



RECORD KEEPING IS FUN

Intended Audience:

- 4-H Club members, leaders and parents

Learning Objectives:

4-H Club members, leaders and parents will:

- Recognize the immediate and long term benefits of keeping 4-H records.
- Become aware that record keeping is a year-round process.
- Gain ideas on how to organize and do record books.
- Develop strategies that help record keeping become easier and more fun.

Target Essential Elements:

Keeping 4-H records helps members learn *mastery* skills.

Time: 20-30 minutes

Supplies Needed:

Looking at Older Record Books Activity

- Completed record books from past

What's in 4-H Record Books? Activity

- Member record books

Handouts

- Member record book forms and supplies
- County materials on record books
- Evaluation

BACKGROUND

(Note: In Wisconsin, local 4-H volunteer organizations determine their own specific 4-H record book forms, guidelines and requirements. There are differences between counties in how record books are handled. Check with your county 4-H Youth Development staff to get current record book information. This lesson discusses record books in a generic way. It's a good idea to add specific county/club information to this lesson.)

Writing things down helps us remember what's happening and what we need to do. How many of you have a calendar at home where your family writes down appointments? How many of you write down things in a journal or diary? Have you seen a job application form where you write down your education and previous work or volunteer experiences? We're talking about different ways of communicating what has happened. 4-H records are an important way to keep track of our 4-H experiences.

WHAT TO DO

Activity: Looking at Older Record Books

(Divide the members into groups of 4-5. Give each group an older record book.) These are special record books that have been borrowed for this meeting. We're going to be looking at these books very carefully. Handle the books carefully to avoid tearing any pages or leaving any marks on them. We'll be learning about the people who did these records and their 4-H experiences.



(Write the following questions on a large sheet of paper with marker or on a blackboard.) I'd like each group to answer these questions about the record book that you examine:

1. What did this 4-H member do in his or her projects?
2. What does it look like the 4-H member learned?
3. What did this 4-H member do in his or her 4-H club?
4. What is interesting about this record book?

Value of Record Books

We looked at record books that had some things in common and some differences. It's OK that they are different. How are these record books alike and different from scrapbooks? Why do you think 4-H members do record books? What do you see as the value or benefit of doing records? Here are some reasons for doing 4-H records:

- Place to record goals, work done, and what happened
- Way to keep track of money spent and financial gains or losses
- Keep track of what happened each year
- Source of goals or plans for coming year
- Helpful when applying for 4-H county/state opportunities, awards and scholarships
- Information for employment or college applications
- They're like a scrapbook and help us remember fun memories.

Do Ahead:

- Have supplies and handouts ready.
- Borrow completed record books. Try to get one record book for every 4-5 members. Contact parents, grandparents and 4-H leaders to share their record books.
- Individualize the “What’s in 4-H Record Books?” discussion to fit county or club.
- Obtain record book forms and supplies for each member or request that they bring their record books for the current year.
- Recruit someone to record the reflection discussion to use as an evaluation (optional).

Sources:

- Created by Linda Kustka, Professor Emeritus, Department of Youth Development, UW-Extension.

Not only is there value in keeping 4-H records, members benefit by learning new things. When 4-H’ers keep records they learn:

- To plan and organize their work
- To evaluate what the 4-H experiences meant to them
- To follow directions and pay attention to details
- Skills that they will continue to use during their lives

Activity: What’s in 4-H Record Books?

(Note: Modify the following discussion to fit your county/club.) Now, let’s take a closer look at the record books that we use in our county/club.

- Members should have their record book, pen or pencil for writing.
- Covers: What information can we fill in for this year? Have everyone fill in that information. Younger members should be helped by parents, volunteers or older members.
- Project Information: Have your goals been set and recorded? If not, do this with your project leader and/or parent. Has anything happened in your project that can be written down now? If yes, have members complete that part.
- Activity Information: This section includes participation in county events and activities. What are some county events/activities that have happened so far this year? Anyone who has done these should write them down. What events/activities will be happening soon?
- Club Participation: What have you done in the club so far this year? Think about things like giving a talk or demonstration, planning a meeting or activity, being on a committee, or serving as an officer. Write down anything that you’ve done at this time.

Record Book Completion

Everyone feels good when record books are worked on throughout the year and completed by the deadline. It will be more fun and less frustrating if you spend some time each month on your record book. Here are some tips to help you:

- Keep everything in one place. Stay organized by using a large folder or envelope, box or desk drawer as a place to store your 4-H record book and helpful related information, e.g., newsletters, letters and pictures.
- Keep a diary or journal of your 4-H activities. Some people like to write these on a calendar.
- Add to your record book as the year progresses. Have everyone bring their record books to club and project meetings several times during the year. Spend some time together keeping them up to date.
- When the record book is finished, have your parent and leader look at it. Reflect on the past year, by talking about what went well and what didn’t, what you would do differently, and what you’re thinking about for the coming year.
- Parents/Leaders: Be sure to comment on your members accomplishments. Let them know your thoughts on what went well.

Closing

Records are a part of life. You’ll have records related to your money, insurance, taxes and property. Pictures are fun records of what you’ve done. You’ll enjoy your pictures much more if they are organized in a way that you can find them easily. Doing 4-H records is a part of 4-H life that helps you in many ways.

Your reactions to this session help us evaluate its effectiveness. Please take the time now to complete this short evaluation.

TALK IT OVER**Reflect:**

- What do you think is the biggest benefit of doing 4-H record books?
- Looking back at last year, what would you do differently with your 4-H record keeping?

Apply:

- How might our club help members enjoy doing record books?

ENHANCE/SIMPLIFY**Enhance:**

- Invite older 4-H alumni to come to the meeting with their record books. Ask them to talk briefly about their 4-H experiences and what their record books mean to them now.
- Add county/club record book forms and guidelines to this lesson.
- Older 4-H members who have completed good record books would be ideal teachers of this content. Encourage them to share their record books.
- There is an optional handout for volunteers on project goal setting that includes things they can do to support member record keeping.

Simplify:

- If time doesn't allow a small group activity reviewing older 4-H records, consider a substitute presentation of some record books that answers the discussion questions. Give participants the opportunity to carefully look at the old record books.

EVALUATION

- It is important to use an evaluation that is consistent with your teaching objectives. The short evaluation in the handouts can be modified to meet your needs. An alternative to a written evaluation is to record the Reflection discussion under "Talk It Over." Recruit someone ahead of time to take notes while you are leading the discussion. Remember to share the evaluation results with 4-H Youth Development Extension staff in your county.

ADDITIONAL WEB LINKS

Following are Wisconsin 4-H record book forms that some counties use:

- "Junior 4-H Project Financial Record," FR01, at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/showdoc.cfm?documentid=363.
- "Member Evaluation – 4-H Program," ME, at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/showdoc.cfm?documentid=378.
- "Member Planning & Evaluation - Activity," MPEA, at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/showdoc.cfm?documentid=381.
- "Member Planning & Evaluation - Project," MPE, at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=68>.
- "Member Record Book Cover," RBG, which provides good summary sheets for what happens each year regardless of county or club practice, at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/showdoc.cfm?documentid=383.
- "Younger Member Summary Form," YMS, at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=80.

The following publications also give helpful record-keeping information:

- "Member's Personal 4-H Record," Julie Chapin and Priscilla Martin, 4-H Youth Development Children, Youth, and Family Programs, Michigan State University Extension at <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/msue/cyf/youth/downloads/4H1230PersonalRecordBook.pdf>.
- "Record Keeping in 4-H," Betty Ann Smith, New Jersey 4-H Youth Development, Rutgers Cooperative Extension, 1994, at www.rcrc.rutgers.edu/pubs/pdfs/4h/e148/309-312.pdf.

Finalized by the Strengthening 4-H Club Leadership Work Team on September 2005.

Goal Setting Yearly Planning Guide for Youth and Adult Project Leaders

September - October

- Help members evaluate the past year.
- Assist members in enrolling in 4-H projects.

November - December

- Assist members in developing goals for the year.
- Develop project group plans for the year.

January - March

- Leaders check 4-H'ers progress.
- Have members write down things on planning sheets.
- Help members evaluate plans. Are there any changes, additions or deletions of goals?

April - June

- Have member's record work done on planning sheets.
- Have member's record participation in activities and events.
- Provide encouragement and reminders.
- Assist members in preparing exhibits for county fair.
- Prepare members for conference judging.

June - August

- Check progress of work.
- Have members write work done on planning sheets.
- Encourage members to exhibit at county fair.
- Review feedback received by members from judge.

August

- Have members complete planning sheets.
- Talk to parents and leaders about accomplishments.
- Evaluate and start planning for next year.

Record Keeping is Fun

Evaluation

1. How useful is this information on 4-H record keeping?
(Circle one response.)

Very Useful Somewhat Useful Not Sure Not Useful

2. Do you feel more comfortable doing your 4-H records?

Yes No

3. What will you do as a result of this program?