

Kings County 4-H Parent Packet

A Survival Guide for New 4-H Parents

WELCOME TO KINGS COUNTY 4-H

- *Welcome to the Kings County 4-H Program. We are glad you have enrolled your child in 4-H and we hope your whole family will benefit from your 4-H experiences.*
- *4-H is a non-formal educational youth program, conducted by the University of California's Cooperative Extension. The purpose of 4-H is to help young people discover and develop their potential by learning to set goals, making plans and decisions, building self-confidence, and learning to understand others.*

THE 4-H FAMILY:

One of the good things about 4-H Club work is that it gives everyone in the family an opportunity to get involved. Not only do boys and girls participate equally, but youth of many ages can work, learn and have fun with each other, as well as with adults. All family members are encouraged to participate in the club member's project work, as well as club and county activities.

WHAT EVERY NEW 4-H FAMILY NEEDS

- 1) 4-H Member's Guide (4-H-1052)
- 2) Welcome to 4-H (4-H-1057)
- 3) Copy of your club's by-laws (check web site)
- 4) County 4-H Calendar of Events (check web site)
- 5) Monthly Youth Talk Newsletter
- 6) Web Address <http://ceking.ucdavis.edu>
- 7) Willingness to ask questions and seek help.

THE 4-H PARENT:

As a parent, we know that you are helping your child develop skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will help him/her grow into a responsible and well-adjusted adult. Taking an active interest in your child's 4-H Club work will help him/her feel that what he/she is doing is important and worthwhile. This will contribute to your child's self-confidence and feeling of self worth - an important step toward maturity.

HINTS FOR PARENTS

- 1) Find out what the expectations and responsibilities are for parents in your child's local 4-H Club and project group.
- 2) Become familiar with local club rules and responsibilities of members.
- 3) Get to know the Community Leader as well as your child's Project Leaders. (Remember to say "thank you" to them for giving their time to help your child.)
- 4) Provide transportation for your child to attend meetings. Be prompt - 4-H leaders are not "babysitters."
- 5) Attend monthly club meetings with your child. If you must miss a meeting, make arrangements for another adult to be responsible for your child.
- 6) Encourage your child to write down anything he/she does in relation to 4-H and find out about the record keeping your child is to do.
- 7) Offer to help any way you can. Even assuming a small responsibility in the local club will be appreciated.
- 8) Encourage your child to complete project work and to meet all deadlines.

What is the CE Office?

You will hear people mention the "CE Office" they are referring to the University of California Cooperative Extension Office. 4-H is part of the UCCE program. The office is located at 680 N. Campus Dr., Suite A in Hanford. The telephone number is 582-3211 ext 2730. The fax number is 582-5166.

COUNTY 4-H NEWSLETTER:

4-H Youth Talk is a monthly online newsletter for all 4-H families. Once your club leader submits your enrollment form to the CE Office, your family will be notified by email when a new issue is posted.

COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL

All 4-H leaders and a designated older member from each 4-H Club are voting members of the Kings County 4-H Council.

The Council establishes policies for the county 4-H program and is responsible for sponsoring the county events. All 4-H members and parents are welcome to attend the monthly Council meetings.

COUNTY EVENTS:

The County 4-H Council sponsors numerous 4-H events each year to support and supplement the local project work. Check the annual county 4-H calendar and monthly newsletters for details.

AWARDS: Awards are used to motivate youth to participate and learn more. Two major types of awards programs are:

- The California 4-H Rank System in which members compete against standards described in the Personal Development Report to earn bronze, silver and gold stars.
- The Kings County 4-H Record Book Medal Program recognizes good project work as demonstrated in the 4-H Record Book evaluation at the end of the year.
- The California Incentives & Recognition Program rewards older members for project achievements, leadership and community service. Savings bonds are currently being awarded to State Winners in each project area.
- The Kings County Emerald Star and All Star Programs are leadership awards for older youth.

PRESENTATIONS:

Presentations are talks or demonstrations given by one or two members showing or telling about something they know. A presentation can be given using posters and/or showing how to do or make something. They can be given at project or local club meetings, at school or to community groups, as well as at Presentation Day.

FAIR ENTRIES:

Most fairs are not 4-H activities. (The exception is the Kings County 4-H Fair each spring.) They are opportunities offered to 4-H members, but are not required. 4-H members should contact their leaders to obtain the necessary forms, help with completion of forms and leader signatures. Members are responsible for turning in their entries on time.

PARENTS AS 4-H LEADERS:

- *There are several ways in which a new 4-H parent can contribute to the 4-H program. One obvious way is to serve as a project leader. (Specific information for new project leaders is also available.)*
- *Another way is to help by assuming one specific responsibility, such as working with a committee of youth to plan an activity, helping a club officer with his/her responsibility, helping members prepare for an event like Presentation Day, helping with paperwork for the club, or recruiting someone you know to be a leader.*
- *Adults helping in any way can be enrolled as a 4-H leader once they have attended a leader orientation. Leaders not leading projects fill out an enrollment form and mark "Other" as the leader type. Adults enrolled as 4-H leaders pay the accident insurance fee and are covered just like 4-H members. In addition, leaders are covered by a liability insurance policy.*

LOCAL 4-H CLUBS:

One strength of the 4-H Program is that local clubs may operate in the way that works the best for the local situation. There are only a few rules from the state and/or county level which govern local clubs.

Most local 4-H Clubs are led by a Community Leader or by Co-community Leaders. The responsibility of the Community Leader is to manage the 4-H Club and serve as a contact person between the county 4-H program and the participants in the club. A major duty of the Community Leader is to share responsibility for the club with the officers, members, leaders and parents.

Attendance at monthly club meetings is important. Most clubs require a specific number of meetings be attended in order to complete the year and be eligible to exhibit at fairs as 4-H members.

BE SURE TO FOLLOW YOUR CLUB'S BY-LAWS. THEY ARE POSTED ON THE WEB SITE.

Reminder postcards or telephone calls are courtesies some clubs extend, but it is the responsibility of members to remember the regular club meeting date.

MORE ABOUT CLUBS...

There are special tasks that can be taken care of by adults who serve as "Other" leaders. Such jobs could include committee advisor, uniform and supply leader, transportation leader, officer advisor, presentation advisor, etc.

Older and/or experienced 4-H members are important to the 4-H Club. They can serve as club officers as well as Junior or Teen Leaders.

The officers of the club form the executive committee that is responsible for operating the club according to parliamentary procedure.

Junior and Teen leaders are older youth, who, as part of their own Leadership Development Projects, provide leadership in projects or in other parts of the local club.

4-H PROJECTS:

The basic unit of the 4-H program is the project work. Project Leaders are very important people who work directly with the youth to help them develop by learning about a specific project area.

As a parent, you can assist the project leader by seeing that your child attends meetings, by taking an interest in the project work, and by helping your child complete necessary project work and record keeping at home.

RECORD BOOKS:

Record keeping is a part of the 4-H club work that helps young people learn to take account of what they are learning and doing as well as what they are spending and earning. Most 4-H Clubs require a completed record book from each member near the end of the program year (June). This includes:

1. An Annual Project Report for each project completed.
2. A Personal Development Report (This tells what your child has done in 4-H other than in his/her projects and it includes a story about the year.
3. Photographs are optional.

You should help your child keep track of all that he/she does, learns, or spends in relation to 4-H.

Blank paper or a calendar can be used and then later the information transferred to the report forms.

Ask your club leader for details.

4-H UNIFORMS:

Uniforms are not required for 4-H membership and may not be required or used as evaluation criteria for any 4-H activities. Some local, county and district fair boards require wearing the traditional 4-H uniform for participation in livestock shows. Some stores and a mail order company carry the hats, ties and scarves. Check with the CE Office or your leader for details.

4-H POLICIES:

(Additional policies are available in the document “The 4-H Experience” provided to all volunteer 4-H Leaders and in the 4-H Handbook at <http://fourh.ucdavis.edu>)

1. No dues may be charged for membership in the 4-H Program. Only the Program Fee established by the state and county programs may be collected from members as a condition of membership.
2. Youth may not carry the same type of project (i.e., beef, sheep, etc.) in either 4-H, FFA or Grange, at the same time. They may transfer the project from one organization to the other only once in a calendar year.
3. 4-H is open to all youth without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, or physical and mental handicaps.
4. Affirmative Action is practiced to insure fair opportunities to all.
5. All adult leaders must attend a 90-minute basic orientation.
6. Each project a club offers must have an adult leader.
7. Members and Leaders are expected to follow the Code of Conduct as stated on the enrollment form.
8. Equestrian Helmet Policy: A number of serious injuries have occurred in the recent past in the horse and pony project and the handicapped riding clubs. As a result, the University of California has established an Equestrian Helmet Policy. All youth and adults participating in any equestrian activity must wear an equestrian helmet that meets ASTM/SET standards when mounted on the horse or riding in a vehicle pulled by an equine.
9. Fund Raising and Finances: County, state and national regulations must be adhered to when fund raising is necessary. Federal law prohibits the use of the 4-H name and the official 4-H emblem if the use will exploit the 4-H program, its volunteers, or members. To use the 4-H name or emblem, prior approval must be obtained from your county director. Fund raising policy forbids gambling, wagering and raffles. All fund raising efforts must be approved by the local unit and 4-H staff. All funds must be deposited in a 4-H unit or county 4-H account. When a 4-H unit disbands, all funds and equipment become the property of the county 4-H Council.
10. Primary members are those who are at least 5 years old or in Kindergarten and not yet 9 or in the 4th grade by January 1 midway through the club year (July 1 - June 30). Primary Members will remain as such throughout the whole club year regardless of when they turn 9. Clubs are not obligated to provide a program for Primary Members.
 - Primary Members may only participate in 4-H activities at the club level, except that they may exhibit entries at the 4-H Fair. They will not be judged, but will receive a participation ribbon.
 - Primary Members are not to be put in competitive situations in the 4-H program and may only receive participation recognition only.
 - Primary Members do not keep record books.
 - The only approved animal projects for Primary Members are dogs, rabbits, rats, cats, poultry, cavies, mice, embryology, entomology, marine science, pygmy goats, and therapeutic animal projects.



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