

# 4-H Primary Member Handbook

Mini-members: for youth in Grades K-3 or ages 5-8 years old

The 4-H Program is open to youth in Grades K - 12. Programming is broken up into various age categories: Primary, Junior, Intermediate, and Senior. 4-H has specific guidelines and policies for primary members to make their experience a positive and age appropriate experience.

Primary aged youth are impressionable and respond to exciting and creative activities. This is a critical stage in the development of the young child and an excellent time to enhance a child's learning experiences in self-perception. Researchers estimate that children experience half of their learning before four years of age, another 30 percent before the age of eight, and only 20 percent during the remaining years of their education. Therefore, it is important to offer non-formal exploratory programs focusing on the developmental needs of younger children.

## Enrollment

- ♣ Primary members must be 5 years old by January 1 of the program year.
- ♣ Parents should select projects that are age appropriate for 5-8 year olds.
- ♣ Primary members should be encouraged to participate in a variety of projects and experiences. The approved animal projects for this age group are: dogs, rabbits, cats, poultry, small pocket pets, cavies, embryology, entomology, marine science, pygmy goats, and therapeutic animal projects.
- ♣ Primary members cannot enroll in large animal projects or shooting sports.
- ♣ Fairs are open to Primary members for exhibit only. Primary members should only receive recognition for their participation.



## Incentives & Awards

Primary Member recognition at the county level is based on the following:

- ♣ Primary Members will only receive participation recognition
- ♣ Primary Members may be encouraged to complete the Primary Member Record Book. This is the only record form for primary member use.
- ♣ Primary Members may not accumulate credits on the Personal Development Report form that supports the Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum Star Ranks
- ♣ Structured competition is not appropriate for this age group.

In general, 5-8 year old children find it especially hard to lose, so projects and activities should not involve competitive learning experiences such as judging. Each Primary Member progresses and develops at his or her own speed.



## Program Delivery

The 4-H Program is centered around the 4-H Club. Primary members have several options on how to participate:

- ♣ *4-H Primary Members as 4-H Community Club Members* - Primary Members participate in all club and project activities
- ♣ *4-H Primary Member in a Primary Member Club* - Primary Members join a community club geared specifically for this age group. Not currently offered. Interested in leading a club like this? Contact the 4-H office!
- ♣ *4-H Primary Member Projects* - Probably the most common delivery mode for Primary Members, this delivery allows Primary Members to join projects that meet weekly, biweekly, or monthly. Members are not associated with a community club.

When choosing a delivery mode, select one that matches the type of experience you are interested in.

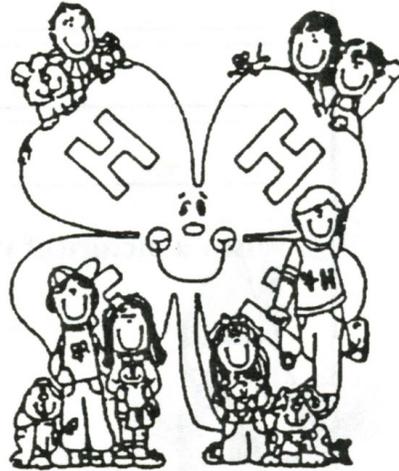
## 4-H Pledge

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.

## 4-H Slogan

**“Learn-by-doing”** is the 4-H member’s way of acquiring new skills and learning how to get along with others. New skills come from working with the hands. The ability to get along with others comes from working and playing with the group.



## How You Can Help

As a parent/guardian, you can support the 4-H program in many ways. You can:

- ♣ Provide financial support for your child’s project work
- ♣ Provide transportation
- ♣ Help your child secure needed materials or equipment
- ♣ Support and guide the project work of your child
- ♣ Offer your time as a volunteer to the project group and to the 4-H Program

You are vital in helping your child get the most out of 4-H. Please take an interest in 4-H projects and events and encourage your child to participate. If your child is taking part in an event, come and watch and visit with others. Interest and participation makes 4-H strong.

Whenever possible, attend local 4-H meetings. As a parent/guardian of a 4-H’er, you will have much in common with other 4-H families. Keep in touch with project leaders, or become a leader yourself! If you want to help, ask the leader what you can do. He or she will appreciate any assistance or support you can give.