



4-H Club Management

WELCOMING NEW MEMBERS AND FAMILIES

Activity Plan – Wisconsin 4-H Club Training Series

ACTcc053

Intended Audience:

- 4-H Club members, leaders and parents

Learning Objectives:

4-H Club members, leaders and parents will:

- Value get-acquainted activities with new members and families
- Understand that everyone has a role in welcoming new members and families
- Understand the different 4-H information that new participants need
- Share ideas about 4-H events and activities that will help new participants

Target Essential Elements:

A welcoming environment increases members' sense of *belonging* in their 4-H club.

Time: 20-30 minutes

Supplies Needed:Across the Line Activity

- Rope or masking tape or anything to make a line

Getting Better Acquainted with 4-H Activity

- Handouts

Handouts

- Club and/or County 4-H Yearly Calendar
- Getting Better Acquainted with 4-H
- Welcome to Wisconsin 4-H (BRO42)
- Evaluation

BACKGROUND

Most of us probably remember being new to a group. We probably felt excited to experience new things and meet new people. Often, we felt nervous and worried because we didn't completely understand what was going on. Sometimes, we feel this way for quite a while. We're going to focus on how we can welcome new members and their families by getting better acquainted and sharing information on how 4-H works.

WHAT TO DO**Activity: Across the Line**

(Direct club members to stand on one side of the line. If there is enough space, include parents and volunteers. As an option you could have participants stand up and sit down instead of crossing a line.)

This is a get-to-know-you-better game. (Add or change questions to better fit the club). When I make a statement that applies to you, step over the line. Look around to see who has stepped across the line and who hasn't. After we're done with the statement, you will step back across the line before the next one. Step across the line . . .

1. If you like summer
2. If you're wearing red
3. If you ate breakfast this morning
4. If you've been in the 4-H club three or more years
5. If you like winter
6. If you have blue eyes
7. If you've been to 4-H camp
8. If you like mushrooms on pizza
9. If you're in the 4-H Foods project (or substitute a popular club project)
10. If you have a brother
11. If you are a dog person
12. If you play a sport
13. If you've given a talk in 4-H
14. If you've ever been to Washington, D.C.
15. If you've taken a project to the county fair
16. If you're in the 4-H Photography project (or another popular club project)

Did anyone learn something new about someone? How about something new about someone that you've known for awhile?

Getting Better Acquainted:*An Important Part of Welcoming New Members & Families*

When we do get-acquainted activities like this, we discover how we're alike and different. This gives us a starting point on future conversations. After we're done with this session and it is informal time, ask the "dog people" if they have a dog and what their dog's personality is like. If they don't have a dog, ask them about other animals they might like or own. This keeps the conversation going and members get to know members better.



Do Ahead:

- Make a line on the floor with rope or masking tape that is long enough for the whole club to stand along in single file on one side.
- Find the top 4-5 projects or activities in the club to include in the “Across the Line” activity.
- Revise the “Getting Better Acquainted with 4-H” handout to better fit your county and club.
- Have supplies and handouts ready.
- 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.
- Trisha Day and Greg Lampe, “4-H DD’s (Dynamic Duos)” in “Communication Activities for 4-H Clubs and Other Youth Groups,” COMMO7, *4-H Youth Development Building Bridges Curriculum*, Department of 4-H Youth Development, UW-Extension.
- John de Montmollin, “It’s in the Bag: Team Builders for Any Group,” Kenosha County, UW-Extension.
- “Welcome to Wisconsin 4-H,” BRO42, family brochure in both English and Spanish, 4-H Youth Development, UW-Extension, available at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/publications/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=33.

Helping new and continuing members and their families feel welcome is the responsibility of everyone. We’ll do more get-acquainted things in the club through the year with roll call and other activities. You can help by sitting next to different people and visiting.

(Options: Present a mentoring system that matches experienced members or families with new members or families. See the “Creating a Welcoming Environment” lesson in this training series for the Dynamic Duo idea.)

Activity: Getting Better Acquainted with 4-H

(Hand out the club and/or county 4-H yearly calendar.) Our club calendar shows when we have club meetings and other activities. The county 4-H calendar provides a list of county and state activities. We’re going to look at the calendar(s) by seasons to share ideas about the things that are listed.

(Mix small group participants by member age and family experience.) We’re going to have small groups of 4-5 members and parents look at 4-H activities by the season. Your task is to develop short phrases on what the activity means to you and give a tip to get ready or enjoy the activity. When you’re done, we’ll share between groups and collect your tips. We’d like to save the tips for later use. (Use the handout “Getting Better Acquainted with 4-H.” Revise this handout to better reflect the club.)

(If you are short on time, ask each group to do one season. If time allows, ask them to do more seasons. Be sure to have a mix of seasons discussed. Get brief reports on each season. Collect the handouts to keep their tips.)

More Ideas to Help New Members & Families Understand 4-H Happenings

There are other places you can learn more about 4-H opportunities and resources. Every family will receive a county newsletter by e-mail or regular mail. This newsletter includes the county calendar of events, training opportunities and activities for youth, and news from clubs. The newsletter is written by our county UW-Extension staff. They are educators who do training and work with volunteers to conduct the 4-H program in clubs and at the county level. They are available to answer questions. The county 4-H web site is at [fill in your county 4-H URL].

The state 4-H web site can be found at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/index.cfm. This site lists more opportunities and additional resources. The state 4-H program area provides this family brochure, “Welcome to Wisconsin 4-H.” It has some 4-H background information and includes ways that adults can support their children and the club. Also check out the Wisconsin 4-H Community Club web site at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/index.cfm for ideas.

All of us were new to 4-H at one time. We know that it seems like a lot to learn and it can be a bit overwhelming. Our goal is to have fun while learning new skills. It is not our goal to frustrate new people. So, experience 4-H one season at a time. Ask questions. We’re glad to have new members and families in our group! You make our club more fun and interesting!

Closing

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 we sometimes forget to tell new members and families?
- What activity was confusing to you as a new member or family?

Apply:

- How might our club help new families throughout the year?

ENHANCE/SIMPLIFY

Enhance:

- Be sure to make the “Getting Better Acquainted with 4-H” activity relevant to your club by including activities that your members enjoy the most.
- Consider pairing new members or families with experienced members or families as a way to ensure that relationships start developing and that people are offering help to new participants. See “Creating a Welcoming Environment” at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=3170 to learn about the Dynamic Duo pairing idea.
- Check with your county UW-Extension office to see if there are county orientation resources that should be given to new families. Caution: don’t overload them with lots of information. Just give them what is needed for this time of year.

Simplify:

- If you need to do this in less time, substitute standing and sitting for the crossing the line direction in the “Across the Line” activity. Ask each group to do one season in the “Getting Better Acquainted with 4-H” activity.

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

- The Wisconsin State 4-H web site has “How to Join” information, “Frequently Asked Questions About 4-H” (BRO40) and a “Welcome to Wisconsin 4-H” family brochure in both English and Spanish (BRO42) available at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/.
- You can find games and get-acquainted activity web links at the “Leading Recreation” and “How to Have Fun” lesson plan web pages at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/meetings.cfm.
- The club and/or county 4-H yearly “Calendar Planner” can be found at www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/documents/4HClubCalendarPlanner.pdf

*Finalized by the Strengthening 4-H Club Leadership Work Team:
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Getting Better Acquainted with 4-H

Look at your 4-H club and county calendars to see the events and activities that happen each season. As a group, write a couple of words to describe each event or activity. Write 1-2 tips that you would give to new participants for each event.

Fall (September, October, November)	Spring (March, April, May)
Club Meetings: Describing words: Tips: Enrollment: Describing words: Tips:	Club Meetings: Describing words: Tips: Project Meetings: Describing words: Tips:
Winter (December, January, February)	Summer (June, July, August)
Club Meetings: Describing words: Tips: Club Party: Describing words: Tips:	Club Meetings: Describing words: Tips: Camping Opportunities: Describing words: Tips:
Project Meetings: Describing words: Tips: Club Service Projects: Describing words: Tips:	County Fair: Describing words: Tips:

Welcoming New Members and Families

Evaluation

1. How useful is this information in welcoming new members and families?
(Circle one response.)

Very Useful Somewhat Useful Not Sure Not Useful

2. Do you feel better prepared to welcome new members and families?

Yes No

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