Guidelines:

All youth who participate in Illinois 4-H Youth Development programs, which are planned, conducted, and supervised by University of Illinois Extension, are responsible for their own conduct. Youth participating in 4-H programs are expected to demonstrate the character traits of trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Specifically, 4-H youth are expected to abide by the following behavior guidelines:

1. Be courteous and respect others.
2. Obey all the laws of the locality, state, and nation and University of Illinois and Extension policies and guideline as well as 4-H Program Guidelines and those of the local club/group.
3. Treat all people fairly and animals humanely.
4. Respect the property of others.
5. Respect the authority of adult or youth volunteers, paid Extension staff, and others in leadership roles.
6. Use appropriate language and wear acceptable clothing at 4-H activities and events.
7. Show kindness to others and give assistance when needed.
8. Be honest and honor commitments.
9. Strive for personal best and keep trying to improve.
10. Accept responsibility for personal choices.

Annual Calendar

- The 4-H Newsletter is distributed monthly.
- This listing of events is a guideline. The most current calendar is published in each newsletter. Be sure to check for dates of upcoming events!



September

New 4-H Year Begins
Award Applications Due
Livestock Record Books Due
Fall Leader's Meeting
Club Meeting

September 1
September 15
September 15

October

National 4-H Week
National Youth Science Day
Club officer elections
Club Meeting

1st full week of October

November

Club Award programs
Club Meeting

December

Club Meeting

January

Deadline to enroll in 4-H online
Order publications for projects
Club Meeting

January 1

February

Madison County Trivia Night
Steer Weigh-in & Tattooing
Club Meeting

March

Club meeting

April

National Volunteer Week
Spring Leader's Meeting
Club Meeting

May

Deadline for QAEC & YQCA
County 4-H Horse Show
Dog Obedience classes
Club Meeting

May 1

June

Horse Show
Dog Show
Food & Clothing Show
Public Speaking Show
Club Meeting

July

State Fair Livestock Entries Due	July 1
Madison County Fair	Late July
State Junior Horse Show	Late July
Club Meeting	

August

Illinois State Fair & Jr. Livestock Shows	Mid-August
End of 4-H Year	August 31
Club Meeting	

Activities/Events

County and State activities are regularly posted in the 4-H newsletter and Facebook page.

A listing of regularly updated State activities can be found here:
<https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/events>

***On days of school closings due to inclement weather conditions, county 4-H activities will not be conducted, unless otherwise notified. ***

What Can Parents Do to Help?

1. Take time to learn about 4-H, what it stands for and how it operates.
2. Advise your son or daughter in selecting their 4-H projects. Help them select a project they are interested in, a project they can accomplish, and one for which you can furnish facilities, financing, needed materials and guidance.
3. Show your interest and enthusiasm for the 4-H projects selected. Find out what is suggested for the members to do and learn.
4. Encourage your child to get started and then complete the work.
5. Resist doing your child's project for them even though you may be able to do it faster, better, simpler, and with much less mess.
6. Keep the purpose of the 4-H program in perspective. Realize that the project is a teaching tool and a method for involving boys and girls in a worthwhile activity. Above all, remember that your child is more important than the 4-H project. This is great bonding time.
7. Remember that the 4-H experience should be an educational one. Do not let the desire to win overpower your child's ability to learn.
8. Encourage your 4-H'er when they succeed and even more when they fail.
9. Offer to help the 4-H club leader.
10. Encourage your child to keep track of work done in 4-H. This information will be helpful if the member seeks awards in 4-H or outside of 4-H (college applications, scholarships).
11. Avoid scheduling other activities which conflict with your child's 4-H schedule when possible.
12. Remember that the 4-H boy and girl are more important than the 4-H project.
13. Be tactful with 4-H leaders, staff, judges, and your child.
14. **ASK QUESTIONS!**



Where to Go for Questions

University of Illinois Extension – **Madison County** (Branch Office)

Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to noon and 1 pm to 4:30 p.m.

1606 Eastport Plaza Dr.

Suite 100

Collinsville, IL 62234

Website: <https://extension.illinois.edu/mms/4-h-madison-county/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/University-of-Illinois-Extension-Madison-County-4-H-309169712606683>

Phone: (618)344-4230

E-mail: angielyn@illinois.edu

Madison County 4-H Staff

Amy Cope, County Director

Rachel Hazen, 4-H Youth Development Educator

Emily Reece, 4-H Youth Development Educator

Angie Abernathy, 4-H Program Coordinator

Patty Stanton, Office Support Associate

Your 4-H Club Leader(s)

Other Parents

Madison County 4-H Newsletter*

<https://extension.illinois.edu/mms/4-h-madison-county>

Madison County 4-H Showbook

https://extension.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/madison_showbook_2020.pdf

The *Illinois 4-H Project Guide*

<https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/members/projects>

Helpful 4-H Websites

University of Illinois Extension – Madison, Monroe, St. Clair:

<https://extension.illinois.edu/mms>

University of Illinois Extension

<https://extension.illinois.edu/>

Illinois State Fair

www.state.il.us/fair

Illinois 4-H

<https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/>

National 4-H Council

<https://4-h.org/>