

Utah 4-H

# Community Handbook

Your Guide to building a 4-H Community through Clubs & Activities



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# Community Club Handbook

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# 1.

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# An Introduction to 4-H



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# An Introduction to 4-H

## What Is 4-H?

4-H is a place where young people discover what they're good at, try new things, and grow with the support of caring adults.

4-H is one of the largest youth development organizations in the country. Supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, state land-grant universities (such as Utah State University), and local county governments, 4-H helps young people become **Beyond Ready** – ready for life, work, and leadership.

4-H serves youth from elementary through high school, offering age-appropriate opportunities that grow alongside them. Every young person belongs and has something valuable to contribute

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## Youth Development in 4-H

In 4-H, youth grow through experiences that connect learning, leadership, and community. Members take part in projects and activities that spark curiosity, while caring adults guide, encourage, and support them along the way.

This partnership helps youth build confidence, responsibility, and a strong sense of belonging – skills that continue long after their time in 4-H.

Research shows that youth involved in 4-H are more likely to contribute to their communities, earn higher grades, practice healthy habits, and explore science and technology (Lerner et al., 2005).

### WHY IT MATTERS

When youth feel supported and engaged in meaningful learning, they begin to see who they are – and who they can become.





## Learn By Doing

The 4-H motto, “Learn by Doing,” captures the heart of the program. Instead of only listening or reading, youth learn through hands-on experiences, service, and leadership.

4-H follows an experiential learning model:

- **Learn:** Youth are introduced to a new idea, skill, or concept.
- **Do:** They take part in a hands-on activity, such as planting a garden, building a robot, sewing a project, or giving a speech.
- **Reflect:** They think about what happened, what worked, and what could be improved.
- **Apply:** They connect what they learned to everyday life and future goals.

Through learning by doing, youth gain both project-specific knowledge and lifelong skills like teamwork, communication, creativity, and problem-solving.

**WHY IT MATTERS** Experience builds confidence, and that confidence lasts far beyond any single project.

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## 4-H Mission Areas

Every 4-H project helps youth grow through hands-on experiences that build skills for life. Projects are organized into three mission areas:

### STEM & Agriculture

Agriculture, engineering, environmental science, technology, and more

### Healthy Living

Nutrition, fitness, mental health, and overall wellness

### Civic Engagement

Civic engagement, leadership, and service

These focus areas give youth meaningful ways to explore interests, build skills, and practice leadership through real experiences that prepare them for future education, careers, and community involvement.

## 4-H Beyond Ready

**Beyond Ready** is a national 4-H initiative focused on preparing youth for life beyond the program. It builds on what 4-H does best: hands-on learning, youth leadership, and caring adult support.

Youth develop real-world skills such as communication, teamwork, adaptability, problem-solving, and service. These experiences help young people feel capable, confident, and prepared for what comes next.

The goal is simple: 4-H aims to prepare youth to be “Beyond Ready” – not just ready to graduate, but ready to thrive in school, work, and their communities. “Beyond Ready” describes a youth who can work well with others, adapt and problem-solve, lead with confidence, grow through challenge, and serve with purpose.

**WHY IT MATTERS** Youth who feel capable and supported are more likely to lead with purpose, serve with compassion, and strengthen their communities.

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## Building Tomorrow's Leaders Today

4-H is more than a club; it's a pathway for growth. Through projects, service, and leadership opportunities, youth gain skills that support success in school, careers, and life.

No matter a young person's interests, there is a place in 4-H to learn, lead, and grow. Every meeting, project, and experience moves youth one step closer to being Beyond Ready.

In 4-H, young people don't just join a program - they join a community where learning, leadership, and belonging come together to make the best better.

## At a Glance: What 4-H Offers

- Hands-on learning through projects and real experiences
- Opportunities to build leadership, confidence, and life skills
- Caring adult mentors and supportive families
- A welcoming community where every youth belongs
- Preparation for life, work, and leadership



## 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 Motto

To Make the Best Better



## References

Lerner, R. M., et al. (2005). Positive youth development, participation in community youth development programs, and community contributions of fifth-grade adolescents: Findings from the first wave of the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development. *Journal of Early Adolescence*, 25(1), 17–71. Retrieved September 2025 from [Lerner, R. M., et al. \(2005\). Positive youth](#)



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## 4-H Community Clubs



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# 4-H Community Clubs: Where Youth Lead & Communities Grow

## What is a 4-H Community Club?

A 4-H Community Club is a local group of youth, families, and caring adults who come together to learn, lead, and grow through 4-H. Clubs are youth-led and adult-supported, creating a place where young people can take responsibility, make decisions, and guide activities with help from trusted mentors.

Each club meets at least nine times per year and serves as a welcoming space for youth ages 5–18 within a neighborhood, city, or county. Meetings focus on hands-on learning, leadership, and service. Every project helps youth build communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and confidence, skills that help them thrive in school, at work, and in their communities.



## Who Makes Up a Community Club

A 4-H Community Club is made up of youth, families, and caring adults who each play an important part in helping the club succeed. A strong club works best when everyone has a role to play.

- **Club Members**

Youth ages 5–18 who learn, lead, and serve through meetings and projects.

- **Teen Leaders**

Older youth who plan and lead meetings, mentor younger members, and model leadership.

- **Families and Caregivers**

Parents, grandparents, and guardians who volunteer, assist with projects, and encourage their child's 4-H journey.

- **Community Club Mentors (Club Leaders)**

Adults who organize meetings, guide youth leadership, and connect the club with county 4-H programs.

- **Project Advisors**

Adults who help smaller groups learn specific skills like cooking, sewing, or robotics.

- **Committees**

Teams of youth and adults who plan service projects, fundraisers, or community events.

- **Other Adults**

Volunteers and local experts who share their time and talents, expanding opportunities for youth.

When everyone contributes, the club becomes a living example of community where youth lead by doing, adults guide with care, and families support one another.



## What Happens in a Community Club

A 4-H Community Club meeting is where fun and learning come together under youth leadership and adult support. Each meeting brings youth, families, and volunteers together to learn new skills, serve their community, and connect with one another.

Every meeting looks a little different. One month might include a leadership game, a public speaking challenge, or a creative art project. Another might focus on planning a food drive, caring for animals, or cleaning up a local park.

Youth lead the way by sharing ideas, running meetings, and planning activities. Adults are there to support and encourage. Together, they create a safe space for everyone to learn, grow, and belong.

Each meeting helps members build the life skills that make them Beyond Ready—ready to lead with confidence, serve with purpose, and strengthen their communities.



## Why the 4-H Model Works

The 4-H Community Club model balances youth leadership with adult guidance and family support. Teen Leaders plan and lead meetings, while adults provide structure, encouragement, and safety. Families share in the process, creating a team where everyone has a voice and a purpose. This shared approach builds a positive environment where youth, adults, and families all participate, learn, and grow together. It helps youth:

**Gain real leadership and decision-making experience.**

**Explore new interests through hands-on projects.**

**Build life skills while serving their community.**



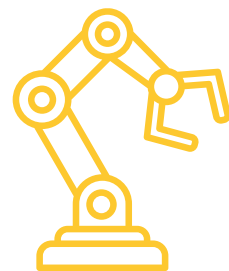


## Project Clubs: Learning by Interest

In addition to regular meetings, many 4-H Community Clubs include smaller, interest-based Project Clubs that focus on specific topics or skills. A Project Club might explore gardening in the spring, cooking in the summer, or robotics in the fall.

Each project involves at least six hours of learning and gives youth the chance to explore their passions, build new skills, and develop mastery in areas they care about most.

Youth belong to the main Community Club and can choose the Project Clubs that interest them. Adults share their time, knowledge, and mentorship to make these opportunities possible. Throughout the year, families and community members contribute their talents, helping youth plan service, teach peers, and truly learn by doing.



## The Heart of 4-H: Growing Together Through Community

At their heart, 4-H Community Clubs are about more than meetings or projects. They're about people. Youth discover their strengths and independence. Adults share their time, experience, and encouragement. Families find connection and belonging.

Together, they create a space where hands-on learning builds mastery, leadership grows naturally, and every community grows stronger.

This is the lasting power of 4-H: youth who lead with confidence, adults who guide with care, and families and communities that grow stronger together.



### At a Glance: 4-H Community Clubs

- ✿ Youth-led, adult-supported
- ✿ Open to youth ages 5–18
- ✿ Hands-on learning that builds life skills
- ✿ Meet at least nine times per year
- ✿ Opportunities for leadership, service, & Project Clubs
- ✿ Families & communities growing together
- ✿ Welcoming, inclusive spaces where every youth feels they belong



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## 4-H Community Club Meetings



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# 4-H Community Club Meetings Where Youth Learn, Lead, and Belong

## The Purpose of Community Club Meetings

Community Club meetings are the heartbeat of a 4-H Community Club. They provide youth with a place to belong, opportunities to practice leadership, and the freedom to learn by doing. With caring adults serving as mentors, meetings become spaces where young people lead with confidence and families share in the journey.

During Community Club meetings, members learn about broader 4-H opportunities that support growth beyond individual projects. These include leadership, public speaking, demonstrations, record books (portfolios that help youth reflect on learning and progress), teamwork, and community service. While Project Clubs focus on specific interests such as robotics and gardening, Community Club meetings help youth build essential life and leadership skills that prepare them to be Beyond Ready for life, work, and citizenship.

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## How Meetings Make a Difference

Well-planned meetings do more than fill time. They help youth:

- Connect with peers, share interests, and build friendships
- Practice leadership, communication, and citizenship skills
- Experience the 4-H model of learning by doing
- Develop a strong sense of belonging within their club and the larger 4-H community
- Grow through opportunities at the local, county, state, and national levels



Each meeting supports youth development in meaningful and lasting ways.





## Youth-Led, Adult-Supported

Every 4-H Community Club meeting is designed so youth can take the lead while adults provide guidance and encouragement. This balance gives young people real leadership experience while ensuring meetings remain safe, structured, and supportive.

Youth officers, such as presidents, secretaries, and treasurers, lead the business portion of meetings. Teen leaders or volunteers may guide learning activities or group reflections. Adults serve as mentors, supporting youth ideas and helping them build planning, organization, and teamwork skills.

Adults also help ensure meetings are safe, respectful, and supportive for all youth.

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## Meeting Frequency and Format

Community Clubs hold at least nine meetings per year, with many choosing to meet monthly or seasonally. Meetings typically last 60-90 minutes and may be held in person, virtually, or in hybrid formats.

Clubs are encouraged to adapt meeting schedules and formats to fit the needs of their members while keeping youth engagement, consistency, and connection as top priorities.

## Key Elements of Every Meeting

Each Community Club meeting includes four essential parts:

**Business**

**Learning**

**Activity (Do)**

**Closing**



- **Business:** Planning, reports, and decision-making led by youth officers
- **Learning:** A youth-led lesson, workshop, or guest presentation on topics such as leadership, public speaking, teamwork, or record books
- **Activity (Do):** A service project, game, competition, committee meeting, or social activity
- **Closing:** Reflection, application of learning, and reminders about upcoming events

These elements align with the 4-H experiential learning model: Learn, Do, Reflect, Apply.

This approach ensures meetings are more than a checklist. They become experiences that build both practical skills and personal growth.

## Planning in Advance

Youth leadership teams prepare agendas, assign roles, and plan activities with guidance from Community Club Mentors. Planning ahead helps meetings run smoothly, keeps members engaged, and gives youth valuable experience in responsibility, leadership, and teamwork.

## Suggested Topics for the 4-H Year

Youth leaders should plan a balanced mix of business, learning, and activity topics.

- **Business:** Leadership elections, event planning, committee meetings, project fairs
- **Learning:** Leadership skills, public speaking, teamwork, portfolio development, contest preparation
- **Activities:** Service projects, games, competitions, field trips, and celebrations



# Examples of Community Club Meetings

Community Club meetings can take many forms. Here are a few examples:

## Meeting A - Leadership and Teamwork Focus

- *Business (20 min)*: Youth officers lead a discussion to plan upcoming county events and select a club service project
- *Learning (15 min)*: Teen Leader presents a lesson on teamwork and communication
- *Activity (20 min)*: Small-group "Team Tower" challenge using marshmallows and spaghetti
- *Closing (5 min)*: Reflection and reminders about the next meeting

## Meeting B - Public Speaking and Demonstrations

- *Business (15 min)*: Committee reports and contest announcements
- *Learning (25 min)*: A few of the youth demonstrate public speaking skills by giving short "How-To" demonstrations
- *Activity (15 min)*: Peer feedback, with members sharing compliments and ideas for improvement
- *Closing (5 min)*: Recap of what was learned and next steps to enter county-level demonstrations

## Meeting C - Service

- *Business (10 min)*: Committee reports on the food drive
- *Learning (10 min)*: Guest speaker from the local food pantry shares how donations make a difference
- *Activity (30 min)*: Members sort and pack donated food or collect donations from the community
- *Closing (10 min)*: Reflection circle on service and teamwork

Each meeting blends learning, doing, and reflection to help youth grow in leadership, communication, and community engagement.



## The Impact of Community Clubs

Community Club meetings leave an impact far beyond the time spent together. They shape leaders, strengthen families, and build connections that reach into schools, neighborhoods, and future careers.

When youth lead, families support, and communities engage, every meeting becomes a step toward a stronger, more connected world.



## At a Glance: Community Club Meetings

- Held at least nine times per year
- Youth-led and adult-supported
- Include business, learning, and activities
- Typically 60-90 minutes
- Focus on building belonging, leadership, and life skills



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## Youth Leadership in a 4-H Community Club



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# Youth Leadership in a 4-H Community Club

## Purpose

Youth Leaders are at the heart of every 4-H Community Club. They guide meetings, make decisions, and help set the direction of the club with encouragement from caring adult mentors. This youth-led, adult-supported structure gives young people meaningful opportunities to learn by doing, practice leadership and communication skills, and serve as positive role models for others.

Youth leadership helps members build confidence, responsibility, and a strong sense of belonging. These skills support success in school, careers, and life.

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## Why Youth Leadership Matters

Today's world is changing quickly, and strong communities need leaders who can listen, think critically, and act with courage and compassion. Leadership is not something reserved for adults. Young people have the ability to lead, contribute, and make a difference right now.

Leadership skills such as communication, decision-making, teamwork, and problem-solving grow through practice. When youth are given real opportunities to lead while they are still learning and growing, they build confidence that carries into school, future careers, and community life.

In 4-H, youth do not just learn about leadership: they practice it. With the guidance of caring adults, young people lead meetings, plan activities, and serve others. These experiences help youth see themselves as capable leaders today and prepare them to lead with purpose in the future.





## Role of Youth Leaders

Leadership roles in 4-H Community Clubs are flexible and may vary based on the size of the club, the ages of members, and the goals of the group. The roles described below offer a suggested framework, and clubs may add, combine, or adjust roles so younger members can take on age-appropriate responsibilities and every youth has an opportunity to contribute and grow.

Youth leaders may be elected by club members or appointed by Community Club Mentors. Leadership opportunities are matched to members' ages, interests, and abilities, with caring adult mentors present to support youth leaders, ask guiding questions, and help with planning and decision-making. No matter how roles are filled, youth lead in a supportive environment where learning and growth come first.



## Types of Leadership Roles in 4-H Community Clubs

In 4-H Community Clubs, youth take on many leadership roles. Some lead pledges or activities, some teach skills, and others help plan service projects. Together, these opportunities allow youth to practice leadership in ways that match their interests and abilities.

### Community Club - Officer Team (Presidency)

The Officer Team is a group of youth leaders who work together to guide and organize the club. These leadership roles focus on helping the club run smoothly and supporting youth-led decision-making.

Club officers plan meeting agendas, meet with adult mentors, and help ensure meetings and activities run smoothly. Each officer has a specific responsibility, but they work together as a team to support participation, organization, and leadership within the club.

This shared leadership approach helps create meetings where youth lead with confidence, everyone has a voice, and the club stays focused on learning, service, and connection.

- **President:** Leads club meetings, works with officers to create agendas and calendars, and helps build connection and belonging among members
- **Vice President:** Assists the President, fills in when needed, and supports committee chairs
- **Secretary:** Records meeting notes, maintains club records, and helps keep members informed
- **Communication Specialist:** helps document club activities, share club news, and celebrate member accomplishments
- **Treasurer (optional):** Manages club funds, helps develop budgets, and reports on finances when the club chooses to collect or handle money

Additional optional roles may include **Historian**, **Recreation Leader**, or **Song Leader**. These are examples only, and clubs may create or adapt roles to best fit their needs



## Community Club – Committee Roles

Committees allow youth to lead in smaller teams focused on specific goals and interests.

- **Committee Youth Chairs:** Lead committees such as service, fundraising or project fairs. Guide meetings, delegate tasks, and report progress to the Officer Team
- **Committee Youth Member:** Join committees of interest, help plan and carry out activities, and take responsibility for assigned tasks

Committees provide leadership opportunities for youth of all ages and experience levels.

## Project Club Leadership

Project Clubs offer additional leadership opportunities within smaller, interest-based groups. These roles mirror Community Club leadership on a smaller scale and help youth build confidence and skill.

- **Project Club Officers:** Lead Project Clubs in roles such as President, Vice President, or Secretary
- **Youth Project Advisor:** Helps plan and lead a project, such as cooking, gardening, or robotics, with support from an Adult Project Advisor
- **Assistant Youth Leader:** Supports activities and helps guide younger members

## Leadership Opportunities Beyond the Club

4-H offers leadership opportunities beyond the Community Club at the county, regional, state, and national levels. These experiences help youth connect with peers, build leadership skills, and represent their clubs and communities.

- **Countywide:** Ambassadors, Teen Council members, camp leaders, workshop presenters, and event organizers
- **Regional, State, and National:** State and Regional Ambassadors, TRY Teams, Project Ambassadors, Design Teams, camp counselors, scholarships, and travel programs



**TIP:** Contact your county 4-H staff for details about opportunities, applications, and requirements.





## Resources for Youth Leaders

Youth leaders are never alone in 4-H. Support, training, and encouragement are always available. Youth leaders can access support through:

**County  
4-H Staff**

**County Teen  
Council**

**Leadership Guides  
& Online Resources**

**Utah State  
4-H**



- **County 4-H Staff:** Provide mentoring, training, and guidance
- **County Teen Council:** Peer leadership and development opportunities
- **Leadership Guides and Online Resources:** Handbooks, training modules, and online tools available through county, state, and national 4-H programs
- **Utah State 4-H:** offers additional state-level resources to support youth leadership and learning

For more information, see Appendix or visit:

- [utah4h.org](http://utah4h.org)
- [extension.usu.edu/utah4h/programs/youth-leadership-development](http://extension.usu.edu/utah4h/programs/youth-leadership-development)



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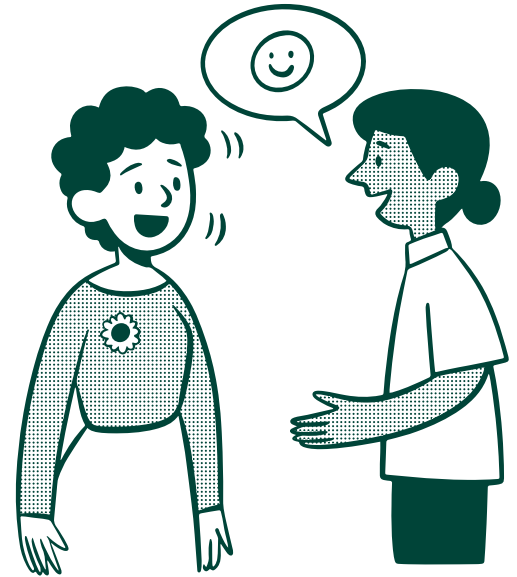


Youth Leadership  
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## The Power of Youth Leadership

Youth leadership in 4-H is about more than holding a title. It is about helping young people build confidence, leadership skills, and a strong sense of purpose as they prepare to be Beyond Ready for life. Whether leading a meeting, guiding a project, or serving on a committee, every role helps young people discover their strengths and step into responsibility.

These experiences prepare youth to lead with confidence and purpose in school, careers, and communities. That is the lasting power of youth leadership in 4-H.



## At a Glance: Youth Leadership in 4-H

- Youth lead meetings, plan activities, and help set club direction
- Leadership skills grow through real practice and support
- Officer roles may include President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and more
- Committees offer leadership opportunities for youth of all ages and experience levels
- Project Clubs provide smaller-scale leadership experiences
- Leadership extends to county, state, and national opportunities

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## Adult Volunteers in a 4-H Community Club



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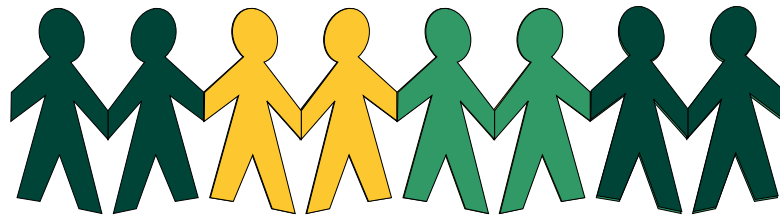
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# Adult Volunteers in a 4-H Community Club

## Purpose

4-H Community Clubs thrive because of caring adults who guide, support and encourage youth leadership. Each adult role is unique, but all share the same purpose: creating a safe, supportive environment where youth can learn, lead, and grow.

Adults serve as mentors and advisors rather than directors. Youth lead the learning and decision-making, while adults provide guidance, supervision, and encouragement as needed. Together, youth and adults build strong clubs where everyone belongs and grows Beyond Ready for life.



## Who Can Serve in a 4-H Community Club?

Any caring adult - parents, grandparents, guardians, or community members - can serve in a 4-H Community Club. Clubs are strongest when adults bring a variety of experiences and share responsibilities.

Adults may serve in a variety of volunteer roles that support youth leadership and learning. Each role has a different focus, but all support youth leadership and learning.



## Roles for Adults

### Family Members and Caregivers

Families play a vital role in every 4-H Community Club. Their encouragement and involvement create the foundation for youth success.

Each family or caregiver is expected to contribute at least 10 volunteer hours per year in a way that fits their strengths and schedule. This may include serving as a Mentor, Advisor, Activity Volunteer, or helping in other meaningful ways.

To keep clubs strong and share responsibilities, each family or caregiver is expected to serve as a Project Volunteer at least once every one to two years. This allows families to share their interests and talents while giving youth opportunities to explore a wide range of projects.

### Community Club Mentors (Club Volunteers)

Community Club Mentors provide overall organization and leadership support for the club. They create a welcoming environment, guide youth leaders without taking over, and connect families with county, state, and national 4-H opportunities. This role may be shared among two or more adults.

#### Responsibilities

- Managing enrollment and required forms
- Securing meeting space and coordinating with the county Extension office
- Coaching youth officers as they plan meetings and activities
- Encouraging leadership, teamwork, and Beyond Ready skills
- Welcoming new families, explaining expectations, and coordinating volunteers

#### Time Commitment

An average of about 4 hours per month, plus attendance at scheduled club meetings.



## Committee Advisors

Committee Advisors support youth-led committees such as service, fundraising, or activities. Their role is to guide, not lead, by helping youth plan, organize, and carry out their ideas while building confidence and leadership skills.

Committee Advisors do not need to be experts. Being supportive, encouraging, and available is what matters most.

### Responsibilities

- Meeting with committees monthly or as needed
- Teaching youth how to run a meetings, set goals, and create agendas
- Providing logistical support for activities and events
- Ensuring each committee has a youth chairperson
- Helping youth work through challenges and problem-solve

### Time Commitment

1-2 hours per month, plus attendance at community club meetings when possible.



## Project Club Advisors

Project Club Advisors support youth learning in a specific project area such as sewing, robotics, livestock, or cooking. Their role is to guide hands-on learning while connecting projects to leadership and life skills.

Project Club Advisors do not need to be experts. They simply need to be willing to learn alongside youth and create a supportive environment where youth can explore, practice, and grow.

### Responsibilities

- Organizing and guiding a small group of youth around a shared interest
- Providing at least six hours of instruction or activities over time
- Encouraging goal setting, project completion, and reflection
- Involving families and community members when possible
- Helping youth showcase or share their work

### Time Commitment

At least 10 hours per year for each project club.

## Assistant Project Volunteer

Assistant Project Volunteers help Project Club Advisors with activities and organization. They are not the primary leaders but provide important support to ensure activities run smoothly.

## Adult Project Advisor (for youth-led Project Clubs)

When a youth serves as a Project Advisor, an adult Project Advisor is present to ensure safety and provide guidance as needed. The youth leads the project, while the adult supports, encourages, and assists behind the scenes.

## Activity Volunteers

Activity Volunteers support one-time events such as service projects, field trips, contests, or celebrations. Their role is to assist with logistics while ensuring youth (especially Teen Leaders) take the lead.

### Time Commitment

A few hours of preparation plus time during the event

## Other Ways to Help

Adults with limited time can still make a meaningful difference. Even small contributions strengthen the club and expand opportunities for youth.

- Hosting a learning activity or workshop
- Assisting at an event or project
- Sharing skills such as photography, carpentry, or technology
- Connecting the club with community resources or guest speakers
- Helping with publicity, marketing, or outreach

Roles can range from one-time commitments to ongoing leadership, depending on availability and interests.

## Resources for Adult Volunteers

Adult volunteers are never alone in 4-H. Training, guidance, and ongoing support are always available.

For training, resources, and volunteer support, see the Appendix or scan the QR code to visit [utah4h.org](https://utah4h.org):

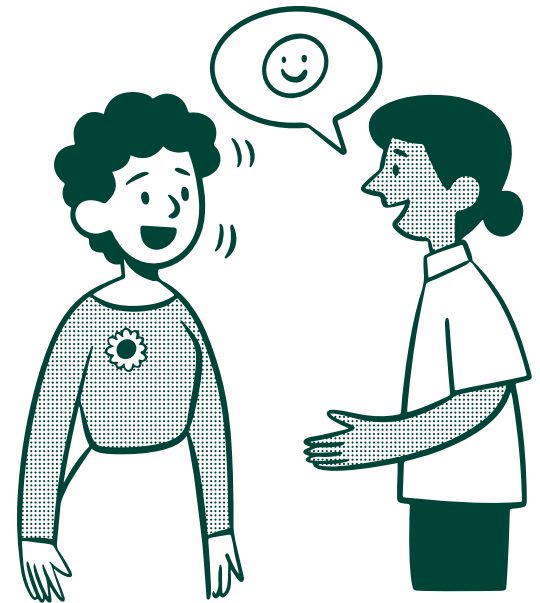


## How Adult Volunteers Make a Difference

Adult volunteers make youth leadership possible. By mentoring, encouraging, and sharing their skills, adults give young people the space to lead with confidence.

Guidance builds independence. Projects open doors to new skills. Caring adults help create a community where youth feel supported, capable, and ready to thrive.

This is how adults make 4-H more than a program. They help build a community where youth leadership flourishes and families belong.



## At a Glance: Adult Volunteers

- Adult volunteers make 4-H Community Clubs possible
- Adults guide, support, and encourage youth leadership
- Families contribute time and talents in ways that fit their schedules
- Roles range from one-time help to ongoing leadership
- Every volunteer helps create safe, supportive spaces where youth can thrive

# 6.

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## Family & Caregiver Involvement Expectations



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# Family and Caregiver Involvement Expectations

Families and caregivers play a vital role in every 4-H Community Club. When families get involved, clubs grow stronger, and youth gain the encouragement they need to thrive. Strong clubs are built when families show up and grow together.

## Expectations for Families and Caregivers

Families and caregivers can support their clubs by:

- **Encouraging and supporting youth:** Provide transportation, assist with Project Clubs, and cheer on their efforts.
- **Promoting the club:** Share information with neighbors, friends, and local networks to help others discover 4-H opportunities.
- **Supporting events and leaders:** Attend project fairs, join in service projects, volunteer as a chaperone, and lend a hand at meetings or activities.
- **Contributing time:** Volunteer at least 10 hours per year in a way that fits your family's schedule. Often through one of the adult leadership roles in a 4-H Community Club.
- **Serving as a Project Volunteer:** Each family is expected to share their skills and interests by leading or assisting with a Project Club at least once every one to two years. This shared responsibility ensures that every youth has opportunities to explore new interests and keeps the club vibrant and growing.

---

## Flexibility for Families

Every family's situation is unique, and 4-H is designed to fit around real life. If regular volunteering isn't possible, families can still make a meaningful difference by:

- Helping with communications such as the club website, social media, or newsletters
- Lending a hand at events or activities
- Providing behind-the-scenes support for projects or club logistics



Even small acts of help make a big impact. Every contribution, large or small, keeps the club running smoothly and ensures youth have what they need to succeed.



## How Families Help Community Clubs Thrive

Family and caregiver involvement transforms a club from a group of individuals into a connected community. Every hour volunteered, every ride to a meeting, and every word of encouragement build an environment where youth feel supported, families feel included, and the club grows stronger together.

When families participate, they model teamwork, generosity, and service. These are the same qualities 4-H helps youth develop and carry into every part of life. Together, they make 4-H a place where everyone belongs and grows Beyond Ready for life.



## At a Glance: Family Expectations

- Support your child’s 4-H involvement
- Contribute at least 10 hours each year to the club
- Serve as a Project Volunteer at least once every one to two years
- Attend and assist with club events when possible
- Promote the club by sharing with friends, neighbors, and online

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## Committees in a 4-H Community Club



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# Committees in a 4-H Community Club

## Purpose of Committees in a 4-H Community Club

Community Club Committees are small groups of youth, supported by an adult advisor, who focus on one specific area of the club such as service, fundraising, education, or activities. Committees give members more opportunities to actively participate in planning, organizing, and carrying out the work of the club.

Committees reflect the 4-H model of youth-led, adult-supported by placing youth in leadership roles while caring adults provide guidance, encouragement, and support.

## Suggested Committees

Each club may create committees that fit its needs, goals, and community. The following are common examples, and clubs are encouraged to add or adapt committees as needed.

- ◊ **Recruitment Committee:** Welcomes new members, helps them get involved, and supports outreach efforts to grow the club.
- ◊ **Activity Committee:** Plans social events, team-building activities, and special programs that help members connect and enjoy learning together.
- ◊ **Training/Education Committee:** Helps plan workshops, invite guest speakers, or organize youth-led lessons that build skills and leadership.
- ◊ **Service Committee:** Designs and carries out community service projects such as food drives, park cleanups, or donation campaigns.
- ◊ **Project Fair Committee:** Organizes the Project Fair, including planning, setup, judging coordination, and recognition.
- ◊ **Fundraising Committee:** Coordinates sponsorships, donations, or events that support club activities and service projects.
- ◊ **Communications/Publicity Committee:** Shares the club's story through photos, newsletters, news articles, or social media.
- ◊ **Healthy Living or Special Events Committees:** Promote wellness activities, plan celebrations, or organize special events for members and families.





Committees may plan Community Club activities, organize events, or focus on special projects. Clubs can create new committees at any time to match member interests or emerging needs.

## Benefits of Committees

Committees help clubs run smoothly while creating meaningful leadership opportunities for youth.

### Leadership Practice

Youth learn how to run meetings, make decisions, and work as a team.

### Shared Responsibility

The workload is spread out so no one person carries all the planning.

### Stronger Programs

Smaller teams allow clubs to offer more projects, service, and activities.

### Belonging & Engagement

Every member has a chance to contribute ideas and talents.

## How Committees Strengthen the Club

Committees are where leadership turns into action. They give youth meaningful responsibility, strengthen teamwork, and ensure every member has a voice. With committees in place, clubs accomplish more, leadership opportunities grow, and belonging deepens.

The result is a club where youth lead with confidence, adults support with care, and the whole community grows stronger together.



## At a Glance: Committees

- Youth-led, adult-supported small groups
- Focus on one area such as service, fundraising, activities, etc.
- Provide additional leadership opportunities for members
- Spread the workload across the club
- Strengthen belonging and engagement



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## 4-H Project Area Clubs



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# 4-H Project Area Clubs

## 4-H Project Areas: Learning by Doing, Growing Beyond Ready

A 4-H project is a hands-on learning experience in a specific subject area such as cooking, sewing, gardening, robotics, or livestock. Every project is designed to help youth:

- ◉ **Learn By Doing** through real, hands-on activities
- ◉ **Build life skills** like responsibility, problem-solving, and teamwork
- ◉ **Grow Beyond Ready** by developing the confidence and abilities they need to succeed in school, work, and life

**Beyond Ready** is a 4-H initiative that helps young people prepare for their future by strengthening essential skills such as communication, adaptability, leadership, and service. These skills help youth thrive in a changing world.

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## Popular 4-H Project Areas

4-H projects can cover nearly any area that sparks curiosity & builds skills, including:

- Animal science (beef, sheep, swine, poultry, rabbits, or horses)
- Gardening & horticulture
- Cooking & nutrition
- Sewing, quilting, or fashion design
- STEM & robotics
- Woodworking or construction
- Leadership & citizenship
- Environmental science & outdoor skills
- Arts & crafts
- Photography and videography
- Childcare & babysitting
- Entrepreneurship & business
- Dog training or small pets
- Healthy living & fitness
- Creative writing or public speaking



## Where To Begin

To get started, families and volunteers can explore the ***Discover 4-H Clubs*** curriculum series. These ready-to-use guides include step-by-step activities for dozens of project areas, making it easy for new or experienced volunteers to lead successful, hands-on learning experiences.



Discover 4-H  
Curriculum

Whatever their interest, youth learn by doing through real-world projects that teach them how to think critically, work collaboratively, and lead confidently—the same skills that help them grow Beyond Ready for life.

## What is a 4-H Project Club?

A Project Club (sometimes called an Activity Club) is a smaller group within a Community Club where youth focus on a single project together.

- Typically 6–8 youth with 1–2 adult or youth advisors (with adult supervision)
  - Group size may vary depending on the project
- Youth may join more than one Project Club
- Advisors do not need to be experts. 4-H offers curriculum and support to help volunteers learn alongside youth.

Project Clubs are designed to be welcoming, flexible, and manageable for both youth and volunteers.





## How Project Clubs Work

A Project Club (sometimes called an Activity Club) is a smaller group within a Community Club where youth focus on a single project together.

### Duration

Each project includes about six hours of intentional learning, which may be spread across weekly meetings, monthly sessions, or a single-day or weekend experience.



### Meetings

Each meeting includes pledges, announcements or brief business, and hands-on project learning. Project Clubs meet outside of regular Community Club meetings.



### Leadership

Youth may serve as officers such as President, Vice President, or Secretary, making Project Clubs an excellent entry point for younger members to practice leadership.



### Flexibility

Project Clubs can be simple or more involved, depending on the goals of the group.



Project Clubs may be led by an adult advisor, a youth advisor with adult supervision, or a combination of both.

# How Project Clubs Work in Action

## Examples of Project Clubs

Project Clubs can look very different depending on age, interests, and setting. The examples below show just a few ways clubs bring projects to life.

### Cooking Club



Six to eight members ages 8–10 meet weekly for six summer sessions. A 15-year-old Youth Project Club Advisor leads cookie and cupcake baking lessons, supported by an Adult Project Advisor who is their grandparent. Meetings include pledges, hands-on learning, and reflection. Members enter their baked goods in the county fair.

### Gardening Club



Six youth ages 9–12 meet weekly in the spring to plant and care for a vegetable garden. A parent and a local master gardener serve as advisors. Youth organize watering schedules, teach mini-lessons, and track progress. In August, they donate produce to a local food pantry.

### Dog Training Club



Seven youth ages 12–16 meet weekly for six weeks with their dogs. A Project Club Advisor with dog training experience leads sessions. Meetings include pledges, reminders, and training practice. Youth later demonstrate skills at a club showcase.

### Robotics Club



Ten middle school youth meet twice a month for three months to build and program robots. Youth serve as officers, with two parents as Project Club Advisors. Meetings include planning, hands-on work, and teamwork. Youth showcase their robots at a competition.

### Sewing Club



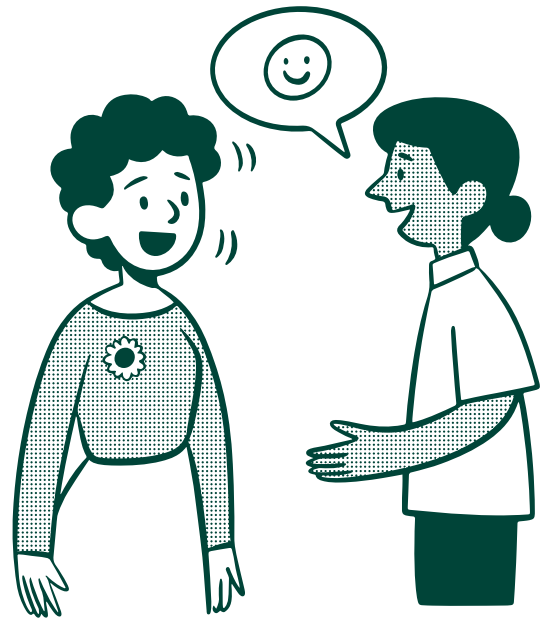
Twelve youth ages 10–12 attend a one-day, six-hour sewing camp. A teen Youth Project Advisor and a community Adult Project Advisor guide youth in making drawstring backpacks. The day includes pledges, hands-on sewing, reflection, and a project showcase. Youth later enter their projects in the county fair.



## Project Clubs Make a Difference

Project Clubs are where passion meets practice. They give youth the chance to dive deep into an interest, build skills through Learn by Doing, and practice leadership in a smaller, supportive setting.

Whether a project lasts a single day or an entire year, youth gain confidence, friendships, and life skills that prepare them to thrive in 4-H and beyond. Together, Project Clubs and Community Clubs ensure every young person has a place to learn, lead, and belong.



### At a Glance: 4-H Project Clubs

- Smaller groups within a Community Club
- Focus on one specific project area
- Usually 6–8 youth with 1–2 advisors
- At least six hours of intentional learning
- Build life skills and leadership through 4-H’s Learn by Doing approach

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## Project Fairs in 4-H Community Club



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# Project Fairs in a 4-H Community Club

## What is a Project Fair?

**Project areas** are the main way 4-H helps youth learn life skills through hands-on experiences. A **Project Fair** is a simple, welcoming event where youth and families explore project options, ask questions, meet project leaders, and sign up for Project Area Clubs.

In short, a Project Fair is the club's sign-up event for Project Area Clubs, helping youth move from interest to enrollment.

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## When and How Project Fairs Happen

Project Fairs may be held during a Community Club meeting or on a separate night, such as a family open house. Many clubs offer Project Fairs 2-4 times per year, especially when new projects begin in different seasons.

Project Fairs are usually set up as an open-house experience. Youth and families move freely from booth to booth, learning about different projects and deciding what to join.

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## What A Project Fair Looks Like

Each project is represented by a table or booth. Displays do not need to be fancy. A clear, simple setup works best and may include:

- ◉ A table sign with the project name
- ◉ A short description or flyer
- ◉ A sign-up sheet (or QR code)
- ◉ Optional: a few example projects or photos

\*Clarity matters more than decoration.





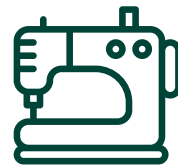
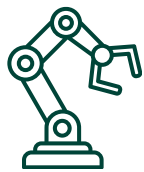
## How Youth Sign Up for a Project Club

Clubs may use one or more sign-up methods:

- Sign-up sheets at each booth
- QR codes linking to an online form
- Paper selection forms turned in before leaving
- Club websites, email links, or digital tools

No matter the method, the goal is the same: youth leave the Project Fair knowing which Project Clubs they joined and what happens next.

**Helpful Tip:** Clubs should clearly share sign-up deadlines and confirmation plans (for example, “You will receive project details within one week”).



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## Joining More Than One Project Club

Youth may join more than one Project Club, depending on interest, schedule, and space available. Many youth enjoy combining a hands-on project (like cooking or sewing) with a STEM or leadership project.

## What Youth and Families Can Expect

At a Project Fair, youth and families can expect to:

- Explore projects and discover new interests
- Meet adult or youth Project Club Advisors
- Learn meeting dates, time commitments, and supply needs
- Ask questions before signing up
- Choose projects that fit interests and schedules

After signing up, families receive project details and next steps. Youth attend the first Project Club meeting and begin hands-on learning with their group.

## Planning Tips for Community Clubs

A few simple practices help Project Fairs run smoothly:

- Share meeting dates and locations when possible
- List age ranges if projects are age-specific
- Explain supply needs or costs ahead of time
- Clarify space limits and offer waitlists if needed

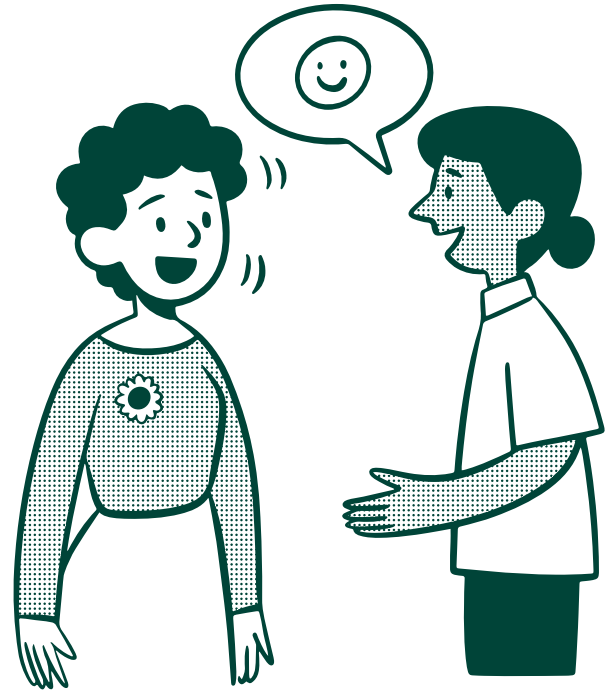
Some projects have capacity considerations (for example, kitchen projects). When space is limited, clubs may use simple guidelines to share opportunities fairly.



## The Value of Project Fairs

Project Fairs open the door to discovery. They help youth try new things, connect with peers, and choose projects that match their interests. They also give adults and teen leaders a chance to share skills and mentor others.

Every Project Fair supports youth choice, builds excitement for Learn by Doing, and helps young people find a place where they can learn, lead, and belong.



## At a Glance: Project Fairs

- A simple event where youth explore and sign up for Project Clubs
- Held during a Community Club meeting or on a separate night
- Open-house style, with families going booth to booth
- Youth may join more than one Project Club
- Displays can be simple: a table sign, flyer, and sign-up sheet
- Helps youth discover interests, build skills, and grow Beyond Ready



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## Beyond the 4-H Community Club



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# Beyond the 4-H Community Club

## Opportunities Beyond the Club

The Community Club is where the 4-H journey begins, but opportunities for growth do not end there. Beyond the club, youth can demonstrate their skills, step into new leadership roles, and be recognized for their hard work.

From county events to state and national programs, 4-H offers many ways for youth to build confidence, leadership, and life skills that carry into school, careers, and community life. Youth are encouraged to participate at their own pace, choosing opportunities that fit their interests, time, and readiness.

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## Portfolios and Record Books

Portfolios (also called Record Books) help youth track goals, skills, and accomplishments throughout the year. They include reflections on projects, leadership, service, and learning. Youth can practice record keeping right in their Community Club by:

- ▶ Setting goals during meetings
- ▶ Reflecting on what they learned after activities or projects
- ▶ Recording leadership roles, service, and project progress

Portfolios help youth prepare for recognition, scholarships, contests, and future careers by building organization, reflection, and goal-setting skills.

Utah 4-H provides guidance at:  
[extension.usu.edu/utah4h/more/4-h-portfolios](https://extension.usu.edu/utah4h/more/4-h-portfolios)

Scan the QR code to visit the page!





## County Fair

The county fair gives youth a chance to showcase their work, receive helpful feedback, and celebrate achievement. Youth may display items such as food projects, sewing, photography, livestock, STEM projects, and more.

The focus is growth and learning. Youth receive encouragement and constructive feedback that helps them build confidence and improve their skills.

## Achievement Night

Achievement Nights celebrate youth accomplishments in projects, leadership, service, and participation. These events recognize effort, growth, and dedication, not just awards or ribbons, and help youth feel proud of their 4-H journey.

## County and State Contests

Contests give youth opportunities to practice skills, build confidence, and challenge themselves in a supportive environment.

- ◀ **Demonstrations:** Youth practice public speaking by showing how to do something, such as baking bread, grooming an animal, sewing a project, or programming a robot
- ◀ **Public Speaking:** Prepared or impromptu speeches
- ◀ **Judging Contests:** Evaluating animals, food, or projects
- ◀ **STEM Challenges:** Robotics, engineering, or problem-solving events
- ◀ **Talent or Communication Showcases**

Youth can practice demonstrations and contests right in their Community Club meetings, starting small and building confidence before participating at the county or state level.

Most entries and materials are submitted online through county or state 4-H systems. Community Club Mentors and county staff are available to help families understand how and where to submit entries.

## Leadership Beyond the Club

Older youth can expand their leadership through opportunities at the county, state, and national levels. These roles help youth grow confidence, responsibility, and a strong sense of purpose.

Examples include:

- **County Ambassadors and Teen Council:** Lead local events, support younger members, and provide youth voice.
- **State 4-H Ambassadors:** Represent Utah 4-H at events and conferences
- **TRY Teams (Teens Reaching Youth):** Teach younger members about topics such as STEM, healthy living, or livestock
- **State Project Ambassadors:** Serve as leaders in project areas like healthy living, livestock, horse, or STEM
- **Design Teams:** Help plan state-level events such as Teen Summit, State Contests, or leadership camps

## Camps and Conferences

Camps and conferences offer immersive experiences where youth grow friendships, independence, and leadership skills.

- **County Camps:** Local day or overnight camps focused on fun, teamwork, and skill-building.
- **State Camps and Retreats:** Events such as Teen Summit or project-specific camps in livestock, STEM, sewing, and more.
- **Leadership Retreats:** Multi-day experiences centered on communication, teamwork, and leadership growth.

## Other Opportunities:

Skills gained in 4-H open doors to even more experiences, including:

- Earn college scholarships
- Regional or international service trips
- Leadership roles in school or community organizations
- STEM and project-focused events such as maker fairs, robotics challenges, or innovation contests
- National programs like National 4-H Congress, Citizenship Washington Focus, leadership summits, national contests, and international exchanges



## From First Steps to Future Leadership

From their first demonstration at a club meeting to representing Utah at a state or national event, youth in 4-H grow step by step. Each experience builds on the one before it, helping young people develop confidence, responsibility, and leadership skills over time.

Through projects, contests, service, and leadership opportunities, youth practice public speaking, teamwork, problem-solving, and decision-making in real and meaningful ways. These experiences help them move from trying something new to leading with confidence.

What begins as a small step in a Community Club can grow into a lifetime of leadership, service, and success. That is the power of 4-H: preparing young people not just for the next opportunity, but for the future they are building.



## At a Glance: Beyond the Club

- Practice public speaking and teaching through demonstrations
- Prepare for scholarships and careers with portfolios and record books
- Showcase mastery and achievement at fairs and contests
- Expand leadership at the county, state, and national levels
- Build friendships, teamwork, and leadership at camps and conferences



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## Resources for 4-H Community Clubs



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# Resources for 4-H Community Clubs

4-H Community Clubs thrive because youth and adult leaders are supported with tools, training, and mentoring at every level. From ready-to-use project guides to leadership handbooks, resources are always available to help clubs succeed.

No club is expected to figure things out alone. County and state staff, curriculum, and community support work together to help every club create meaningful, engaging experiences for youth.

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## Curriculum for Clubs and Projects

4-H offers a wide variety of **ready-to-use curriculum and activity guides** that make planning easier for both youth and adults. These resources are designed to support hands-on learning and leadership development.

Examples include:

- ◀ **Discover 4-H Curriculum:** Short, engaging activities designed for Community Club meetings and group learning.
- ◀ **Project Guides:** Step-by-step lessons across a wide range of project areas, including STEM, animals, sewing, healthy living, gardening, leadership, and more.
- ◀ **Activity Ideas:** Ready-to-use activities for icebreakers, team building, project introductions, and skill practice.

These resources help ensure that meetings and projects follow the 4-H “Learn by Doing” approach while helping leaders feel confident and prepared.



## Resources for Youth Leaders

Youth leaders are at the heart of 4-H and receive support to grow their skills and lead with confidence. Available resources include:

- **County 4-H Staff**

Provide mentoring, training, and ongoing guidance for youth leaders.

- **Lesson Plans and Team-Building Tools**

Practical resources that help youth develop communication, teamwork, and leadership skills.

These supports help youth leaders learn by doing while knowing they have guidance every step of the way.

- **Leadership Guides and Handbooks**

Printed and online tools (such as officer handbooks) that support meeting planning, record keeping, and leadership roles



## Resources for Adult Volunteers

Adult leaders guide and support youth leadership, but they are never expected to do it alone. A wide range of training and tools is available, including:

- **County & State 4-H Staff**

Extension professionals who provide training, mentoring, and leadership support for Adult Volunteers.

- **State & County 4-H Websites**

Sources for announcements, calendars, downloadable materials, and current information.

- **Leader Handbooks & Guides**

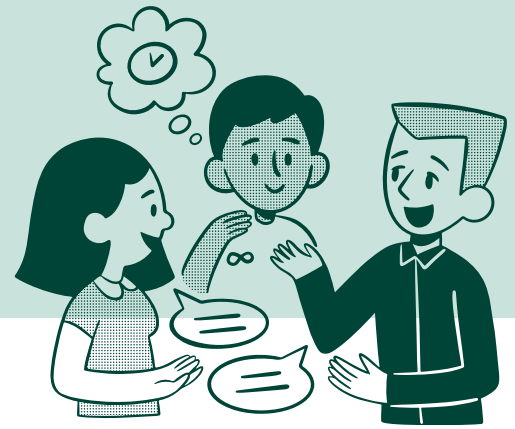
Step-by-step guidance and best practices for running successful Community Clubs.

- **4-H Curriculum**

Hands-on project guides that support learning across many topic areas, from sewing & cooking to STEM & livestock.

These resources help adults feel supported while keeping youth leadership at the center.





## Shared Resources for Clubs

Community Clubs also benefit from shared local resources that makes activities and events possible:

**County 4-H Office**

**Members and Families**

**Local Businesses and Community Partners**

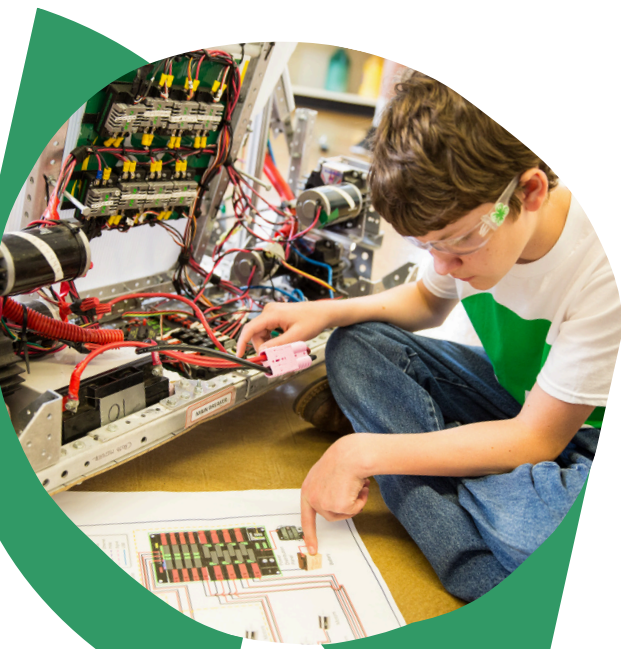


**County 4-H Office:** May provide displays, handouts, project examples, or supplies.

**Members and Families:** Often lend materials, help with set-up, or share talents and skills.

**Local Businesses and Community Partners:** May donate supplies, space, or materials to support projects and events.

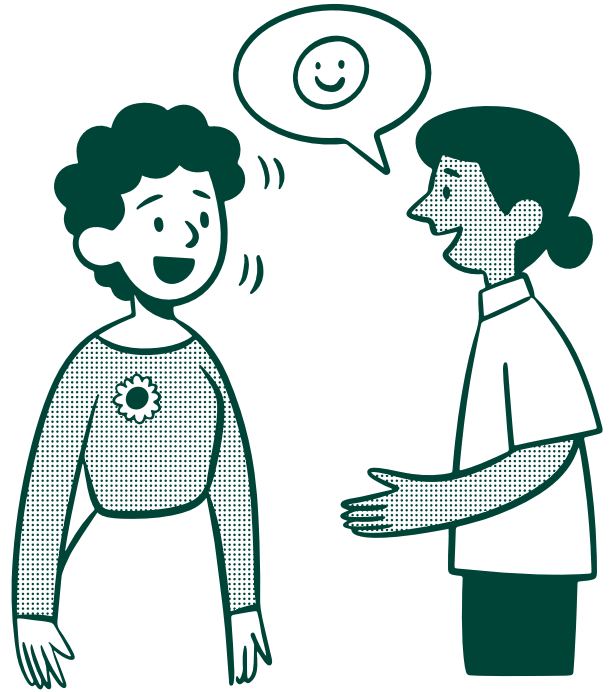
These shared efforts strengthen clubs and build meaningful community connections.



## Support Every Step of the Way

Strong resources ensure that no leader, youth, or adult, has to navigate 4-H alone. With staff support, curriculum, guides, and community partnerships in place, every 4-H Community Club is equipped to create a safe, structured, and thriving environment where youth can learn, lead, and grow.

Most resources are free and easy to access online or through your county 4-H office, keeping support always within reach.



## At a Glance: 4-H Resources

- Connect with county and state Extension staff for mentoring and guidance
- Use guides and handbooks to support officer roles and leadership
- Access ready-to-use curriculum for club meetings and project areas
- Check state and county websites for announcements and downloadable resources
- Rely on families and community partners for local support



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# APPENDIX

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## 4-H Community Club Terms

The 4-H Community Club Handbook uses a few key terms to explain how clubs work, who participates, and how youth and adults share leadership. This section serves as a quick reference guide to help members, volunteers, and families understand the structure and language of 4-H.

Each term reflects an important part of what makes 4-H unique: youth-led learning, hands-on projects, teamwork, and community service. Whether you're new to 4-H or helping lead a club, these definitions will help you feel confident and connected as you grow together.

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### Clubs and Club Types

From local clubs to focused project groups, each experience helps youth explore new interests while building confidence and friendships.

- ◊ **4-H Club:** A local group of youth, families, and adults who come together to learn, lead, and serve through hands-on activities.
- ◊ **Community Club:** A group of youth and adults from the same town, school, or neighborhood who meet regularly to learn new skills, make friends, and serve their community.
- ◊ **Project Clubs (or Activity Clubs):** A smaller group within a Community Club where youth focus on a specific topic that interests them, such as cooking, robotics, gardening, sewing, or animals. Project Clubs usually include about 6-8 youth, with one or two adult or youth volunteers who help guide and support the group.
- ◊ **Project Area:** The specific subject or topic a Project Club focuses on, such as photography, leadership, or woodworking. Each project area helps youth “learn by doing” while developing real-world skills and building confidence.
- ◊ **County 4-H Program:** The local program that oversees and supports all 4-H clubs in a county. County 4-H staff provide training, resources, and guidance for clubs, volunteers, and youth leaders.





## Club Members

4-H welcomes youth of all ages and backgrounds to learn, lead, and grow together. Members are grouped by age so that activities and leadership opportunities match their stage of development. Each level builds on the last, helping youth gain confidence, responsibility, and life skills as they grow from curious beginners to capable teen leaders.

- 📌 **Cloverbud Member:** The youngest 4-H members (usually ages 5-8, grades K-2). Cloverbuds explore 4-H through fun, age-appropriate activities. They learn what it means to be part of a club but don't yet take on formal leadership roles.
- 📌 **Junior Member:** Youth in the middle age group (usually ages 9-11, grades 3-5). Juniors begin taking small leadership roles, participate in projects, and learn by doing alongside older members and mentors.
- 📌 **Intermediate Member:** Youth in the upper-middle age group (usually ages 12-13, grades 6-8). Intermediates build on their skills, take on greater responsibility, and prepare for teen leadership opportunities.
- 📌 **Senior Member:** Older youth (usually ages 14-18, grades 9-12). Seniors take on major leadership roles, mentor younger members, and often serve as club officers, teen leaders, or county and state representatives

**\*Quick Tip!** If your club doesn't have older youth, younger members can step into leadership roles, with guidance and support from adults.



## Youth Leadership Roles

Youth leadership is at the heart of every 4-H Community Club. Youth take the lead in planning, organizing, and guiding activities while adults provide encouragement, safety, and support. These roles help youth build confidence, teamwork, and real-world leadership skills.

- **Officer Team (or Presidency):** A group of youth officers who share leadership responsibilities. Together, they plan meetings, organize activities, and make decisions for the club.
- **Officer:** A youth leader who holds a specific position (such as President, Vice President, Secretary, or Treasurer) and helps manage meetings, guide discussions, and represent members.
- **Youth Leader:** An older youth who leads meetings, plans activities, and mentors younger members. They help organize events and model positive leadership.
- **Youth Project Club Leader:** A youth who leads a Project Club by planning lessons, teaching skills, and guiding other members in a topic they enjoy, such as cooking, gardening, or robotics. Adults support by providing supervision, while the youth lead the learning.
- **Assistant Youth Leader:** A youth who helps in a Project Club by assisting the Youth Project Club Leader or adult Project Volunteer. They help organize activities, prepare materials, and assist in running the Project Club alongside the main leader.
- **Committee Chair:** A youth who leads a specific committee, such as service, training, recruitment, or project fair. They organize meetings, delegate tasks, and track progress.
- **Committee Youth Member:** A youth (Junior or Senior member) who serves on a committee to help plan and carry out club projects or events. They work alongside peers and adults to accomplish club goals.

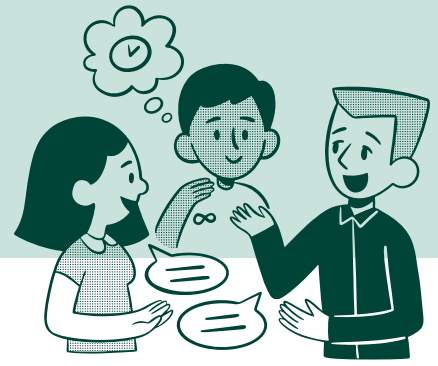


## Adult Volunteer Roles

Adults play an essential part in every 4-H Community Club by guiding, supporting, and encouraging youth as they learn and lead. Adults serve as mentors, helpers, and facilitators, providing structure and safety while empowering youth to take ownership of their learning.

Here are the primary adult volunteer roles that support youth leadership.

- **Parent or Caregiver:** Parents and caregivers support their child's 4-H experience by volunteering at least 10 hours each year. They may help as Mentors, Advisors, or Activity Volunteers; whatever fits their time and talents. Each family is asked to serve as a Project Volunteer at least once every one to two years, helping youth explore new topics and develop hands-on skills.
- **Community Club Mentor (Club Volunteer):** An adult volunteer who helps a 4-H club run smoothly. They support youth officers, guide club planning, and connect the club with county and state 4-H resources. Mentors ensure meetings are safe, inclusive, and youth-led.
- **Committee Advisor (Committee Volunteer):** An adult who supports youth on a committee, helping them plan, organize, and carry out their ideas, such as fundraisers, service projects, or community events. Advisors guide the process while ensuring youth remain in charge of decision-making.
- **Project Club Volunteer:** An adult who helps youth lead a Project Club in a specific subject area, such as cooking, gardening, or robotics. Project Volunteers don't need to be experts; they just need to be willing to create meaningful hands-on learning experiences.
- **Adult Mentor for Youth-Led Project Clubs:** An adult who supports a youth-led Project Club by providing supervision, encouragement, and ensuring a safe, positive learning environment while allowing the youth to lead.
- **Assistant Project Club Volunteer:** An adult who helps the Project Club Volunteer plan, organize, and run Project Club activities. They provide extra support where needed and may serve as an Assistant in one club and a Project Club Volunteer in another.
- **Activity Volunteer:** An adult who helps plan or assist with one specific club event or activity, such as a service project, contest, or field trip. Activity Volunteers make a big difference, even with small time commitments.



## Projects and Activities

4-H is all about learning by doing. Projects and activities give members hands-on experiences where they can explore interests, practice new skills, and serve their communities. Every project is an opportunity to grow in confidence, creativity, and leadership.

- **4-H Project:** A hands-on learning experience in a specific subject area, such as cooking, sewing, gardening, robotics, or livestock. Each project helps youth “learn by doing,” build life skills, and gain confidence while exploring new things.
- **Project Fair:** An event where youth discover new interests by exploring different Project Clubs. Tables may be set up around a room with signs like Gardening, Cooking, or Rocketry, so members can learn about each club and decide which ones they’d like to join.
- **Learning Activity:** A hands-on experience that helps members learn something new, like teamwork, public speaking, or a project skill. These activities help make club meetings engaging and help youth practice skills they can use in everyday life.
- **Demonstration:** When a youth member teaches or shows others how to do something, such as giving a short talk or showing a step-by-step process. Demonstrations can be part of a club meeting, a contest, or a project presentation.
- **Project Presentation:** A short presentation where youth share what they’ve learned from their 4-H project. This may include explaining their process, showing finished work, or demonstrating a new skill. Project Presentations help youth build confidence in speaking, organizing ideas, and teaching others.
- **Service Project:** An activity where youth work together to give back to their community. Examples include organizing a food drive, cleaning a park, or creating care kits.

## Community Club Structure

Behind every great 4-H club is a simple structure that keeps things running smoothly. These parts help youth lead, adults support, and everyone stay connected and engaged.

- **Charter:** The official document that recognizes a group as an approved 4-H Community Club through the county 4-H office.
  - **Chartering:** The annual process of submitting required club information to the county 4-H office to officially recognize or renew a 4-H Community Club.
  - **Club Enrollment:** The process of registering youth and volunteers each year in the 4-H system so they can participate in clubs projects, and events.
  - **Bylaws:** The written rules a club creates to guide how it operates. They outline how leaders are elected, how meetings are run, and how decisions are made, helping the club stay organized and fair for everyone.
  - **Meeting Agenda:** A written outline that lists the order of business for a club meeting, including pledges, reports, activities, and announcements.
  - **Pledges:** The American Pledge of Allegiance and the 4-H Pledge are recited at the start of most meetings to promote patriotism, service, and 4-H values.
  - **Portfolio/Record Book:** A personal record where youth track their 4-H projects, leadership, and service throughout the year. It helps members reflect on what they've learned, set new goals, and celebrate progress.
- 

## Club Finances (Optional)

Not every 4-H club collects money, but for those that do, Utah State University and 4-H financial policies help ensure funds are handled safely, transparently, and responsibly.

- **Club Dues (Optional):** Small, optional fees members contribute to help cover the cost of activities, supplies, or events. Dues vary by club and are typically decided together by youth members and adult volunteers.
- **4-H Bank Account (Optional):** A checking account established under county and state 4-H policies for handling club funds, if any are collected. Because 4-H is part of Utah State University, these accounts follow nonprofit financial rules for transparency and protection.
- **Annual Financial Report (If Applicable):** A yearly summary clubs must submit to the county 4-H office showing income, expenses, and balances for any 4-H club account.

## 4-H Support and Resources

4-H clubs don't operate alone. Each club is part of a larger support system that helps youth, families, and volunteers succeed. Through Utah State University Extension, clubs receive training, tools, and guidance from county offices and statewide programs. This partnership connects local clubs with events, resources, and opportunities for growth across Utah.



### Utah State University Extension:

The statewide university system that supports 4-H through Utah State University. Extension connects research, education, and community programs to help youth learn by doing.

### County Extension Office:

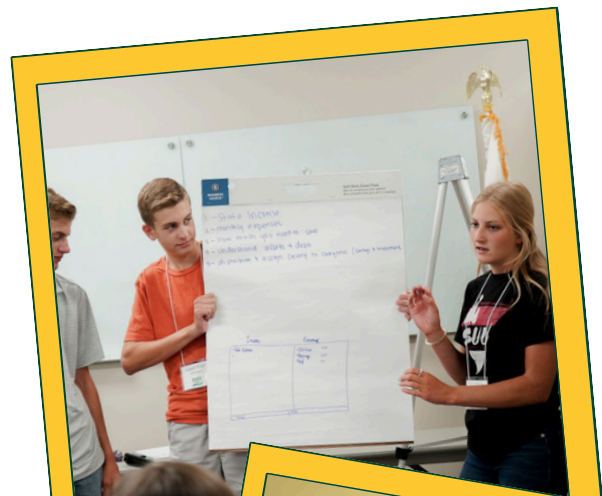
The local office of the Utah State University Extension system. County 4-H staff help organize clubs, support volunteers, and provide materials, training, and program guidance.

### 4-H Zsuite:

The official online system for enrolling Utah 4-H members and volunteers. Families use it to register for clubs, projects, and events, and to keep member records up to date.

### County/State Events:

Larger gatherings such as contests, camps, or fairs where youth from different clubs come together to learn, share ideas, and connect through friendly competition and teamwork.



## Sample Club Meeting Agenda (60-90 minutes)

This sample agenda provides a flexible structure for a 4-H Community Club meeting and can be adapted to fit your club's needs and goals.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Conducting (person leading the meeting): \_\_\_\_\_

Attending (list members and guests):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Icebreaker (5 min)

- Led By: \_\_\_\_\_
- This is a quick activity to welcome members and build connections

### Opening (5 min)

- Led By: Club President \_\_\_\_\_
- Welcome members and introduce any guests or new members
- Pledge of Allegiance: Led by \_\_\_\_\_
- 4-H Pledge: Led by \_\_\_\_\_

### Business (10-30 min)

- Led by: Officers or Committee Chairs
- Announcements
- Committee reports (service fundraising, project fair, etc.)
- Planning for upcoming activities or events
- Club discussions or decision-making

### Training (15-30 min)

- Led by: \_\_\_\_\_
- A learning segment where youth and adults explore new skills together
- Topic/Description: \_\_\_\_\_
- Example: leadership skills, teamwork, communication, or a 4-H project-related skill

### Activity (15-30 min)

- Led by: \_\_\_\_\_
- Activity/Description: \_\_\_\_\_
- Example: a hands-on project, teamwork challenge, or community service activity

### Closing (2-5 min)

- Led by: \_\_\_\_\_
- Reflect: What did members learn, enjoy, or want to try differently?
- Apply: How can they use what they learned at home, school, or in projects?
- Reminders: Announce upcoming meetings or events
- Gratitude: Thank members, leaders, and volunteers for participating

**\*Quick Tip!** Meeting times may vary based on your club's goals and activities. Shorter meetings can focus on one key area, while longer ones can include more training or project time. Find the rhythm that works best for your club!

## 4-H Community Club Bylaws

This section explains what bylaws are, why they matter, and includes a simple example your club can use or adapt.

### What are Bylaws?

Every 4-H Club needs a few simple rules to stay organized and fair. These rules are called bylaws.

Bylaws are a written agreement between members, youth officers, and adult volunteers. They make sure everyone understands how the club is run, who can join, how many officers are chosen, how money is handled, and how decisions are made.

Think of bylaws as the club's instruction manual. They help your club run smoothly by:

- ◉ Keeping meetings consistent
- ◉ Solving problems with clear rules in place
- ◉ Giving youth and adults a framework for leadership and participation

Bylaws should be simple, easy to read and follow, and updated as needed.

### Helpful Bylaw Examples

These examples can help you get started. Add, change, or remove items to match your club's needs.

- **Club Name & Purpose:** Define what your club is called and why it exists
- **Membership:** List who can join (ages 5-18, enrolled through 4-H ZSuite)
- **Meetings:** Describe how often your club gathers and what is typically covered (business, learning, activities).
- **Officers & Elections:** Explain youth officer roles, how they are selected, and how long they serve.
- **Committees:** Outline how committees are formed and who helps lead them.
- **Finances:** State who manages club funds and how spending is approved.
  - Note: Finances are optional. Clubs that do not collect or manage funds may skip this section.
- **Amendments:** Explain how bylaws can be updated or changed.



## Quick Tips

- Bylaws can be customized for your club's needs. As you create them, keep them short, clear, and easy for everyone to understand. For example, your youth officers might be appointed rather than elected, or your club might not collect fees, so you may not need a Treasurer.
- Review your club's bylaws each year to keep them clear, current, and helpful for everyone involved

## Sample Community Club Bylaws

Below is an example of bylaws to use as a guide. Your club can change, add, or remove items to fit your needs.

### Article I – Name

The name of this club is the \_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Community Club.

### Article II – Purpose

The purpose of this club is to:

- Provide opportunities for youth to develop leadership, citizenship, and life skills.
- Create a safe and supportive environment for learning through hands-on experiences.
- Support 4-H at the county, state, and national levels.

### Article III – Membership

- Membership is open to youth ages 5-18 who enroll through 4-H Zsuite, the official 4-H enrollment system.
- Members must agree to follow the 4-H Code of Conduct.

### Article IV – Leadership

- The club will elect youth officers such as a President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, and Committee Chairs as needed.
- Adult volunteers support youth leaders, provide guidance, and help the club run smoothly.
- Parents and caregivers are encouraged to help with club activities and volunteer when possible.



### **Article V – Meetings**

- The club will hold at least nine meetings per year
- Meetings will include business, learning, and activities
  - Note: Meeting times and activities may vary based on the club's goals.

### **Article VI – Elections**

- Youth officers are elected each year at a regular club meeting
- Officers serve for one year or until new officers are elected
- If an officer position becomes vacant, club mentors may appoint a replacement with input from members.

### **Article VII – Committees**

- Committees may be created as needed for service projects, fundriasing, events, or other activities.
- Each committee will have a youth chair and an adult advisor.

### **Article VIII – Finances**

- The club Treasurer will keep accurate financial records
- All expenses must be approved by the club membership
- Each year, the club will submit a financial report to the County 4-H Office

### **Article IX – Amendments**

- These bylaws may be amended by a vote at a regular meeting, with more than half of the members present and provided notice has been given in advance.
- Amendments must comply with county, state, and national 4-H policies.



## Chartering and Finances in a 4-H Community Club

### Chartering and Finances Overview

Every 4-H Community Club begins with a charter, the document that officially welcomes your club into the 4-H family. This section outlines how to establish and maintain your charter and provides simple guidance for managing funds responsibly if your club chooses to handle money.

### What is Chartering?

**Chartering** is the process of officially recognizing a 4-H Community Club as part of the 4-H program.

A **charter** is the official form your club completes and submits to show it meets county and state 4-H requirements. Once approved, it gives your club permission to use the 4-H name and emblem.

Chartering gives every club a strong start by helping your group get organized, connect with local 4-H support, and officially begin its 4-H journey.



### Why Chartering Matters

Chartering is more than just a requirement. It's what makes your club an official part of the 4-H community, connects your group to county and state resources, and opens the door to new opportunities for growth and recognition.

- Only chartered clubs can use the 4-H name and emblem
- Shows that the club meets county and state 4-H standards
- Gives members access to county, state, and national 4-H events and opportunities

## Requirements for Chartering

Each 4-H club earns its charter by meeting a few simple requirements. These steps ensure that every club has a strong foundation, supportive leadership, and meaningful opportunities for youth to learn and grow.

- ◊ Have at least five youth from three families
- ◊ Have at least two screened and approved adult volunteers
- ◊ Enroll all members and volunteers through 4-H ZSuite
- ◊ Hold at least nine meetings per year
- ◊ Follow all county and state 4-H policies
- ◊ Elect youth officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, etc.)
- ◊ Create and approve bylaws for how the club will operate

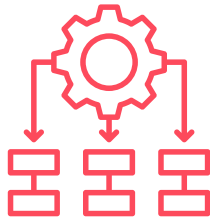


# The Chartering Process

Once your club meets the basic requirements, it's time to make it official. The chartering process is simple and ensures your club is recognized and ready to begin.

### Step 1: Organize the Club

Recruit youth and adult volunteers



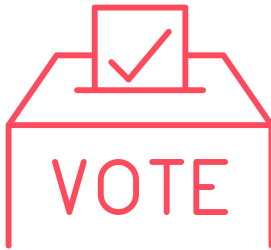
### Step 2: Draft Bylaws

Work with youth and adult mentors to decide rules.



### Step 3: Elect Officers

Youth vote on their leaders



### Step 4: Complete enrollment

Register all youth and adults in 4-H Zsuite



### Step 5: Submit Application

Turn in the Utah 4-H Club Charter Request-Renewal Form to the County 4-H office.



### Step 6: Approval

Once reviewed, the county office issues an official charter certificate



## Maintaining a Charter

After a club receives its charter, a few simple steps help keep it active and in good standing each year. Staying organized ensures youth leadership continues to grow and the club remains officially recognized.

- Hold six to nine meetings each year
- Update officer lists annually
- Submit annual financial reports (if the club handles funds)
- Follow county and state 4-H policies
- Renew their charter each year through the county 4-H office

If a club falls behind on these requirements, it can renew its charter once all steps are back in place.

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## Resources for Chartering

Your county 4-H office and state 4-H team are here to help every step of the way. These resources provide the tools and forms needed to start or renew your charter.

- **County 4-H Office** – Provides applications, guidance, and training
- **State 4-H Website** – Download charter forms, bylaws templates, and officer handbooks
- **4-H Zsuite** – online system for enrolling members and volunteers





## Managing Club Finances (Optional)

Once your club is chartered, you may decide to collect dues or raise funds to support activities. Not every 4-H club handles money, but for those that do, Utah State University and 4-H financial policies help ensure that funds are managed safely, transparently, and responsibly.

Learning to handle money as a group also teaches youth accountability, teamwork, and good stewardship.

**Club Dues  
(Optional)**

**4-H Bank Account  
(Optional)**

**Annual Financial  
Report (If Applicable)**



**Club Dues (Optional):** Small, optional fees members contribute to help cover the cost of activities, supplies, or events. Dues vary by club and are usually decided together by youth members and adult volunteers.

**4-H Bank Account (Optional):** A checking account established under county and state 4-H policies for handling club funds, if any are collected. Because 4-H is part of Utah State University, these accounts follow nonprofit financial rules for transparency and protection.

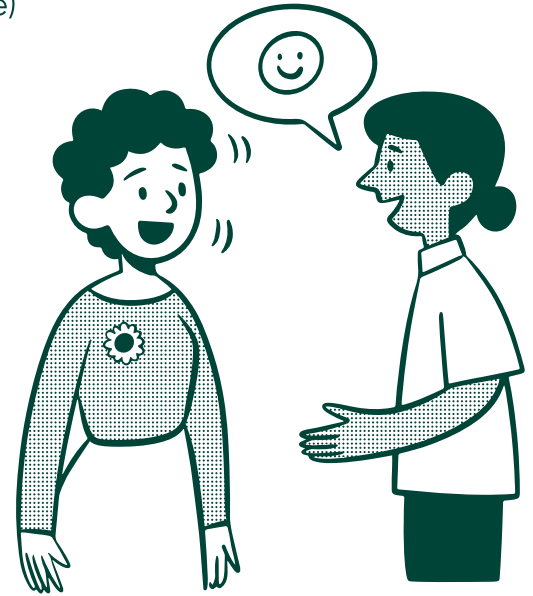
**Annual Financial Report (If Applicable):** A yearly summary clubs must submit to the county 4-H office showing income, expenses, and balances for any 4-H club account.

## A Club must open a 4-H Bank Account if it:

- ✓ Collects club fees (beyond the county enrollment fee)
- ✓ Takes money to purchase supplies, equipment, or club shirts
- ✓ Raises money in the name of 4-H
- ✓ Accepts donations or funds from other organizations

Because 4-H is a part of Utah State University, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, all club accounts fall under USU's IRS reporting. This protects both volunteers and youth while ensuring transparency.

\*Contact your local county 4-H Office for more information on 4-H bank accounts.



## At a Glance: Chartering & Finances

- Chartering is required for official recognition
- Clubs need five youth from three families and two approved adult leaders
- Charter through the county 4-H office and renew annually
- Handling funds is optional
- Dues and accounts must follow county and state 4-H policy
- Transparency and accuracy keep the club in good standing

## Fact Sheet

# 4-H Community Club: Fact Sheet

## What is a 4-H Community Club?

A 4-H Community Club is a local group of youth, families, and caring adults who come together to learn, lead, and grow through 4-H. Clubs are youth-led and adult-supported, giving young people real opportunities to take responsibility, make decisions, and guide activities with the help of trusted mentors.

Through Community Clubs, youth develop the skills to be Beyond Ready, prepared for life, work, and leadership. Every meeting, project, and service activity helps them practice communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and confidence. With support and encouragement from their club, they learn to thrive in school, at work, and in their communities.

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## Who Makes Up a Community Club?

A strong Community Club works best when everyone has a role to play.

- ◊ **Club Members:** Youth ages 5-18 who learn, lead, and serve.
- ◊ **Teen Leaders:** Older youth who plan and lead with mentor support.
- ◊ **Families and Caregivers:** Parents, grandparents, and guardians who help by mentoring, leading, or assisting with activities.
- ◊ **Community Members:** Adults who share their skills or resources, expanding opportunities for youth.

Everyone contributes something, creating a community where youth learn by doing, adults guide with care, and families grow together.





## What Happens in a Community Club Meeting

A 4-H Community Club meeting is a gathering where youth, families, and caring adults come together for hands-on learning, leadership, and service. These meetings give youth the chance to practice leadership, make decisions, and connect with others in a supportive environment.

Youth take the lead by planning events, leading activities, and running meetings, while adults provide encouragement and guidance. Each meeting helps members learn, collaborate, and build confidence and leadership skills.

Meetings vary throughout the year based on the activities and goals youth choose. One month might include a leadership game, a public speaking challenge, or an art project. Another might focus on organizing a food drive, caring for animals, or cleaning up a local park.

## Project Clubs: Learning by Interest

Project Clubs are smaller groups within a 4-H Community Club where youth explore topics that interest them, like cooking, gardening, sewing, or robotics. These clubs give members the chance to “learn by doing” through fun, hands-on projects.

Youths belong to the main Community Club and can choose the Project Clubs that match their interests. Adults, families, and community members volunteer their time and skills to teach projects, share knowledge, and guide activities. By working together, they help youth take on leadership roles, plan service projects, teach peers, and grow through real-world learning.



## Why Join or Start a Community Club

Here's how everyone benefits from being part of a 4-H Community Club:

- Youth:** Gain confidence, leadership, and practical skills for life
- Families:** Build connection, purpose, and shared experiences that strengthen relationships
- Adults:** Make an impact by mentoring the next generation
- Communities:** Grow stronger when youth and adults work side by side



### Did You Know?

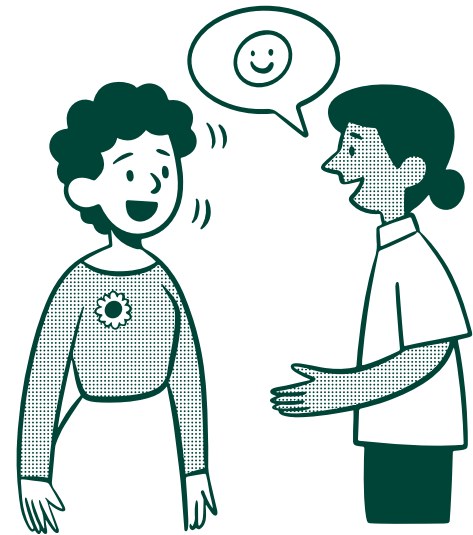
There are more than 3,000 4-H Community Clubs across the U.S., giving thousands of youth hands-on leadership and learning experiences each year.

# The Power of Community Clubs

A 4-H Community Club is more than just meetings. It's a place where youth lead, families connect, and communities grow together.

Together, members strengthen their community by creating a space where everyone feels valued, supported, and inspired to give back. In 4-H, it takes a village to help young people learn, lead, and thrive, and that same village grows stronger in the process.

That's the power of 4-H: growing leaders, families, and communities together.



## At a Glance: 4-H Community Clubs

- Local groups of youth, families, and mentors learning together
- Include smaller, seasonal Project Clubs for focused interests
- Youth-led and adult-supported to build leadership and life skills
- Families and volunteers share time, skills, and encouragement
- Strengthen communities through learning, service, and teamwork
- Help youth become Beyond Ready for life, work, and leadership
- Builds confidence, leadership, and lifelong skills



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