Welcome to McPherson County 4-H!

This guide has been prepared to help you gain a better understanding of the McPherson County 4-H Program. It will not have all the answers, but hopefully it will provide an insight on the 4-H Program. All of us involved with the McPherson County 4-H program feel we have much to offer our members (and potential members), and want to make your family’s 4-H experience worthwhile.

“4-H is a Family Affair!” Every member of the family, youngsters and parents alike, can benefit from belonging to and participating in 4-H. Parents of a 4-H member are extremely important. Your children need your support, help and guidance to get the most out of any experience.

No one can influence or do as much for children as their own parents. The 4-H program is adults and youth, parents and children, working together to accomplish goals. 4-H provides an opportunity for youth to have other significant adults in their lives that have a positive impact on their life skill development.

The 4-H program, projects and activities offer many opportunities for parents to positively influence their children. Please join our 4-H program with the understanding that the whole family involvement is the key to developing youth and helping our 4-H program remain progressive and educational. 4-H is a family affair—we are proud of the need for parents and children to work together.

This guide will be supported monthly with a newsletter from the McPherson County Extension Office along with a newsletter from the 4-H club your family joins. When questions arise, please feel free to contact me, I have an open door policy.

Again, welcome! We are glad to have your interest in the McPherson County 4-H Program.

Sincerely,

Shawna M. Mitchell
County Extension Agent
4-H & Youth
WHAT IS 4-H?

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

4-H is an informal educational program for all boys and girls, whether they live in town, the country, or on a farm. (A youth may join at any time during the year when they turn 7 years old). There is a Tag-Along option for youth wanting to join, but not yet 7.

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

4-H is older 4-H'ers sharing experiences and teaching younger members things that they’ve learned by doing.

THE PRIMARY OBJECTIVE OF 4-H IS...

The basic philosophy in 4-H is to strengthen the mental, physical, moral and social development of boys and girls; therefore, helping develop more desirable citizens and leaders. The main objective is the development of boys and girls through participation in projects, events and various activities.

4-H is intended to supplement, not replace, the three primary educational institutions...namely school, home, and church.

YOUNGSTERS ENJOY 4-H BECAUSE...

While all youth are different, they are also alike in many ways. Five inner desires are shared by all youth:

- They want to belong.
- They want to achieve
- They want to become independent
- They want experiences and adventure
- They want affection

The wide variety of “learn by doing” projects, activities, and events which make up the 4-H program contribute to meeting these needs. Decision making, individual responsibility, achievement and recognition further help make 4-H satisfying.

GOALS

4-H is youth and adults growing together to become better citizens. As teaching methods, 4-H uses learning-by-doing projects, club meetings, community service, events and experiences for young people and adults as they work toward attaining citizenship and leadership-developing life skills.

Life skill goals in 4-H are more than just empty words. They are meaningful to children and their families, and Extension 4-H programs support the five outcome skills to develop.

- Positive self-concept
- Sound decision-making
- Positive interpersonal relationship
- Desire for lifelong learning
- Concern for community

WHY AND WHEN DID 4-H ORIGINATE?

4-H work, as we know it, began in Kansas in 1905 (in the U.S. in 1902) 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 convince their 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 such as beef, corn, gardening and canning. There were corn, poultry and garden clubs in Kansas as early as 1905. The first county agents were hired about 1915 and the first Kansas State 4-H Leader was hired in 1916.

EXTENSION OFFICE STAFF:

Office Professionals
- Terra Regehr
- Regina Abbott

Extension Agents:
- Shawna Mitchell, CEA, 4-H & Youth
- Dale Ladd, CEA, Agriculture
- Jana McKinney, CEA, Family & Consumer Sciences

*** Listen to Shawna’s radio spot on Monday morning, 7:25 a.m. on KNGL/KBBE Radio Stations. 4-H & Youth issues are discussed weekly.
MOTTO
“To Make The Best Better”

EMBLEM
The 4-H Emblem is the four-leaf clover with the letter “H” on each leaf, standing for head, heart, hands and health.

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.

4-H MISSION
Kansas 4-H Youth Development uses unique strategies and opportunities to engage youth in reaching their full potential through partnerships with caring adults.

4-H VISION
Kansas 4-H Youth Development provides a world where youth and adults acquire and advance positive life skills by learning, growing, and working together.

AGE
4-H membership is open to all boys and girls whenever they turn 7 years of age and have not turned 19 years of age prior to January 1 of the current year.

CLOVERBUDS
McPherson County has a Cloverbud program that provides an opportunity for youth 5-6 years old to join the 4-H program. They can take certain projects, but do not “complete”. Their focus is learning and doing activities.

SCOPE
4-H is in all the states and in over 80 foreign countries.

PROJECTS
Other than age, the only requirement for 4-H membership is that 4-H’ers enroll in at least one project. There are about 48 project areas from which to choose. Members are expected to complete the projects in which they enroll. Most animal projects have an ownership deadline.

LEADERS
Adults serve as two types of leaders. Project (subject matter teachers) and Community (organizational leaders). Helping boys and girls grow through their 4-H opportunities can be a very rewarding experience for adult volunteers.

4-H RECORDS
Each member must keep a record of their 4-H work. Records are not an extra task, but a part of 4-H work. Few young people (adults are no exception) enjoy record keeping. However, in our society, the record habit is quite valuable.

A good record book...

N is a measuring stick. Members and leaders are kept informed of the member’s progress and will usually stimulate self-improvement by the member.

N is a mirror. It will reflect accomplishments and therefore serve as the basis of awards, trips, and other recognition.

N teaches a desirable habit. Modern day society demands that each and everyone no, matter what vocation, keep track of financial and business matters. Developing this habit early in life will be a valuable asset.

N can be achieved only when there is the proper attitude and cooperation between member, parents, and leaders.

A separate manual is available to each 4-H family to assist with the task of record keeping. It was written by 4-H families for 4-H families. It will be helpful to each 4-H member in their record book efforts.
What is a 4-H Club?

A 4-H club is a group of at least 5 boys and girls organized with officers appropriate to the group and with one or more leaders under the sponsorship of the Cooperative Extension Service.

The club is organized within a social unit, neighborhood, church, school, even a business. The size of the club should be suitable to the age of the members, meeting place & leadership available. This type of club is called a community 4-H club. Most clubs hold monthly meetings, normally the same week night each month.

Who is responsible for the administration of the 4-H program?

The Cooperative Extension Service is a cooperative undertaken by the United States Department of Agriculture, the land-grant colleges (for us, Kansas State University), and the County Extension Councils.

The Extension Service has charge of carrying up-to-date information from the classroom and laboratory to the people of the State and bringing back to the university those problems that can be solved only by careful study and research.

The purpose of the County Extension Service is to provide instruction and practical demonstrations in agriculture, marketing, family and consumer sciences, 4-H and youth work, and community development to ALL persons in the county. The County Extension Councils hire college trained agents in 4-H and youth, agriculture, and family and consumer sciences to plan and conduct the respective programs in the county.

How does 4-H operate?

Simply: Learn by doing. 4-H Club members can vary greatly from four or five youngsters and one or two adult volunteers to clubs that are larger. Some clubs have grown to 50 or more 4-H'ers.

Clubs meet monthly, generally on the same night of the week, to handle their business affairs, programs, and recreation. When it is time to learn, make, or do something in a project the 4-H'er attends separate project meetings that relate to the projects.

There are five key steps to successful 4-H Clubs:
1. **Getting acquainted:** This is especially important for younger and new 4-H'ers and generally needs to happen at every meeting with some sort of get acquainted activity.
2. **Deciding what to do:** This happens at the beginning of the 4-H year and whenever a group or committee gets together. A 4-H'er also decides what projects to work on (with parental help).
3. **Action:** This is when things happen. It is the meeting, tour, picnic, camp, or making something. In other words, it is learning by doing.
4. **Measuring progress:** This can happen at every meeting when 4-H'ers talk about what they have learned, made or done. 4-H records are a good tool for the 4-H'ers to measure their progress.
5. **Celebration:** This is helping 4-H'ers feel good about what they have done. This could be a part or an achievement night. Telling someone face to face what they have accomplished, works great!

Have objectives changed since its early days?

Yes! Following the “teach improved practices to farmers and homemakers through their children” idea came from 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 youth, in the city or in the country.
What are the Purposes of 4-H Club Meetings?

The purposes of 4-H meetings are to help boys and girls:
1. Acquire new information
2. Learn to use leisure time creatively
3. Develop social skills
4. Acquire leadership and citizenship traits

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 needed to attend the meeting with their children. 4-H is a family affair.

How often does the club meet?

Most clubs hold their monthly meetings, normally the same night each month (i.e., 2nd Mondays).

What is a club meeting like?

The 4-H meeting includes business, educational program, and recreation. 4-H meetings normally last 1 to 1 1/2 hours.

What is the educational program?

This part of the meeting is designed to help members learn more about subjects of general interest in the entire 4-H program. 4-H teaching is unique - it is "learning by doing". Good 4-H teaching employs seeing, hearing, and doing. The educational program will include talks and demonstrations by the members. Outside speakers may also present programs for 4-H meetings, plus fun activities too.

A 4-H meeting may have the following parts:

Presentations:
- Demonstrations: These talks 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. Most demo's consist of three parts:
  A. Introduction - explains the purpose
  B. Body - outlines subject step-by-step
  C. Summary - reviews important points and gives opportunity for questions

- Illustrated Talks: These talks differ from demonstrations in that they "tell how" rather than "show how". Charts, model and other visuals are important for illustrated talks.

- Project Talks: These talks are given about the members' projects. The project talk can relate things experienced in the project, or give information relating to the project.

Business Session: This portion of the meeting should be short and snappy. It is a small democracy in action. Parliamentary procedure is used and all members have a chance to discuss.

Recreation Session: The recreation portion of the meeting distinguishes the 4-H meeting from other educational activities. Recreation may include challenges, group singing, dodge ball, relays, guessing games, singing games, active games and quiet games. Everyone gets to play.

Refreshments: Some clubs serve refreshments at meetings, although this is not essential. Usually, different families are hosts each month. The learning experience for the members who select, prepare, and serve the refreshments is the prime concern. Club members should learn how to select simple, nutritional, inexpensive refreshments and how to serve them. Parents can and should help by giving suggestions and guidance.

How are good monthly 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 month early in the 4-H year. Generally, program planning is done by the club officers and junior leaders with guidance from community leaders and the club parents' committee. The exact planning program varies from club to club.

Who conducts the club meetings?

Each club normally elects officers at the start 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?

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 persons, and young adults are often willing to help the 4-H'ers. Leadership for monthly club meetings is provided by the community leaders.

What is the Club Parents’ Committee?

Club parents’ committee are usually made up of three or five adults. They assist the club by securing community and project leaders. They may also lend some ideas and guidance in planning the yearly program and other club activities.

What is the role of the Extension Agent?

The McPherson County Extension 4-H and Youth agent provides leadership for the 4-H youth activities on a county-wide basis -- conduct leader trainings, planning activities, and keeping everything organized. The Extension Agent provides leadership and support for special interest youth programs throughout the county. The Agent is available to answer any questions concerning the 4-H youth program.

4-H Teaches these five life skills...

1. **Building Self Confidence** - through feelings of acceptance by others and success in meeting increasingly difficult challenges.

2. **Developing an inquiring mind** - through mental stimulation, curiosity, and enthusiasm, for finding out about the world and its people.

3. **Learning to make decisions** - through use of knowledge, skills, and value in identifying, defining and analyzing problems, and then selecting from alternative solutions.

4. **Relating to others** - through communication of information and feelings, respecting differences among others, dealing with conflict, and applying democratic practices in problem solving.

5. **Developing concern for the community** - through awareness of the natural and social communities and their interrelationships, learning to respect difference, and assuming responsibilities to help.

What are the principles of 4-H?

It is not what we know, but what we believe that determines what we do. 4-H leaders and parents can make their best contribution to the development of boys and girls if they understand 4-H objectives and principles.

1. **The 4-H club members are more important than the project.**

2. **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.**

3. **4-H is not trying to replace the home, church or school, only to supplement them. This does not mean that 4-H should avoid areas dealt with by school or church. 4-H music, dramatic, etc., may give additional opportunity for participation.**

4. **4-H’ers should be their own best exhibit. This means in manners, attitudes, and courtesy, as well as appropriate dress and physical appearance.**

5. **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 device.**

6. **No 4-H award is worth sacrificing the reputation of a 4-H member or leader.**

7. **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.**

8. **Many things are caught rather than taught.**

9. **Every 4-H member needs to be noticed, to feel important, to achieve some degree of success, and to be praised.**

10. **Our job is to teach 4-H members how to think, not what to think.**
Who's Who in 4-H

LOCAL CLUB LEVEL

4-H Member is any child 7-19 years of age who participates in a local 4-H group or activity.

Cloverbud Member is any child under 7 years of age who participates in a local 4-H group or activity.

Project is a learning experience for the 4-H member where they make or learn to do something. Each member should take at least one project, and complete the record book for the project.

Project Leader is a volunteer who helps boys and girls as they learn, make or do something. This person can be a 4-H parent who agrees to help with a project. It may also be a Junior Leader or a person from the community who has knowledge in a particular subject matter area.

Junior Leader is a 4-H member who is 12 years old and is enrolled in the Leadership project. They take an active part in helping the younger members in the club. By doing this, they grow, mature, and learn leadership skills.

Parents are very important to the success a child may have in the 4-H program. Parents are encouraged to attend monthly meetings and project meetings with their child. All county-wide events are open and parents are encouraged to attend. Parents' key role is the support they give to their children: support the child in the commitment they made, help them think through decisions, and see that they reach their goal. Other responsibilities including helping at the 4-H food stand, fair setup and fair cleanup.

Community Club leader is an adult volunteer or volunteers who are responsible for the organizational part of the 4-H club. They work closely with the County Extension Agent, club officers, 4-H council representatives, and parents' committee to make their 4-H club successful and educational.

COUNTY LEVEL

The 4-H Program Development Committee (PDC) is an elected body of six people. They are responsible for the direction of the county 4-H program.

4-H Council: 4-H clubs each have two youth and two adult representatives to this group. They meet on the 2nd Thursday of every other month in the Extension Office Meeting Room. Council plans 4-H activities and events that take place on a county-wide basis and set some county 4-H policies. Many times Council members will receive information and bring it to the club for discussion.

Extension Agents are the professionals who administer the 4-H program. McPherson County has a County Extension 4-H and Youth Agent who works with the 4-H program. The McPherson County Extension Office is at 600 W. Woodside, McPherson. It is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday - Friday, including lunch hour. The phone number is 620-241-1523. The fax number is 620-241-3407. E-mail address: smitchel@oznet.ksu.edu. You can also find information on the website at: www.oznet.ksu.edu/mcpherson.

STATE LEVEL

State Specialists are people with the responsibility of providing the support material. There are currently eight State specialists, with four being located in area Extension offices. Diane Mack is the Northeast Area Extension 4-H and Youth specialist and is located in Manhattan. Each one has a specific part of the total 4-H program. The State 4-H Leader is located at Kansas State University, Manhattan.
Kansas State University is the land grant college that has the responsibility for taking education to the people of the State, and the 4-H program is part of that directive.

Rock Springs 4-H Center is the statewide 4-H camp and is located between Herrington and Junction City on Highway 77.

The Kansas 4-H Foundation is a nonprofit organization that works to provide additional resources for the 4-H program. They sponsor scholarships, funding for programs, and assist where needed.

NATIONAL LEVEL

The National 4-H Council is an organization with an office located in Chevy Chase, Maryland (301) 961-2800. The National 4-H Council is also the base of National 4-H Supply Service. The E-mail address is: 4hstuff@fourhcouncil.edu.

The National 4-H Center opened in 1959 and is located in Washington, D.C. The center has expanded into one of the most modern residential-educational facilities in the area for meetings and conferences. The 4-H Center is open 365 days a year and is a great place for 4-H families to stay and visit when in the Chevy Chase/Washington, DC area. 301-961-2806

4-H Projects

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.

Why Projects?

The project is the 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 consideration.

What are Projects?

Projects are real life experiences that help 4-Hers learn to make sound decisions. Projects put the hands and mind to work. The selection of 4-H projects has expanded greatly over the years. There are now 45 different projects with a variety of different phases or degrees of advancement. Most of the projects have been planned with several phases so that a member may advance to more difficult and challenging activities. 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.

What are the objectives of 4-H projects?

1. Create a sense of ownership.
2. Give a feeling of achievement.
3. Strengthen family and community ties.
4. Provide members the opportunity to:
   A. Learn project skills
   B. Develop and understand project knowledge
   C. Develop good attitudes
   D. Assume responsibility
   E. Provide healthful competition
   F. Make meaningful decisions
5. Provide leisure time activities
6. Explore career opportunities and thus the need for continued education. All projects are, in a sense, career explorative, giving each member a taste of the work and responsibilities involved.

What is the “Guide to Project Selection”?

The guide lists guidelines and suggested learning experiences for various projects. It is printed in the August issue, Kansas 4-H Journal or copies are available at the Extension Office. Be sure to look at a copy before making your project choice.
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. Generally, 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:

1. Does it meet the needs and interests of the member?

2. Is the project in keeping with age and ability of the member? Will it challenge him/her educationally?

3. How much time does the member have and how much time does the project require? What season of the year has most of the activity of the project?

4. Is the project acceptable to you as parents and does it fit into the family needs and situation?

5. How much will the project cost?

6. Are adequate space and equipment available?

7. Is there an opportunity for ownership and management responsibility?

8. Are there leaders to help with the project or are you willing to help the member with the project?

How are Projects Conducted?

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

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

What is the role of the project leader?

4-H Project Leaders are people who have an interest in a particular area. They are willing to share their time, talents, and efforts with a group of young people.

You could be a project leader! It doesn't take an expert to be a project leader. The most important ingredient for project leaders is that they are interested in working with youth. If you would consider being a project leader, visit with your club’s community leaders or parent advisory committee members.

Training meetings for project leaders are conducted on the county level, plus many projects have leaders’ guides to assist leaders.

The project leaders will notify members when and where the project meetings will be held. Most projects will require at least four project meetings, with the first one being held prior to January 1.

4-H members may add or drop projects no later than May 1 of the current year.

County-wide Leaders

Some projects are more difficult to find leaders that have knowledge in specific areas, such as Entomology and Geology. To help members that are taking those projects, there are project leaders that are willing to serve as a county-wide leader. That means, the project leader works with 4-H members from all clubs that are enrolled in a specific project. McPherson County has numerous county-wide leaders--these leaders are not meant to replace local club leaders, only fortify.

Many clubs will share project leaders too. If your club has one or two members and cannot find a leader, many times a leader from another club will take those members too. Many project leaders would like to have several members to assist. Ask at 4-H Council or contact Jana if need a leader for a specific project.
There are a wide variety of activities that are offered to 4-H members and their families. Participation in these activities are encouraged, but not required. For many activities there are pre-entry needs, and for some a cost to participate (especially trips). The following is a list of activities offered on the local, county, state, national and international levels. This list is designed to give you a little bit of information on each opportunity. More information will be supplied in the monthly newsletter sent to each 4-H family, or contact the Extension Office with specific questions.

**Local Club Activities**

**Officer’s Training** - All club officers are asked to attend this yearly event to learn about their office duties and leadership development.

**Club Tours** - Many of the 4-H clubs hold a 4-H Tour during June or July of each year. Tours provide an opportunity for 4-H’ers with animal, garden, etc., projects to “show and tell” their projects to other 4-H’ers and parents in their club. Many clubs include a picnic, swimming party, or some other family activity.

**Club Projects** - Each year, clubs usually select a project that the club works on as a group, usually a community service project. The purpose of the club project is to perform a service to the community and to encourage unity and fellowship between club members.

Additional club activities are planned by the individual 4-H clubs. Visit with your club’s community leaders about the particular activities of your local 4-H club.

**County-wide Activities**

**4-H Days** - 4-H’ers make presentations to share things they’ve learned in 4-H. Presentations include speaking (show and tell, project talks, illustrated talks, demonstrations, public speaking categories), talent and musical numbers (solo and group), gavel games (parliamentary procedure), and pickle power (non-competitive decision making). Presentations are evaluated and awarded top blue, blue, red or white ribbons. 4-H’ers are divided into age divisions for competition. 4-H members are judged against a standard, not against each other. The event is usually held in February, on a Friday evening or Saturday.

Top Blue recipients from 4-H Days will get to advance to Regional 4-H Club Day held on a Saturday in March at El Dorado. 4-H members from 7 counties give their presentations at this event in all categories from 4-H Days.

**Spring Shows** - Spring Shows are held in lots of project areas to give 4-H members a chance to exhibit their project work other than at the 4-H Fair. Be watching for dates in the monthly newsletters starting in March or April. McPherson County hosts a beef and sheep show in May.

**Spring Livestock Day** - An event open to McPherson County 4-H members only to exhibit their swine, goats, horse, dairy and bucket calf projects. Prizes are awarded to participants. Emphasis is placed on education and fellowship more so than competition. Entry is needed, small entry fee.

**Spring Show** - An event open to McPherson County 4-H members enrolled in the projects of Photography, Bicycle, Pets, Horticulture, Rabbits (meat quality), Foods (baking and Place Settings), Poultry (broiler quality), Exploring 4-H, and Talks and Demonstrations. Entry is needed, no entry fee. Exhibits are conference judged. Exhibits entered in Spring Show are not eligible to be exhibited at the 4-H Fair.

**County 4-H Camp** - 4-H’ers camp at Rock Springs 4-H Center, near Junction City with 4-H’ers from other counties. County Camp lasts four days and three nights and is for youth who have completed the 3rd through 7th grades. Entry is needed, a fee is charged. McPherson County camps with youth from several other counties. Bus transportation will be available.

**Rookie 4-H Camp** - This camp is for youth that are in 1st and 2nd grades and is about a 36 hour experience. It is held at the same time as our County 4-H Camp. Entry is needed, a fee is charged. Bus transportation will be available.
Camp Counselors - Older 4-H members are encouraged to apply to be camp counselors.

Ambassadors - Older 4-H members who promote and represent 4-H in the community and within the clubs. Two adult advisors guide the youth.

Judging Schools and Contests - Judging provides a fun way for 4-H'ers to learn more about how to make decisions. 4-H members may participate in any judging contest regardless of projects enrolled in. Judging contests are held in conjunction with other events and are done by age divisions. 4-H'ers must compete in county contests to be eligible for selection for State Fair judging teams.

County 4-H Fair - The Fair provides an opportunity for youth to show their project work. Exhibits are evaluated by judges and receive a ribbon denoting its quality in comparison to a standard. The 4-H Fair is held in McPherson, usually the last week of July. A 4-H Fairbook is made available in May/June to each 4-H family. Pre-entry is needed, no entry fee. Conference judging is used for all divisions. Exhibits that receive a State Fair Blue or Purple ribbon are eligible for exhibition at the Kansas State Fair.

Recognition Luncheon - This event is sponsored by Bank of America, Wall Rogalsky Milling Co, and Farmers Alliance Insurance Co, during the 4-H Fair. All trophies are presented at the luncheon on Thursday held at Holiday Manor Convention Center. Tickets are free, but need to picked up at the Extension Office during the Fair.

County Fair - This Fair is held in Canton, usually in mid-July. There are open class opportunities as well as 4-H. Conference judging is not used. Entry information is usually available in mid-late June.

Conference Judging - In this type of judging, the judge and the 4-H member visit about the exhibit being evaluated. Knowing “why” they receive a certain ribbon greatly increases the 4-H’ers learning experience. Conference judging is used at all 4-H events. Parents may listen to the judge, but may not enter into the discussion.

4-H Council - The County 4-H Council is made up of older 4-H’ers and leaders from each 4-H club. The Council plans county-wide events and activities, and also has the responsibility for county-wide fundraising activities. The Council meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month.

4-H Sunday - One Sunday is set aside each year to call attention to and emphasize the spiritual H (heart) of 4-H. The local club decides the way they want to observe 4-H Sunday. Some clubs attend church together, have a part in the church service, a 4-H family picnic or other activity. 4-H Sunday can be any Sunday of the year that each 4-H club would like it to be.

4-H Development Fund - A county-wide fund drive is held in the spring to raise money to help 4-H’ers and leaders participate in many new experiences. Scholarships are given to 4-H members for educational experiences they want to attend. The 4-H Development Fund also provides money for new member T-shirts, awards, and 4-H Fair premiums, among other things.

The 4-H Development Fund Drive places the responsibility for raising money and support for the 4-H program in the hands of the local 4-H clubs. All 4-H families are asked to make one contact to raise funds for the Development Fund.

Exchange Trips - Jr. Leaders plan and implement exchange programs with 4-H members from other states. One year our 4-H members visit the exchange state, then, the next summer, the 4-H members from the exchange state come stay with our 4-H families. It’s a great way to see the United States, plus learn about 4-H programs. McPherson County has exchanged with Illinois, Pennsylvania, Florida, Texas, Georgia, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Arizona, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Tennesse.

Achievement Banquet - Is held at the end of the 4-H year, in November to recognize 4-H members individually for their accomplishments throughout the year. Tickets can be purchased at the Extension Office. 4-H members will want to come with their families to receive their awards.

Family Fun Night - An evening of fun for all 4-H Families at the McPherson YMCA. Swimming, basketball, pool, games, and socializing. Usually held in January each year.
State & National Activities

**Discovery Days** (early June) - Discovery Days is a project enrichment and career exploration on the campus of Kansas State University. Youth 13 years old and older can join teens from all over Kansas in conference activities. Registration due April 15, there is a cost.

**District 4-H Horse Show** - 4-H'ers 10 years old and older compete in performance classes to qualify for the State Fair Horse Show. Our show is held in Salina, usually in early July. Achievement Levels are required. Pre-entry is required by June 1, there is a cost. Competition is tough. Must participate to advance to State.

**Kansas State Fair** - Starts the first Friday after Labor Day, held in Hutchinson. Entries are taken right after the 4-H Fair. 4-H'ers who receive State Fair Blues or Purples at the 4-H Fair are eligible to exhibit in the 4-H division at the State Fair. The minimum age is 10 for exhibition, non-competitive options are also available for 4-H members. Market animals must be nominated by May 1 for beef; June 15 for Sheep and Swine.

**Kansas Jr. Livestock Show** - 4-H'ers can enter beef, sheep, and swine in this show held at the Kansas Coliseum. Competition is stiff. Entry is required by August 15, there is a cost. Market animals must be nominated by May 1 for beef; June 15 for Sheep and Swine.

**National 4-H Week** - A week is set aside each year to recognize and promote 4-H across the country. Each year a theme highlights the week and we use it throughout the next two years. Each club works to promote 4-H in their community and school. It is usually the first full week of October.

**Kansas City Conference** - Youth that are 15 years old and older may participate in this leadership development, career exploration conference. 4-H members from Iowa, Arkansas, Missouri, South Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Kansas come together for a three day conference. Entry is due in early December, there is a cost.

**State and National Leader Forums** - Kansas 4-H leaders are invited to participate in Leadership Development Conferences which take place each fall. Watch for additional information.

**National 4-H Congress** - Each year, National 4-H Congress is attended by nearly 1,500 4-H members from all states and territories. Delegates are selected for state winners in certain project areas based on the Kansas Award Application.

**National 4-H Conference** - Each year in the spring, delegates from each of the 50 states meeting in Washington, D.C. to share ideas and plan for future 4-H programs. Kansas selects 4 youth, ages 15 years old and older to attend this conference held in April. Applications are due in early October, there is a cost.

**International Four H Youth Exchange (IFYE)** - These programs provide youth, ages 15-19, and adults opportunities to learn another culture by living it. Programs include a four week family visit in Japan, a six to eight week experience traveling to another country to live with two or three families, a three to six month experience living with families in another country, or a six-month program with the Soviet Union. Adults can spend three to four weeks touring a country to see programs similar to 4-H. Funds for the youth programs are provided by the participants, Kansas 4-H Foundation, National 4-H Council, County 4-H Councils, and other friends of IFYE. Applications are due in early December.

**KYLF** - Kansas Youth Leadership forum is a leadership conference for youth 14 years and older. This is held in November at Rock Springs. Youth have the opportunity to run for the state 4-H youth council.

**Citizenship Washington-Focus** - Each year Kansas selects 55 youth to travel to Washington, D.C. over a two-week period to attend this citizenship experience at the National 4-H Center. Delegates are involved in citizenship, leadership workshops, in addition to viewing the historic areas. Applications are due in early January, there is a cost.
Awards

Awards are not an end in the 4-H program. The objective of awards is to encourage and further a youth’s educational development and to help him or her look farther up the road of achievements. Some recognition and awards offered in the county are:

**4-H T-shirt** - All new 4-H members will be given a 4-H t-shirt to wear and enjoy throughout the 4-H year.

**4-H Achievement Pins** - Membership pins are awarded to members who complete one year of membership and meet minimum requirements. Bronze, Clover, Emerald, Silver, Silver Guard, Leadership, Gold, and Gold Guard are awarded to members based upon fulfilling goals stated. The Gold Guard is the highest award that can be presented a 4-H’er by the county. The applications for all of these awards are due the same time as the record book, generally late August. Awards presented at the Achievement Banquet in October.

**Key Awards** - Are presented to 4-H members that are 16 years old and older and meet the requirements. Selection is based upon all-around 4-H leadership and participation in local, county and state 4-H activities. Applications for this award should be obtained early in the year and are due at the end of August. The award is presented at the Achievement Banquet in October.

**County Champion Medals** - McPherson County awards 1 award per 11 4-H members enrolled in a project for their accomplishments in individual project areas. Selection is based on the completion of the record book. Record books are turned into club leaders in mid to late August. They, in turn, submit the books for screening by leaders in another county. One County Champion is determined along with additional blue awards based on enrollment figures. Honorable Mention awards may also be presented based on records. Awards are presented at the 4-H Achievement Banquet.

**Kansas Award Applications** - Also known as KAA’s. 4-H members that are selected as County Project Champions based on their record books are eligible to advance to the area level and potentially, state level to be recognized as State Project Winners. 4-H members complete a KAA to compete on the area level. Each county may submit one KAA to the area level for consideration and each area may submit two KAA’s to the state level screening, held in March. Recognition is given to the State Project Winners at the prestigious Emerald Circle Banquet held in June. KAA’s are judged on the area level in January.

**4-H Scholarships** - Kansas 4-H has 42 scholarships that are given at the Emerald Circle Banquet in June. Competition is stiff for these scholarships. The January issue of the Kansas 4-H Journal has the most up-to-date information on the scholarships being offered and eligibility requirements. Scholarship applications are due in late February.

**Special Awards** - McPherson County is able to present two youth with the William H. Danforth, I Dare You award at the 4-H Achievement Banquet. Emphasis for this award is placed on leadership given by the 4-H member at the local club level. Community Leaders may nominate youth for this award. Friend of 4-H Awards are given through local 4-H club nominations of a business or individual that has been especially helpful to their club or the 4-H program throughout the year. Nomination is done by writing a letter to the Trips and Awards committee, due in late August. 4-H Alumni Awards are given to 4-H alums who have continued their involvement in the 4-H Program. An application form is available at the Extension Office and is due by late August. All awards are presented at the Achievement Banquet.

**Achievement Trip to Denver** - This trip is taken every other year to Denver, Colorado in January to attend the National Western Stock Show and other educational activities in the Denver area. It was started several years ago with local banks support, but has evolved to being a 4-H Development Fund sponsored activity. Trip participants are invited based on their record books and being selected as Achievement project winners.
In 4-H several types of awards are available. Achievement Pins are given for accomplishment and progress in 4-H work. Each member should sit down with his/her parents and leaders early in the year to set goals for the year, including plans for earning an achievement pin. Application forms are available from your club leader or the County Extension Office. A 4-H member may receive only one pin per year. Generally, a member will earn the pins in the order listed. Under special circumstances a new member joining at an older age may want to skip beginning pins. This should be discussed with your club Record and Awards Leader or with a Trips and Awards Committee member.

Each pin requires that 4-H members attend a majority of the regularly schedule club meetings.

1. **4-H T-Shirt** - Awarded to members when they join 4-H for the first time.

2. **4-H Membership Pin** - Awarded to members completing their first year. Members must attend one county-wide event or activity.

3. **Bronze Achievement Pin** - 4-H'er must exhibit at the County 4-H Fair or at an event similar to a county fair, attend one club or county event, and complete their 4-H record book and give it to their 4-H leader.

4. **Clover Achievement Pin** - 4-H'ers must exhibit at the County 4-H Fair or at an event similar to a county fair, present part of a program for at least one regularly scheduled club meetings, complete the 4-H record book and give it to their 4-H leader, complete 3 of the optional requirements.

5. **Emerald Achievement Pin** - 4-H'ers must exhibit at the County 4-H Fair or at an event similar to a county fair, present part of a program for at least one regularly scheduled club meeting, complete the 4-H record book and give it to their 4-H leader, complete 5 of the optional requirements.

6. **Silver Achievement Pin** - 4-H'ers must have received the Emerald Achievement Pin, exhibit at the County 4-H Fair or at an event similar to a county fair, present part of a program for at least one regularly scheduled club meetings, complete the 4-H record book and give it to their 4-H leader, complete 7 of the optional requirements.

7. **Silver Guard Achievement Pin** - 4-H'ers must have received the Silver Achievement Pin, exhibit at the County 4-H Fair or at an event similar to a county fair, attend one over half of the regularly scheduled club meetings, present part of a program for at least one regularly scheduled club meeting, enroll and participate in the Leadership project for the current year, complete the 4-H record book and give it to their 4-H leader, participate in a 4-H community service project, complete 9 of the optional requirements.

8. **Leadership Achievement Pin** - 4-H'ers must have received the Silver Guard Achievement Pin, exhibit at the County 4-H Fair or at an event similar to a county fair, present part of a program for at least one regularly scheduled club meeting, enroll and participate in the Leadership project for the current year, complete the 4-H record book and give it to their 4-H leader, participate in a 4-H community service project, complete 11 of the optional requirements.

9. **Gold Achievement Pin** - 4-H'ers must have received the Leadership and Silver Guard Achievement Pins, exhibit at the County 4-H Fair or at an event similar to a county fair, present part of a program for at least one regularly scheduled club meeting, enroll and participate in the Leadership project, complete the 4-H record book and give it to their 4-H leader, participate in a 4-H community service project, complete 15 of the optional requirements.

10. **Gold Guard Achievement Pin** - 4-H'ers must have received the Gold Achievement Pin, exhibit at the County 4-H Fair or at an event similar to a county fair, attend one over half of the regularly scheduled club meetings, present part of a program for at least one regularly scheduled club meeting, enroll and participate in the Leadership project, complete the 4-H record book and give it to their 4-H leader, participate in a 4-H community service project, complete 16 of the optional requirements.

11. **Key Award** (State Award) - 4-H'ers must be 16 years or older, enrolled in Junior Leadership, participate in Community Service project and other county activities.
Ribbons

McPherson County uses the Danish Ribbon System. This means that: All exhibits receive a ribbon. Exhibits are judged in comparison with an ideal standard, not to each other. Exhibits are placed in 4 ribbon groups - purple, blue, red, white.

- **Purple** (can be called Superior, State Fair Blue or 4-H Days, Top Blue) means that the exhibit is outstanding on all standards.
- **Blue** means the exhibit exceeds the minimum standard; may have minor flaws where improvements can be made.
- **Red** means the exhibit meets all minimum standards; may show visible signs of needed improvements.
- **White** means the exhibit meets minimum standards; obvious improvement is needed.

Remember, it is one person’s opinion on that particular day that provides the ribbon placement. A 4-H member may really like that judge’s opinion, or would rather seek another judge’s opinion. It is most important to remember what you learned and gained from the project involvement rather than the ribbon placement of one person’s opinion.

Experiential Learning Model

The fact that the experiential learning model is used in all project materials is what makes 4-H teaching so successful. The model listed below is how the experiential learning occurs.

The Experience happens, the results are shared and processed. The member looks at the experience and reflects on it, then generalizes about the experience, and finally, applies what was learned to a similar or different situation: practice. Thus, the learning occurs all over again.

Project leaders and parents have a major role in helping the member learn from their experience by asking them questions to take them through the Experiential Learning Process.

Volunteer Information Profile

Every adult and junior leader is encouraged to fill out a Volunteer Information Profile (VIP) and have it on file at the Extension Office to become a registered leader.

This was put in place by the 4-H program to make every effort to keep our children safe. We hope you will agree with this need to keep our children safe and become a registered leader.

A registered volunteer is an adult, a teen with authority to independently plan and conduct educational experiences for youth with other adults present or in a public setting, OR a volunteer whose position puts them in close, ongoing, one-to-one interaction with youth.

To become a registered volunteer, a volunteer completes the VIP application and completes the orientation session (take home version is available). There will be several opportunities for leaders to complete an orientation session.

Each year, leaders are asked to complete a VIP Update.
So, how does the 4-H year REALLY fit together? I have compiled a month by month activity list for you. Remember, these all may not apply to you, but will give you an idea of what happens when. It is important for you to attend your club meeting each month.

**September**
- 4-H Club meeting
- Kansas State Fair
- Kansas Jr. Livestock Show
- Officer Election for 4-H clubs
- Re-enrollment/enrollment in 4-H
- Complete Record Books/Pin Applications

**October**
- 4-H Club meeting
- National 4-H Week
- Re-enrollment/enrollment in 4-H
- State 4-H Dog Conference and Quiz Bowl
- 4-H Carnival

**November**
- 4-H Club meeting
- Achievement Banquet
- Officer's Training
- American Royal - Kansas City
- Enrollment cards due to Extension Office
- Make It With Wool Contests
- 4-H Ambassador Applications Due
- Kansas Youth Leadership Forum
- State Leaders' Forum

**December**
- 4-H Club Meeting
- Beef Expo - Hutchinson

**January**
- 4-H Club Meeting
- Prepare for 4-H Days (entries due)
- Kansas Award Applications (area screening)
- MP County Invitational Horse Contest

**February**
- 4-H Club Meeting
- 4-H Days
- Ambassador Applications due
- Development Fund Drive begins

**March**
- 4-H Club meeting
- Regional 4-H Day
- State Ambassador Training
- Jr. Leader Ski Trip
- Beef ID Forms due to office

**April**
- 4-H Club Meeting
- Discovery Days Registrations due

**May**
- 4-H Club meeting
- Livestock Identifications Due
- Noseprints due for Market Steers
- Horse Id's due to Extension Office
- Last Day to add or drop project, May 1
- County 4-H Camp applications due
- Rookie 4-H Camp applications due
- Specialty Camp applications due
- MP County Invitational Beef/Sheep Show

**June**
- 4-H Club Meeting/Tour
- Discovery Days
- Spring Show/Spring Livestock Day
- County 4-H Camp
- Rookie 4-H Camp
- Specialty Camps
- Exchange Trip activities
- Citizenship Washington Focus
- Market Swine and Lamb nominations due for KSF, KJLS (nose prints for lambs, ear notches for swine)
- State Horse Judging Contest

**July**
- 4-H Club meeting
- District 4-H Horse Show
- 4-H Fair (pre-entry needed)
- County Fair
- Make entry for Kansas State Fair
- 4-H Exchange Trip activities

**August**
- 4-H Club meeting
- All Breeds Dairy Show - Salina
- Enter exhibits Kansas State Fair
- Complete record books, award applications
- Sign up for KSF judging teams
- Invitational Dog Show
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4-H Clubs Meeting in these cities or areas:
ñ Marquette & ãLindsborg -- Friendly Fremont
ÀLindsborg & ã Roxbury -- Smoky Valley
ç McPherson -- Good Luck, K-State Wild Kids, Young Pioneers
 économ -- Livewires-Empire Best
é Canton -- Livewires-Empire Best
ê Inman -- Country Cousins
ê Moundridge -- Golden Opportunity
Fifty years from now
it will not matter
What kind of car you drove,
What kind of house you lived in,
How much you had in your bank account,
Nor what your clothes looked like.
But the world may be
A little better because
You were important
In the life of a child.

-anonymous