

WELCOME TO 4-H!

*A community of young people across
America learning leadership, citizenship
and life skills.*



ROCK COUNTY 4-H NEW FAMILY HANDBOOK

Compiled by: Donna Duerst, Rock County 4-H Youth Development Agent
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Cooperative Extension
Rock County

Dear 4-H Families:

Welcome to the Rock County 4-H program!

We're glad that you've chosen to become part of 4-H! Your family is joining approximately 135,000 youth and 30,000 adults throughout the state of Wisconsin who are members and volunteer leaders in the 4-H program. In Rock County, there are approximately 1,500 youth and 600 adult volunteers involved in 4-H, making it the largest 4-H club program in the state!

The purpose of this handbook is to acquaint your family with the various aspects of the 4-H program. You can read about 4-H in general, Rock County 4-H policies, the different types of leaders at the club and county levels, how 4-H relates to the University of Wisconsin-Extension and how the county fair relates to 4-H.

In addition to the New Family Handbook, there is another important source of information regarding the Rock County 4-H program. The monthly 4-H newsletter, "Clover Patch", always contains the most updated information on upcoming events, activities and meetings. It's very important to read the "Clover Patch" every month! If you are not receiving a "Clover Patch", contact the UW-Extension Office at 757-5690. The "Clover Patch" is also available on the Rock County UW-Extension website, <http://fyi.uwex.edu/4hrock/>

Finally, please don't hesitate to call us at the UW-Extension Office if you have any questions about the 4-H program. We're here to help you in any way we can!

Sincerely,

Donna J. Duerst
4-H Youth Development Agent
Rock County UW-Extension

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT...

THE 4-H PROGRAM.

What is 4-H?

4-H is an educational youth organization that belongs to the members, their families and other interested adults who serve as volunteer leaders. Professional leadership is provided by faculty and staff of the University of Wisconsin-Extension. Support for the 4-H program is a joint effort of local county government, the University of Wisconsin and the United States Department of Agriculture.

What is the 4-H Emblem?

The national 4-H emblem is a four-leaf clover with the letter "H" on each leaf.

What are the 4-H's?

The 4-H's stand for Head, Heart, Hands and Health. They represent the four-fold development in which members participate, which is illustrated by the 4-H pledge below.

What is the 4-H Pledge?

The national 4-H pledge is as follows:

"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."

What is the 4-H Slogan?

The 4-H slogan is "Learn By Doing." This slogan describes the basic educational purpose of the 4-H program.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT...

THE 4-H PROGRAM (continued)

What is the purpose of 4-H?

The purpose of the 4-H program is to provide learning opportunities for youth, volunteers and parents that assist them in developing appropriate and essential life skills, such as decision making, relating to others, communicating with others and developing self esteem. 4-H clubs, projects and activities are all vehicles for teaching those life skills.

What is a 4-H club?

Each 4-H member belongs to a 4-H club in the community or at school. Community 4-H clubs meet once a month; After School 4-H clubs meet once a week during the school year. Through club membership, 4-H members learn how to cooperate with others, how to make decisions as a group and how to be effective leaders.

What is a 4-H project?

Each 4-H member signs up for one or more projects, or educational areas. A project is a topic the member wants to learn about during the 4-H year. In addition to club meetings, members can attend small group meetings with project leaders held specifically for their projects. Through project work, 4-H members learn responsibility and new skills in their projects.

What is a 4-H activity?

All 4-H members can participate in a wide variety of 4-H activities, regardless of the project areas they have selected. Members can participate with their 4-H club in such county activities as Music and Drama, Basketball, Volleyball and Softball. Members can also participate individually in these county activities: Communications Arts Festival, 4-H Camp and others. Registration information for county activities is found in the 4-H newsletter, "Clover Patch."

4-H clubs also plan activities at the club level that are open to all club members. Through participation in activities, 4-H members learn communication skills, cooperation and self confidence.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT...

ROCK COUNTY 4-H POLICIES.

What is 4-H membership?

A child becomes a 4-H member by joining a community 4-H club or an after school 4-H club. New members are welcome to visit 4-H club meetings and join 4-H at any time during the year. Membership is open to all youth regardless of their ethnic background, race, gender, handicap status, religious or political beliefs.

When can youth join 4-H?

Youth in Kindergarten (5K), first or second grade as of October 1st may join Rock County 4-H as Cloverbuds. Youth in third grade and up as of October 1st may join as regular members. Youth continue to be eligible for 4-H membership through the 4-H year following their graduation from high school.

In how many 4-H projects may a 4-H member enroll?

First year 4-H members in grades 3 through 5 who have not been Cloverbuds may enroll in up to two 4-H projects. All other members may enroll in a maximum of seven projects **ONLY** if one of the projects is Youth Leadership. Otherwise the maximum number of projects for all other members is six. Every 4-H member must enroll in at least one project.

What are the achievement requirements?

In order to achieve, or meet the membership requirements for the year, the 4-H member must complete the following: 1) exhibit publicly (for example, at the Rock County Fair or at a club meeting) in each project enrolled, 2) submit a completed record book to the club and 3) attend a minimum of 3 regularly scheduled meetings of his/her 4-H club. 4-H clubs may not set additional requirements for achievement. 4-H members that do not achieve will be able to re-join for one year on a probationary basis, meaning they may enroll in only one project.

THESE POLICIES APPLY TO ALL ROCK COUNTY 4-H MEMBERS!

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT...

WHO'S WHO IN ROCK COUNTY 4-H.

At the Club Level:

What is a Club Chairperson?

A club chairperson is an adult volunteer who serves as the general leader of the 4-H club. The club chairperson is responsible for the organizational aspects of the club and serves as the liaison with the county 4-H leadership. Club chairpersons advise the youth in making decisions for the club and may delegate tasks to other leaders and parents.

What is a Club Advisory Board?

The club advisory board is a group of volunteers who support the club chairperson and assist with his or her responsibilities. Club advisory board members also advise the youth in making decisions, running club meetings and planning club activities.

What is a Project Leader?

A project leader is an adult volunteer who helps 4-H members as they learn, make and do things in a specific project. Project leaders hold educational meetings with groups of 4-H members or with individual members at the club level.

What is an Activity Leader?

An activity leader is an adult volunteer who is responsible for organizing and conducting club activities, such as music or drama, softball, and community service activities.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT...

WHO'S WHO AT THE CLUB LEVEL (CONTINUED)

What is a Club Officer?

A club officer is a youth who has been elected by the club members to fill a specific role as an officer of the club: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and so on. Each club officer has specific duties and responsibilities related to planning, running meetings and other club operations.

What is a Junior Leader?

A junior leader in a specific project is an older 4-H member who has several years experience in that project. The junior leader assists the project leader in teaching other youth about the project.

On the county level, youth in 7th grade and older can join the Rock County 4-H Junior Council for additional leadership opportunities.

What does it mean to be a 4-H parent?

4-H parents are a very important part of the 4-H member's experience. Parents are encouraged to attend club meetings, project meetings and county events with their children. Parents are also encouraged to volunteer to help with club activities and events whenever possible.

Regardless of the level of active involvement, it is very important for the member to have their parent's support. Children need their parents to support their commitment to 4-H, the decisions they make and the goals they set. The 4-H member will have a much more positive experience with the support of the parents!

Please refer to the following page for more information on being a 4-H parent.

HOW TO ENHANCE YOUR CHILD'S 4-H EXPERIENCE: A GUIDE FOR 4-H PARENTS

At home:

1. Encourage your child to take an active role in the club. Help him or her set priorities about activities and events by scheduling time wisely.
2. Get to know the youth and families in your club. Volunteer to help with project meetings and other get-togethers or help with car-pooling to other locations.
3. Let your child know you're interested in his or her 4-H experiences and projects. Help set priorities and goals based on your child's needs, interests and time. Encourage him or her to follow through with commitments by attending meetings and completing tasks and assignments.
4. Be available when your child needs you for information, guidance and support. Make sure he or she knows you're there to help when needed. However, refrain from completing 4-H projects, record books, award forms or other tasks yourself.
5. Praise your child's efforts and progress on projects or other experiences. Focus on what's being learned instead of putting all the emphasis on winning.
6. Help your child learn that "doing your best" is more important than "being the best."
7. Avoid criticizing or blaming your child for not winning blue ribbons or being selected for awards. Instead, look for ways to help him or her cope with disappointment.

At 4-H club and county events:

1. Participate with your child in 4-H club meetings and other club and county events.
2. Stay in touch with your child's club and project leaders. Let them know you appreciate the time and effort they're contributing.
3. When possible, volunteer your time and talents to lead or assist with projects and other club and county 4-H events.
4. Work with other 4-H parents, adults and youth leaders to make sure 4-H policies, rules and procedures reflect what's best for the youth.
5. Support your 4-H Youth Development staff's efforts to emphasize and promote the educational value of 4-H events and activities.
6. Work with other 4-H parents and volunteers to make sure competitive events will be handled in a manner that's healthy and beneficial for all youth involved.
7. Let 4-H leaders and others know you are appreciative of their efforts by providing positive and constructive feedback.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT...

WHO'S WHO IN ROCK COUNTY 4-H.

At the County Level:

What is the 4-H Leaders Council?

The 4-H Leaders Council is composed of Senior Council and Junior Council. Together, this group of adult and youth volunteers sets policies, makes decisions and raises funds for the county 4-H program. Junior Council also plans and conducts county activities. Monthly Junior Council meetings are open to any 4-H youth in grade 7 or above, and monthly Senior Council meetings are open to any 4-H adult volunteers.

What is the Executive Board?

The Executive Board is composed of the officers of the Junior and Senior Councils. The Executive Board meets monthly to plan the Council meetings and is advised by the 4-H Youth Development staff.

What is a Project Committee?

4-H project committees are adult and youth volunteers who are responsible for projects at the county level. They plan and conduct educational meetings and activities in specific projects that are open to any youth in the county enrolled in those projects.

What is a Key Leader?

Key leaders are experienced adult volunteers who serve as subject matter resource people for project leaders, members and parents in a few specific projects. They are available to assist with project meetings and help members on an individual basis.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT...

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EXTENSION

What is UW-Extension?

UW-Extension, or UWEX, is a "campus" of the University of Wisconsin system that is found in all 72 Wisconsin counties. UW-Extension administers educational programs in four major areas: 4-H Youth Development, Family Living Education, Community Resource Development and Agriculture/Agribusiness. See the Rock County UW-Extension website, <http://rock.uwex.edu/>, for more information.

What is an Extension Agent?

Extension Agents are university faculty and staff members of UW-Extension. In Rock County, each of the program areas is assigned at least one Extension Agent. Although the primary responsibility for the county 4-H program rests with the 4-H Youth Development staff, other Extension staff in Rock County work with specific aspects of the 4-H program.

What is the role of the 4-H Youth Development Staff?

The 4-H Youth Development staff administers the county 4-H program. They provide educational leadership for the program, serve as advisors to the Leaders Council, and assist key leaders and committees in providing educational opportunities for youth and adults.

Where are the Rock County UWEX Offices located?

Rock County maintains two UWEX offices and employs the support staff. The 4-H Youth Development staff is located at the Janesville office in the Courthouse, 51 S. Main Street in Janesville, phone 757-5690.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT...

THE ROCK COUNTY 4-H FAIR

How does 4-H relate to the Fair?

The Rock County Fair has a long and rich tradition of being called a "4-H Fair." All fair exhibitors must be youth and many are 4-H members; however, any youth who is enrolled in Rock County FFA, FHA, Girls Scouts, Boy Scouts or Education Department may also exhibit. The Rock County 4-H Fair is actually a Youth Fair or a Junior Fair.

Administratively, the fair is not really part of the 4-H program. The 4-H program is administered by the UW-Extension staff; the fair is administered by the Fair Board. Although UW-Extension and the Fair Board are not directly related, they work together toward the continued success of the fair.

Who runs the 4-H Fair?

The Rock County 4-H Fair Board is the sole governing body of the Rock County 4-H Fair. The Fair Board is independent of the UW-Extension Office.

What is a Fair Superintendent?

A superintendent is an adult volunteer who is in charge of a specific department at the fair. Superintendents may or may not also be leaders in the 4-H program. As superintendents they are accountable to the Fair Board, not the UW-Extension Office.

Where is the Rock County 4-H Fair Office located?

The Fair Office is located on the Craig Avenue side of the Rock County Fairgrounds in Janesville. The address is P.O. Box 170, Janesville WI, 53547, phone 755-1470. All questions relating to the fair or anything in the Fair Premium Book should be directed to this office.

Contact the UW Extension Office at the Courthouse for:

Telephone: (608) 757-5690

8 a.m. – noon and 1 p.m. – 5 p.m., Mon.-Fri.

<http://fyi.uwex.edu/4hrock/>

- Achievement banquet forms, lists and certificates for clubs
- Activity registrations, fees and information: basketball, volleyball, softball and others
- Audio visual resources for club and project meetings
- Awards forms and selection: 4-H Resume, Accomplishment Awards, Outstanding Leader Awards, Clover Awards, Community Service Awards
- Award trips fees and information: State 4-H Youth Conference, Citizenship Washington Focus, National 4-H Conference, National 4-H Congress
- Calendar of 4-H events
- Camp registration, fees and information
- Cloverbud program information
- Club chair training and materials
- Communication Arts Festival entries and information
- Computer lists of club members and leaders
- County achievement program awards and information
- County wide project meetings
- Enrollment forms, fees and information
- Insurance for 4-H clubs
- Leader orientation schedule and materials
- Leaders Council meetings: Junior and Senior Council
- Literature and educational materials for projects
- Music and Drama Festival entries and information
- Newsletter address changes
- Record book forms and guidelines
- Risk management for 4-H clubs
- State Fair entries
- Youth Protection Program forms and information

Contact the Rock County Fair Office at the Fairgrounds for:

Telephone: (608) 755-1470

Always call first!

www.rockcounty4hfair.com/

- Face-to-face judging recipes
- Fair Association membership and meeting information
- Fair entry blanks and information
- Fair entry questions
- Fair entry tags and backtags
- Fair events held prior to the fair: Foods Revue, Cat Show, Archery Shoot, Gun Shoot, Junior/Senior Style Revue, Rocket Launch, Aircraft Fly, Bicycle Events, Small Engine Judging, Horse Show, Pony Show
- Fair passes and ticket information
- Fair premium books
- Fair premium checks
- Fair superintendent, assistant superintendent and junior superintendent lists
- Fair trophies and ribbons
- Fur and Feather Sale forms and information
- Honey and honey recipes
- Meat Animal Sale forms and information
- Style Revue sheets

**ROCK COUNTY 4-H
NEW FAMILY HANDBOOK EVALUATION**

Please take a few minutes to complete this evaluation. Input from all family members is encouraged.

1. Did your family find the New Family Handbook to be helpful and informative? (Please check one.)

- Very helpful and informative
- Somewhat helpful and informative
- Not helpful and informative
- Undecided

2. Was the information covered in the New Family Handbook relevant to you as a new 4-H family? (Please check one.)

- Very relevant
- Somewhat relevant
- Not relevant
- Undecided

3. Was the information presented in a way that was easy to follow and understand? (Please check one.)

- Very easy to follow and understand
- Somewhat easy to follow and understand
- Undecided
- Somewhat difficult to follow and understand
- Very difficult to follow and understand

4. What information, if any, was not included in the New Family Handbook that should have been included?

5. Please share any other comments regarding the New Family Handbook.

THANK YOU for taking the time to complete this evaluation! Please fold it so the UW-Extension Office address shows on the outside. Tape or staple it shut, stick on a stamp and put it in the mail. **Your input is very valuable!**

4-H New Family Handbook
Rock County UW-Extension Office
51 South Main Street
Janesville, WI 53545