

UTAH 4-H 

4-H Camps Guidebook



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.



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HOW TO RUN A 4-H CAMP OR EVENT

This guide is a resource for any 4-H staff, faculty or volunteer for information on how to put on a successful event, camp or activity.

4-H events, camps and activities are a great way to enhance a 4-Her's traditional club experience. An ideal event should include interactive, educational activities that follow the Experiential Learning Model ([link resource here](#)), leave participants with new knowledge and/or skills, and/or provide service to the community. They also provide the opportunity for 4-Hers to gain leadership experience, gain a greater sense of belonging to 4-H, and of course, a fun experience.

DEFINE YOUR PURPOSE

Events, Camps and Activities should always serve to fill a need in your 4-H community. The first step to implementing a successful event is to define the purpose behind it. Ask yourself:

- What need(s) do my 4-H members/volunteers have that can be filled?
- What value will participants gain by coming?
- What are my goals with this event?

It is not always necessary to start from scratch any time you would like to hold a new activity. There are several resources with education curriculum that already applies the Experiential Learning Model and have been successful with youth.

View the Curriculum Resource page on the Utah 4-H website for ideas and resources: <https://utah4h.org/curriculum/>

Discover 4-H Curriculums are another great resource. Even if it isn't for running a full, 6-week camp, there are tons of ideas and activities that can be utilized: <https://utah4h.org/discover/>

UTILIZE YOUTH LEADERSHIP

The next and very crucial step to implementing a successful 4-H camp is to integrate youth leadership from the very beginning. At the core of 4-H, we adopt the “Learn By Doing” slogan. So, if we want youth to gain the leadership skills we discuss with the 4-H Mission Mandates, we must give them the opportunity to lead.

Not only are camps a great way for youth to practice and refine leadership skills, the event will be so much more effective from having youth give input for the goals and content of the camp. They have a superior understanding of what 4-Hers will engage in, and what will resonate with them. Giving camp attendees a role model that actually have a chance to demonstrate and teach skills will strengthen any camp or event.

Using the Utah 4-H Junior Youth Conference as an example, below is the youth leadership responsibilities of a camp versus the adult leader responsibilities:

ADULT	YOUTH
Coordinate youth leadership implementation and mentor the team of youth leaders	Decide on the goals, idea or theme for the camp, t-shirt design and create the schedule
Ensure 4-H Policy is followed	Serve as group leaders; form relationships with the youth assigned to their group
Arrange for location, meals, advertising and other logistics	Implement belonging through team tokens, team flag, team cheers, etc.
Coordinate registration and check in/out procedure	Plan and facilitate workshops and camp activities

FOLLOWING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

For any Adult running a 4-H Camp, it is their responsibility to ensure that policy is being followed. See Section 7 of the Utah 4-H Program Guide for all policy and procedure to be followed:

<https://utah4h.org/files/Resources/Programguide/Utah4-HProgramGuide-Section7PoliciesandProcedures-Jan2018.pdf>

LOGISTICS OF AN EVENT

There are several different logistical items to consider when putting on a camp:

Day Camp VS Residential Camp:

The difference between these two types of camps comes down to logistics.

In a Day Camp, participants will come and go, and you are not responsible for making any overnight accommodations. At a Residential camp, participants are dropped off and they are 100% the responsibility of the program until it ends. Housing and chaperone accommodations must be made.

Registration:

The majority of event registrations are required to be done through 4-H Online because it is the best way to ensure that all attendees are enrolled 4-H members. This is important because enrollment means that members have agreed to the code of conduct, we have vital contact and medical information on hand, and they are within our liability guides.

The only exception to using 4-H Online is if the event specifically includes community outreach, in which case you are able to use Eventbrite or another registration system that is approved. An example of an event like this would be the State 4-H Horse Judges Training. 4-H does not require for horse judges to be registered volunteers, so requiring the training registration to be done through 4-H Online would not serve the audience. We utilize Eventbrite for this event.

It is crucial that when incorporating community outreach into an event, it should also be viewed as a recruiting tool and an opportunity to gain more volunteers and members. See the “Using Events as Recruiting Tools” section for more information on this.

Dates:

When choosing dates for any 4-H activity, consider these factors:

- Will this conflict with any other county events that will pull a similar audience?
- Will this conflict with any regional/state events that will pull a similar audience?
- Is there a way to incorporate it into a National Campaign or Initiative?
(example, would this fit into National 4-H week?)
- Are there any factors that would deter the target audience at this time?
(example, several livestock youth come from hunting families, so an event for that audience in early fall may not be the best time)

Cost and Budget:

Maintaining a budget of any camp or event is the key to making sure the event does not lose money. To set up the event budget, begin by recording or estimating every cost that you know you will have. Be sure to record actual charges to replace your estimate once you know for sure what they are. If you are charging registration fees, use the estimated budget to determine how much you will need to charge each event in order to cover the costs.

Camps can generate additional revenue for 4-H programs, but the USU funding guidelines must be followed if the event is going to turn a profit.

Budgets should be saved for your records.

Location:

The location should be able to function in order to serve the needs of the camp. Put careful consideration into the space you choose. Take the time to find a bargain if possible. Some spaces are willing to discount for non-profit organization. Others may donate the space if youth are willing to do some service (weeding, cleaning, etc.). Some areas have recreation or government owned facilities that may give you a deal. It never hurts to ask!

Schedules and Supplies:

Plan out a detailed schedule of the activity in advance. This would include times for check in, plan for breaks and meals, and when there are multiple activities involved, consider how much time it will take to transition. Coordinate with youth leadership on the schedule and utilize their input.

Be thorough when creating an equipment list. It should be done enough ahead of the event so you have enough time to gather/purchase everything that is needed. Put a list together by, going through each activity on the schedule and writing down everything you could possibly need. Visualize the space for each activity down to type of flooring and how many outlets it has.. What does it have that you can use? What doesn't it have that you need to bring?

Event Timeline:

For an event with a lot of moving parts, an event timeline can be very helpful in keeping things running smoothly. It is an enhancement of the regular schedule by detailing everyone's assignments throughout the event and what supplies are needed for each component. The timelines ensures that everything is ready to go at the time the activity starts, and so all contributors know what they should be doing at all times to maximize efficiency. Use the schedule and equipment list to build the framework, and then add in assignments.

Event Logistics Example

The sample is for the first few hours of JYC:

Time	What	Where	Supplies	Assignments
12:30 – 1:30	Registration	Academy Square	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table, tablecloth & Chairs • Nametags • T-shirts • Check-in sheets • Pens • Decorations • Teardrop Banners • A-Frames 	<p>Teen Leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greet • Help youth find rooms • Games <p>Megan & Collegiate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in Table
12:30 – 1:30	Games/Lunch if brought	Academy Square Patio		<p>Teen Leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead games • Be ready at opening <p>Megan & Collegiate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean up registration • Be ready at opening
1:45 – 2:15	Opening Ceremonies	Huntsman Library Auditorium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Script • Decorations • Flags 	<p>Teen Leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform Opening <p>Megan & Collegiate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oversee opening
2:15 – 2:30	Group Time & Adult Orientation	Outside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water bottles • Team tokens • Chaperone Packets • Meeting checklist 	<p>Teen Leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead Group Time <p>Megan & Collegiate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run Adult orientation • Make sure workshops are ready
2:40 – 4:20	Workshops	Lucy Phillips/Outside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shades • Workshop totes • Air Horn • First Aid Kit • Snack 	<p>Teen Leaders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotate with Groups <p>Megan & Collegiate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up snack

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Safety of the youth should be the number one concern of any camp or event. Carefully consider each activity and make sure any and all safety precautions are met. Always consult experts in the various fields of activities to ensure everything is as safe as possible.

Water activities are always popular and make great summer experiences. However, there are some requirements that must be met. There must be a certified lifeguard present at any water activities. Staff and volunteers are welcome to get certified. Additionally, for any deep-water activities (such as going to the lake), all youth must wear life jackets.

ADVERTISING

The first step to advertising for any event is to know your target audience. For instance, if you are planning a sewing camp, make sure that you are specifically targeting the youth that are involved in a sewing project. It's great to lightly make all youth aware of the opportunity in case it sparks a new interest in them, but try to only flood the target audience with the information.

When advertising, consider all of the tools that are available to you. Some potential tools may include:

- Email Campaigns
- Opt-in Text Methods
- County website and/or calendar
- Social Media
- Community Channels (city event calendars, schools, etc.)
- Targeted phone calls or texts / word of mouth

It is also important to learn which tools are most effective for which audiences. For example, some of our county horse programs use an opt-in texting tool to communicate horse-related information and opportunities. However, that audience doesn't typically visit the county website for information. The texting method would be the number one tool to use for any horse camps, clinics or events that you need to promote rather than pushing them through the website.

There is much trial and error when it comes to advertising. To help with future advertising decisions, try to collect the data on how attendees found out about the event. In the meantime, don't be afraid to explore new methods and keep up to date on where and how youth and volunteers are receiving content.

Please note: having a theme for each camp is a great idea to help make the event more appealing and cohesive. It can help the planning process in many ways. However, it is important to avoid copyright infringement. Any publicized content and t-shirts must be approved through the USU Extension Marketing Department:

<https://extension.usu.edu/marketing/>

The Extension Marketing team has developed many resources to help with advertising. They can be accessed here:

<https://extension.usu.edu/marketing/>

USING EVENTS AS RECRUITING TOOLS

Sometimes, camps and events serve as a recruiting opportunity to get new youth and volunteers involved in the program. This is a great way to give them a spark of interest and insight into what 4-H can offer. But, it can sometimes be difficult to know how to take that spark and convert it into a full 4-H membership. Below are some ideas of how to do this for camps that are open to the community outside enrolled 4-Hers:

1. Make the ask: It is imperative that at some point throughout the scheduled activities, there is intentional time to give a quick explanation of the program, how involvement can add value for them, and how to sign up (or at least get more information).

Try to make it as specific of an ask as you can. In the sample below, the Teen Council went to a 4-H afterschool program and facilitated some fun workshops for 6th-8th graders.

Sample of an ask (addressed to the group at the end of the sessions, ideally when parents are picking kids up: "Hey guys, thanks for hanging out with us today! We had so much fun with you. Just a reminder, we are the Sevier County 4-H Teen Council. If you also had fun with us today and want to come to more activities like this, you should come to the next Junior Teen Council Activity. Here is a flier with all the information."

2. Have materials on site: make sure that there is something in an obvious and convenient location that attendees can take with them that clearly explains their next step for involvement with 4-H. There are currently some state-wide resources available, but county specific resources are potentially more effective.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Examples for other events and camps.

A great resource for fine tuning camps and events is reaching out to other 4-H Staff and Volunteers that put on exceptional activities. Reach out to others who had accomplished what you are looking to accomplish. It is also a great idea to collaborate with other counties for some things; for example, Sevier and Utah County might hold their Teen Council Summer Retreat together so that they can each learn from the other's program.

