

New 4-H Family YOUTH

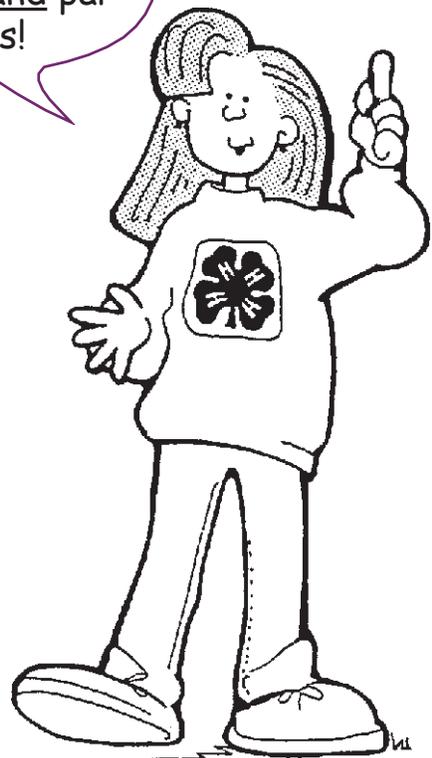
Montana 4-H Center
FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Handbook



My family has helped me a lot in 4-H.

4-H is for kids and parents!



This book belongs to the _____ family.
Our club is the _____ 4-H club.
We meet the _____ of each month at
_____.

5280
May 1999

4-H and Life Skills Development

Youth development is a process of mental, physical and social growth during which young people prepare to live a productive and satisfying life. Youth development experiences of high quality don't just happen. The best ones are carefully planned (1) to encourage life skill development while delivering subject matter content and (2) to achieve specific outcomes.

A skill is a learned ability to do something well. Life skills are skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and fulfilling life. The Targeting Life Skills Model categorizes life skills on the basis of the four "H's" that represent Head, Heart, Hands and Health.

In each area, a number of important life skills have been identified as you can tell from looking at the model below.



MONTANA 4-H IS...

4-H is a part of the Montana State University Extension Service co-operating with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and your local county government. 4-H members are those boys and girls who participate in Extension-sponsored educational programs which are open to all youth regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, marital status or parental status.

The goal of Montana 4-H is to educate youth and adults for living in a global and ever-changing world by using the resources of Land-Grant Universities and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Montana 4-H uses educational, learning-by-doing projects, club meetings, community service projects, events, and activities for young people and adults as they work toward attaining these five **LIFE SKILLS**:

- Fostering positive self-concept
- Learning decision-making and responsibility for choices
- Developing an inquiring mind
- Relating to self and others
- Acquiring a concern for communities—local and global.

The emblem of the 4-H program is a green four-leaf clover with a white “H” in each leaf. The four “H’s” stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health and represent ways to develop the five life skills.

HEAD: Learning to think, make decisions, understand the “whys,” gain new and valuable insights and knowledge.

HEART: Being concerned with the welfare of others, accepting the responsibilities of citizenship in our local and global communities, determining values and attitudes by which to live, and learning how to work with others.

HANDS: Learning new skills, improving skills already developed, instilling pride in work, and respect for work accomplished.

HEALTH: Practicing healthful living, protecting the well-being of self and others, making constructive use of leisure time.

This four-fold development is vital to every individual. All four of the “H’s” should be an important part of the goals youngsters identify as they participate in 4-H sponsored programs and educational activities.

Contents

Section 1: What is 4-H?

What is the primary objective of 4-H?.....	1
Why and when did 4-H originate?	1
Have 4-H objectives changed since its early days?	2
4-H Teaches Life Skills	2
4-H Basic Beliefs	2
How do young people learn in 4-H?	3
Who is responsible for administering the 4-H program?	4

-->Section 2: What is a 4-H Club?

4-H Motto.....	5
4-H Emblem.....	5
4-H Colors.....	5
4-H Pledge	5
The official 4-H creed	6
4-H Year	6
Age for Membership.....	6
Scope.....	6

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-->Section 3: 4-H Club Meetings

What are the purposes of 4-H club meetings?	7
What is a club meeting like?	7
What is the educational program?.....	7
How are meetings accomplished?.....	9
Who conducts the meetings?	9
Who provides leadership?.....	9

-->Section 4: 4-H Projects

Why projects?	10
What are projects?.....	10
What are the objectives of 4-H projects?..	10
How do you select projects?	11
How are projects continued?.....	11

-->Section 5: 4-H Parents and Members

Parents make the difference in 4-H!	12
Where do parents fit in?	12
Ways to support your child in the 4-H program.....	13
4-H members are the focus!	13

-->Section 6: Who's Who in 4-H

Local club level.....	14
County level	14
State level.....	15

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Welcome to the wonderful world of 4-H and the excitement of being a parent of a 4-H member (or 4-H'er, as we like to call them). We are pleased to have you and your child involved in 4-H and encourage you to make 4-H a family affair. You may have some questions about 4-H as your child progresses in the program. Please feel free to visit with your child's club leader or a County Extension Agent in your county.

What is the primary objective of 4-H?

The basic philosophy of 4-H is to strengthen the mental, physical, moral and social development of boys and girls, thereby helping youth to develop into competent, committed and self-assured adults. The main objective is the development of boys and girls through participation in projects, events, and wholesome activities.

4-H is intended to *supplement, not replace*, other learning experiences young people may have through other institutions.

4-H is for everyone, regardless of race, color, creed, age, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, marital status or parental status.

4-H is a volunteer-led, informal educational program that supplements the teachings of home and school.

4-H clubs are for boys and girls ages 6-19 who live in town, the city, the country or on the farm.

Why and when did 4-H originate?

4-H work, as we know it, began around 1900 as a means of reaching parents with improved farm and home practices. It was based upon the assumption that if new ideas were instilled in the minds of the youngsters, they would in turn convince parents to try these innovations.

The second reason 4-H was developed was because the schools were not meeting the needs and interests of rural youth. The first organized 4-H clubs were small groups covering a single topic—corn production or canning tomatoes and other garden crops.

4-H is kids having fun and learning with their friends and families.



Have 4-H objectives changed since its early days?

Yes. Following the “teach improved practices to farmers and homemakers through their children” idea, came World War I and the “food for victory” theme. Following the war, the “keep them on the farm” objective was foremost in people’s minds. Food production was emphasized again during World War II.

Today the objective is the development of boys and girls, providing a wide variety of learning opportunities in which all youth can participate. 4-H is for *all* kids, whether they live in the city or in the country.

4-H Teaches Life Skills

4-H helps young people develop life skills. A life skill is an ability that one can use in everyday life. All education through the Montana 4-H program is designed to ensure that Montana youth develop the confidence, competence and character to become:

- critical thinkers
- active citizens
- caring human beings
- innately curious
- self-sufficient
- adaptable to change
- connected to others in the community

Beliefs About 4-H

- The 4-H member is more important than the project.
- Project work is one of the best devices for developing young people. To “Learn By Doing” is fundamental in any sound educational program and is characteristic of the 4-H program.
- 4-H’ers should be their own best exhibit. This means in manners, attitudes, and courtesy, as well as appropriate dress and physical appearance.
- Competition is a part of life and should be recognized in 4-H as a human trait, but competition requires careful planning and safeguards when used as an educational tool.
- No 4-H award is worth sacrificing the reputation of a 4-H member or leader.
- A blue ribbon 4-H’er with a red ribbon exhibit is more desirable than a red ribbon 4-H’er with a blue ribbon exhibit.
- Every 4-H member needs to be noticed, to feel important, to achieve some degree of success, and to be praised.
- It is the job of 4-H leaders and staff to teach 4-H members how to think, not what to think.



How do young people learn in 4-H?

4-H members “learn by doing.” Young people, with guidance from adults, learn useful skills and how to live with people and serve their community and country by practicing these skills in real-life situations.

4-H members learn by taking part in:

- **Project Work.** Project work helps members gain knowledge and skills and learn to take responsibility. By doing project work at home, members can develop a feeling of partnership with their parents.
- **Demonstration.** 4-H members show and tell others how to do things they learn. This is called giving a demonstration, and it is a youngster’s first step to helping others and developing leadership as well as public speaking skills.
- **Record Keeping.** 4-H members learn record keeping skills by making timely entries into their 4-H records. Keeping records helps members evaluate their 4-H learning and develop business sense skills. 4-H’ers should keep records on every project in which they are enrolled.
- **Recreation.** 4-H’ers learn to enjoy life, themselves, and their association with others in social activities. Recreation is a wonderful way to teach leadership skills as well.
- **County Contests.** 4-H members taking part in contests may receive an award for their efforts, but they learn cooperative and competitive skills as well as the standards of excellence.
- **Exhibits.** Members may exhibit their project results at club meetings or county fairs. Exhibiting 4-H projects shows others what 4-H’ers are doing, helps members find where they can improve their work, and gives members a sense of pride and accomplishment.
- **4-H Camp.** Many 4-H members attend camp. They part in educational and recreational experiences they learn more about nature and living with people.
- **4-H Teen Ambassadors.** For older 4-H’ers, the Teen Ambassador Program is available to promote 4-H work to others and to help members be resources to other youth.
- **4-H Exchanges.** Exchanges can be arranged with clubs from different counties, city and farm members, and clubs in other states. Exchanges help 4-H’ers develop a broader knowledge of people and living situations and provide the chance for creating lasting friendships.

4-H’ers participate in projects, demonstrations, contests and all kinds of other activities.

In 4-H, we learn ~~take~~ by doing in all of our activities!



4-H is supported by the resources of Montana State University.

- **Recognition and Awards.** 4-H'ers are recognized and rewarded for work they do. Rewards range from acceptance by peers and leaders to trips and scholarships. Cooperative and competitive skills are recognized.
- **Fund Raising** 4-H'ers are asked to contribute to the fund raising efforts of the club, so additional educational opportunities can be offered. The skills learned in these fund raising activities add to the member's leadership and organizational skills and may influence career choices. While 4-H is assisted with some public funds, private funds are essential to the operation of the 4-H program.
- **4-H Club.** 4-H members learn how to use parliamentary procedure by conducting meetings, the value of committees to accomplish work, and cooperative skills through social interaction with club members.

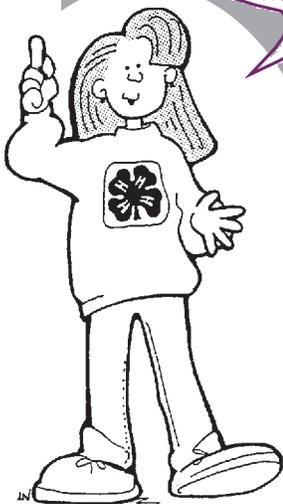
Who is responsible for administering the 4-H program?

Your local county Extension agent is responsible for overseeing the 4-H program. Your county Extension office is a great resource, and you will want to be in contact with the office staff when you have questions. In each county, the Extension System is a cooperative undertaking by the United States Department of Agriculture, the land-grant colleges (in our case Montana State University in Bozeman), and the Boards of County Commissioners.

The Extension System carries up-to-date information from the classroom and laboratory of the land-grant university to the people of the state and brings back to the university those problems in counties that can be solved only by careful study and research. State Extension specialists support the work of county agents.

The purpose of the Extension System is to provide instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture, family and consumer science, 4-H youth development, and community resource development to all persons in the county. In addition, the resources of the land-grant university can be focused on major issues within a community providing assistance in finding solutions.

4-H is a research-based youth development program. 4-H is the largest out-of-school program in the nation.



Section 2:

What is a 4-H Club?

A 4-H club is a group of boys and girls organized with officers appropriate to the group and with one or more leaders under the sponsorship of the Extension System. The club is organized within a neighborhood, a school, a business or other locations. The size of the club should be suitable to the age of the members, meeting place and leadership available. 4-H clubs may sponsor needed community activities depending on the interests of the club membership. This type of club is called a Community 4-H club.

Also, youth are 4-H members by taking part in project clubs (one subject), special interest groups, enrichment programs, and TV 4-H programs.

4-H Motto

“TO MAKE THE BEST BETTER”

4-H Emblem

The 4-H emblem is the four-leaf clover with the letter “H” on each leaf, standing for head, heart, hands, and health. The use of the 4-H emblem has restrictions established by the United States Congress.

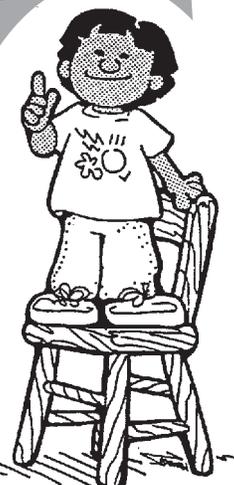
4-H Colors

The 4-H colors are green and white. Green symbolizes nature’s most common color and represents life, springtime and youth. White symbolizes purity.

4-H 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.

In 4-H, your child will learn valuable life skills—like responsibility.



There are
4-H clubs
all over the
world!

The official 4-H creed

I believe in boys' and girls' 4-H club work for the opportunity it gives me to become a useful citizen.

I believe in the training of my HEAD for the power it will give me to THINK, PLAN, AND REASON.

I believe in the training of my HEART for the nobleness it will give me to be KIND, SYMPATHETIC, and TRUE.

I believe in the training of my HANDS for the ability it will give me to be HELPFUL, USEFUL, AND SKILLFUL.

I believe in the training of my HEALTH for the strength it will give me to ENJOY LIFE, RESIST DISEASE, AND WORK EFFICIENTLY.

I believe in my Country, my State, and in my Community, and in my responsibility for their development.

In all these things I believe, and I am willing to dedicate my efforts to their fulfillment.

4-H Year

A new 4-H year begins October 1 each year and ends September 30 of the following year.

Age for Membership

4-H club membership is open to all boys and girls who have their 9th birthday during the year and have not passed their 19th birthday before Oct. 1 of the year. Youth ages 6-8 can participate in a non-competitive 4-H program called Cloverbuds.

Scope

4-H is active in all the states and in many foreign countries. International exchanges are available with many countries. Many Montana 4-H clubs have established pen pal relationships with clubs in Latvia.

4-H is open to all youth between the ages of 6 and 19 years old.



Section 3:

4-H Club Meetings

What are the purposes of 4-H club meetings?

The purposes of 4-H club meetings are to help boys and girls:

- acquire new information
- learn to use leisure time creatively
- develop social skills
- acquire leadership and citizenship traits
- learn to conduct meetings

4-H members are given the opportunity to learn and practice decision making in group situations by using the knowledge and skills acquired at these meetings. 4-H members are expected to attend the monthly meetings. **Parents are encouraged to attend meetings with their 4-H'ers.** 4-H is a family affair.

What is a club meeting like?

The 4-H meeting includes business, educational programs, and recreation. 4-H meetings normally last 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Clubs may meet monthly or at any time determined by the club membership.

What is the educational program?

This part of the meeting is designed to help members learn more about subjects of general interest to the membership. teaching is unique—it is “learn by doing.” Generally, the educational program will include talks and demonstrations by the members. Outside speakers may also present programs for 4-H meetings.

A 4-H meeting may have:

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

By giving demonstrations, your child 4-H will learn how to speak in public.



How are meetings accomplished?

Planning is the key. It takes considerable thought, initiative, creativeness, and the making of plans well ahead of time. Most clubs outline their educational programs for each meeting early in the year.

Generally, program planning is done by the club officers and junior leaders with guidance from organizational leaders and the club parents. The exact program varies from club to club.

Who conducts the meetings?

Each club normally elects officers at the beginning of the 4-H year. Officers elected may include president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, reporter, recreation leader and song leader. Other officers may be elected, depending on the club.

Who provides leadership?

Adults and teens provide guidance and serve as coaches for club and project work. Parents are usually the best source of adult leaders—but not the only source. Other friends of 4-H such as parents of former 4-H'ers, retired people, and young adults are often willing to help the 4-H'ers. Teens may have key leadership roles with younger members.

The 4-H project is the “gateway” to the rest of the 4-H program. But perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the project is the “gateway” to the boy or girl. Projects provide the basis of the 4-H program by offering various educational experiences. Carrying out a project will help the member “learn by doing” as well as learn “why” things happen the way they do.

Good
planning
makes
meetings
and
activities
more fun.

As a parent, you're
a very important
part of 4-H!



Section 4: 4-H Projects

Why projects?

The project is a *teaching tool* that can be used to develop many desirable traits in addition to the more evident project skills. Project work is a means to an end and not the end in itself. The development of the individual is the most important purpose of 4-H.

What are projects?

Projects are real life experiences that help 4-H'ers learn to make sound decisions. Projects put the hands and mind to work.

There are over 40 projects from which to choose educational experiences. Most of the projects have been planned with several phases so that a member may advance to more difficult and challenging activities as he or she develops knowledge and skill. 4-H projects take on a wide variety of interests and activities and are designed to attract members regardless of their place of residence, economic status, or race.

The objectives of 4-H projects:

- Create a sense of ownership
- Give a feeling of achievement
- Strengthen family and community ties
- Provide members the opportunity to:
 - learn project skills
 - develop and understand project knowledge
 - develop good attitudes
 - assume responsibility
 - participate in healthful competition
 - make meaningful decisions
- Provide leisure time activities
- Explore career opportunities and thus the need for continued education. All projects are in a sense career exploration, giving each member a taste of the work and responsibilities involved.

Beginning 4-H'ers
should enroll in only
two projects



How do you select projects?

Parents and members should know and fully understand what is expected of the 4-H'er before enrolling in the project.

Projects are selected early in the 4-H year when enrollment cards are filled out. Usually, younger members should limit their projects to one or two. Older, experienced members are able to complete several different ones, including those that are more difficult.

In selecting projects consider:

- Does it meet the needs and interests of the member?
- Is the project in keeping with age and ability (physical and mental) of the member? Will it challenge him or her educationally?
- How much time does the member have and how much time does the project require? During which season of the year will most of the activity of the project be accomplished?
- Is the project acceptable to you as parents and does it fit into the family needs and situation?
- How much will the project cost?
- Is adequate space and equipment available at home?
- What are the opportunities for ownership and management responsibilities?
- Are there leaders to help with the project, or are you willing to help the member with the project?

How are projects continued?

Project work is conducted through various activities and events such as:

- Project meetings in the local club
- Demonstrations and talks at regular club meetings
- Tours
- Family activities or work at home
- Exhibiting at shows and fairs
- Record keeping

Project leadership is provided by adult and teen volunteer leaders.

4-H'ers can choose from dozens of projects: from beef to photography, woodworking to cooking!

Projects are the reasons kids join 4-H, so pick ones you'll enjoy!



Section 5:

4-H Parents and Members

Parents make the difference in 4-H!

Parents and families are the strength of the 4-H program. A youngster joins 4-H to belong, to do things with his or her friends, to meet new friends, to have fun, to be recognized as a person, and to achieve. It is much easier for youngsters to succeed in 4-H and to continue to grow when they have the support and understanding of their parents. The leader can do only so much; children must have the support of parents.

Parents are very important to the success a child may have in the 4-H program. Parents are encouraged to attend club meetings and project meetings with their child.

The key role of parents is the support they give to their children: support the child in the commitment they make, help them think through decisions, and see that they reach their goal.

4-H is truly a family affair. Youth need adult guidance to encourage and direct them in their character development. As a parent, you can be a project leader, activity leader, camp chaperone, or even a club leader. All parents are encouraged to assume some responsibility to help with the 4-H club because all adults are busy. Share the load!

Where do parents fit in?

Good youth programs do not just happen. It takes the combined efforts of parents, youth leaders, and professionals to have a successful 4-H program. In 4-H, we have a team . . . a 4-H team that contributes to the positive development of boys and girls. Parents are partners on this 4-H team and to

have a successful 4-H program, parents must be regular players.

Research and experience have shown that parental participation in 4-H has many benefits. These include:

- 4-H'ers do better work when they receive more personal attention from parents and leaders.
- Parents can encourage a "learn by doing" approach in which they coach their child in activities.
- Family units are strengthened when parents and children participate together in areas of common interest.
- 4-H clubs become more active and stronger when parents take an active role in 4-H.



As a parent, you can share your knowledge and skills with all children in the club.

Ways you can support your child in the 4-H program:

- Learn what 4-H is all about and keep informed on what is happening in your county.
- Exhibit a genuine interest in 4-H and your child.
- Attend meetings and 4-H activities with your child, and encourage your child to participate in 4-H events.
- Make 4-H a priority in your home — read the 4-H mail that comes to you, and mark your calendar for 4-H activities.
- Provide encouragement and help in your child's project work with record keeping, demonstrations, judging, and completion of attempted work — without doing the work yourself.
- Provide transportation for members to local club meetings and activities and county-wide activities and events.
- Provide a meeting place for a project group. Assist leaders by providing refreshments or other help.
- Share special talents by volunteering to be a project leader.
- Help members select, finance, and manage their projects. There are minimal costs required for project literature and materials.
- Help leaders conduct project work.
- Help leaders locate and secure other qualified adults to conduct project work and help with 4-H activities.

4-H members are the focus!

Developing the potential of the 4-H member is the focus of the 4-H program and is accomplished in a learn by doing manner. This means that the 4-H member must assume some responsibility for his or her own learning and involvement in program opportunities. To get the very most out of 4-H, members need to:

- Attend and participate in meetings
- Support and work for club events and activities
- Attend and participate in project meetings
- Participate in activities and events that enhance project learning
- Keep up to date in work related to projects
- Be proud to be a 4-H member

You can help your child's 4-H club in many ways, even if you don't have a lot of time!

4-H helps develop the fullest potential of every youngster



Section 6: Who's Who in 4-H

Local club level

4-H member—Any young person who participates in an Extension-sponsored youth educational program. Youth who are 9 to 19 years of age and fill out an enrollment card. Cloverbuds are 6-8 years of age.

4-H Organizational Leader—The adult who is responsible for the proper functioning of the 4-H Club.

4-H Resource Leader—A person or group of people including parents, relatives or friends who listen, question, and respond in helpful ways to children. These leaders could also judge at 4-H events or may be other people who prefer not to become involved in other parts of the 4-H program.

4-H Project Leader—The adult or teen leader responsible for a given project area in the 4-H club.

4-H Activity Leader—The adult, teen leader, or youth volunteer responsible for designated 4-H activities in the 4-H club.

Middle Manager or Key Leaders— Adults who assist local 4-H club leaders and/or Extension agents in a specific 4-H project or activity area.

Enrichment Program Volunteer— An adult who leads a special interest or enrichment program.

Teen Leaders— Youth actively involved as leaders. They should be viewed as assets to the 4-H program. Montana 4-H encourages the use of youth as volunteers and leaders.

Every successful program needs some organizational structure.



County level

4-H Council— A formalized group of leaders and members. They assess the needs, interests, concerns of the county's children and youth, and assist the agent in responding with educational programs relevant to those needs. 4-H Council membership includes, but is not limited to, all 4-H leaders and teen leaders in the county.

County 4-H Foundation— Some counties have this non-profit organization working to provide additional resources for the 4-H program. They receive monies from private sources, raise funds for special activities, and sponsor scholarships.

Extension Agents— They are the paid professionals who help to carry out

the 4-H program. They are faculty members of Montana State University and are responsible for the educational programs that are conducted through the County Extension Office.

State level

State 4-H Youth Development Specialists—These people have responsibility for the 4-H program on a statewide basis. There are currently four people in the state 4-H Office based at Montana State University in Bozeman.

Montana State University—This land grant college has the responsibility for taking education to the people of the state and the 4-H program is part of the directive.

Montana 4-H Foundation—This non-profit organization works to provide additional resources for the 4-H program. They sponsor scholarships and funding for programs as well as providing special activities.

Montana 4-H Council—The Montana 4-H Council is comprised of all volunteer leaders in the state who pay dues to the organization. It exists to maintain and strengthen the 4-H program on a statewide basis by providing input on educational needs and assisting with communication linkages, recruitment, and evaluation.

University Faculty—Montana State University faculty and staff lend expertise in subject matter areas through a cooperative effort with the State 4-H Office.

The 4-H Members

*Some members work to keep clubs strong,
While others join just to belong.
Some dig in, some serve with pride,
Some go along just for the ride.
Some volunteer to do their share,
Some lie back and just don't care.
Some do their best, some help, some make,
Some give nothing, only take.
Some greet new members with a smile,
and make their coming more worthwhile.
While some go on their merry way,
and rarely have kind words to say.
Some help their leaders do and show
When asked to help, they don't say no.
Some drag, some pull, some don't, some do.
Consider, which of these are you?*

By participating in 4-H,
your child can have ex-
periences that are not
available anywhere else.

