



## Guide #2 Getting Involved

Learn about events and all of the opportunities 4-H has to offer!

### Membership Levels

#### **Cloverbud (Kindergarten - 2nd Grade)**

Explore hands-on learning! 4-H gives Cloverbud members the opportunity to learn, create, and explore in a non competitive setting. Youth will be given the opportunity to engage in developmentally age-appropriate experiences.

#### **Beginner (3rd Grade - 5th Grade)**

Get involved! This is where 4-H members truly begin their 4-H career! The door is now open to begin experiencing things at a new level, from Shooting Sports to interacting directly with animals. They are given the opportunity to learn how applying yourself and hard work can pay off when competing in pre-fair and fair judging experiences.

#### **Intermediate (6th Grade - 8th Grade)**

Learn to lead! Now is the time to jump into leadership opportunities! You are ready to enter this world! Do you want to be an advocate and face for the Meeker County 4-H program as a 4-H Youth Ambassador? Do you have a passion for leadership at the club or county level? Do you want to engage in leadership exploration at the regional and state level through BLU and YELLO? These and so many more opportunities are now available to you!

#### **Senior (9th Grade +)**

Looking forward! What have you learned thus far in your 4-H career? What more does 4-H have to offer! You are a leader and innovator. Use your passion to inspire others and engage and lead in your community. YELLO!, TEEL, & CWF can help prepare you for your future career. You have come to your final years as a member in a program that we hope has given you the tools and opportunities to MAKE THE BEST YOU, BETTER!

## Graduate/Alumni

Create your future! Your path in 4-H has now brought you to a place where you can use all of the skills and knowledge you have acquired to allow you to be an outstanding citizen and engaged member in your community! Consider becoming a 4-H Volunteer and staying connected with the program!

## Experiences

4-H offers a wide variety of opportunities for youth to engage themselves in learning, exploration, leadership, and more! From local programs to State, Regional, & National opportunities, there are countless ways for your youth to get involved.

### Local

- 4-H Summer Programs
- Livestock Workshops
- Project Workshops

We have created a [program guide](#) to give you an overview of different events and programs that happen at a local level.

### Regional & State

For a full list of opportunities and events, check out [extension.umn.edu/4-h/4-h-events](https://extension.umn.edu/4-h/4-h-events).

- [Arts-In](#)
- [BLU - Building Leadership and Understanding](#)
- [Engineering Design Challenge](#)
- [Minnesota State Fair](#)
- [Regional & State Project Bowl](#)
- Regional 4-H Camp
- [State Dog Show](#)
- [State Horse Show](#)
- [State Shooting Sports and Wildlife Invitational](#)
- [YELLO - Youth Exploring Leadership and Learning Out Loud](#)
- [TEEL](#)
- [And more!](#)

### National

- [CWF - Citizen Washington Focus](#)
- [National 4-H Conference](#)
- National Project Bowl & Judging Competitions

Multiple opportunities are available for National trip opportunities for all species through the State Project Bowl Competition, the Minnesota State Fair, and other state events.

- [Shooting Sports National Championships](#)

## Ambassadors

There are state level Ambassador opportunities for youth that have completed 10th - 12th grade. As a [4-H State Ambassador](#), youth will participate in planning youth leadership development experiences like BLU and YELLO, building their personal leadership skills, representing Minnesota 4-H at events across the state, including the Minnesota State Fair, and more!

Also, there are Agriculture Ambassadors. [4-H Agriculture Ambassador](#) is a leadership opportunity for youth in grades 10 through one year post-high school (grade 13). who are passionate about agriculture and educating others. In addition to teaching, the 4-H agriculture ambassadors have the opportunity to promote agriculture across their local communities and around Minnesota. From plants to livestock, these dedicated youth serve as positive representatives for agriculture and the Minnesota 4-H program.

## Project Groups

### Dog

Youth who participate in the dog projects will have the opportunity to learn obedience, rally, showmanship, and agility. The group practices March - July. Youth K-13th grade are eligible to participate in practices and at the County Dog Show held in July. Cloverbud members are only allowed to participate in Showmanship and can NOT be in control of the dog at any time during practice or the show. Youth in grades 3+ that receive a blue in any area are eligible to participate in the State Dog Show held in September. Additional resources can be found on the [Minnesota 4-H Dog Project](#) webpage.

### Horse

Youth interested in the horse project are encouraged to participate in organized county events throughout the year. Our 4-H Horse Project Development Committee (PDC) provides these opportunities to youth K - 13th grade. Arena practice nights are held May - July for youth to practice with the help and guidance of adult volunteers. Cloverbud members are NOT allowed to be in control of a horse at any point during

a 4-H event. The County Horse Show is held the Saturday prior to the County Fair, with additional opportunities to showcase the 4-H horse project at the County Fair. Additional resources can be found on the [Minnesota 4-H Horse Project](#) webpage.

### **Shooting Sports & Wildlife**

Shooting Sports and Wildlife provides multiple opportunities for youth to engage in safe and educational shooting sports and wildlife training and education. The program is open to youth K - 13th grade, but the following age restrictions apply:

- Wildlife (All ages)
- BB gun (3rd grade +)
- Archery (3rd grade +)
- Air rifle and air pistol (4th grade +)
- 22 rifle and .22 pistol (7th grade +)
- Muzzleloading (7th grade +)
- Shotgun (7th grade +)

Practices are held throughout the year. The State Shooting Sports & Wildlife Invitational is held yearly in September. Additional resources are available on the [Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports and Wildlife Project](#) webpage.

### **Olmsted County Fair**

County fair is often a highlight of a 4-H member's year. It provides a great opportunity for youth to showcase some of the learning and projects they have done throughout the year. For each 4-H member the county fair provides a way of "wrapping up" their learning because each project is exhibited before a judge. This is a great opportunity to gain confidence and public speaking skills. It is also a very fun week filled with great friends, fun events and good food! Finally, each project judged will earn a premium check from the Fair board depending on what ribbon they earn!

### **The 4-H judging experience**

4-H provides many opportunities for youth involved to learn and grow. While participation in these events is certainly not a requirement of membership, it is a wonderful way for young people to showcase and receive feedback and recognition for their work.

### **4-H exhibits are judged in a conference**

Conference judging is a conversation between the judge and the 4-H'er. It is a chance for youth to explain to a judge what they have learned from their project

experience. It allows time to ask a judge questions that they may have about the project.

### **What to expect during conference judging?**

- The interview is as important as the exhibit itself: an equal “weight” is given on the actual exhibit and on the conference—50/50.
- The judge, who is knowledgeable in the project area, determines the ribbon placing.
- Judges will observe, question, listen and challenge youth
- Judges offer encouraging and constructive feedback, as well as suggestions on how to further explore the project area.

### **How are Cloverbuds judged?**

- The judge will ask the youth to tell them about their project.
- The judge will ask you questions about the project and may give ideas for next year's project.
- Youth will receive a recognition ribbon for Cloverbuds.

The Cloverbud program provides youth in K - 2nd grade the opportunity to explore and actively learn in a noncompetitive environment. Developmental research supports noncompetitive activities and participation recognition for youth in this age division.

## **Who's who and what they do**

### **Club leader**

- Gives guidance
- Works with youth to guide successful meetings
- Helps plan yearly club program
- Guides club officers with responsibilities
- Keeps club informed of general club matters
- Informs parents and youth of 4-H activities
- Attends leader meetings and training
- Assists in recruiting new members
- Assists with 4-H enrollment paperwork and processes

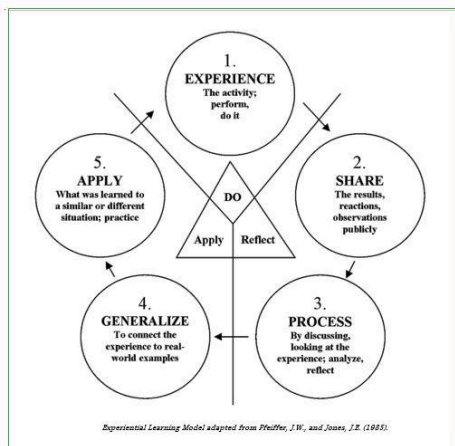
### **Project leader**

- Plans, coordinates, publicizes, and conducts project trainings
- Assists county fair superintendents
- Evaluates project guidelines

## Extension staff

- Serve as a resource
- Help plan, conduct and evaluate the 4-H program
- Assist club and project leaders by providing training and resources
- Advise the public about 4-H opportunities
- Develop and disseminate the 4-H Clover Update and other communication
- Recruit, screen, and train volunteers
- Work with county and state decision-makers to build public support for 4-H
- Help secure and manage the financial support necessary to deliver a quality 4-H program

## Learn by doing



The 4-H slogan is the educational philosophy of the 4-H program. Since young people learn best when they are actively involved in the learning process, 4-H programs are designed to provide hands-on experiences that are reinforced through personal and group reflection and application “do-reflect-apply.” This research-based educational methodology is called ‘Experiential Learning.’ The model to the right illustrates how 4-H experiences are intentionally developed to optimize learning.

**Source:** Information from Minnesota 4-H Family Handbook

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