



# Planning a 4-H Club Program

*--- A Guide for New Leaders*

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**DISCARD**

**W**elcome to the ranks of 4-H leadership. As a new 4-H club leader you may feel at a loss in knowing where to begin. This folder is provided to help you in charting direction and developing with the club members a plan for the club program.

## The Importance of Planning

### Why plan?

Good 4-H club meetings don't just happen. They come when everyone who takes part knows what to do and how and when to do it. To be more specific, planning results in the following:

- Establishes definite dates and times for club meetings and activities.
- Makes it possible to relate one meeting to the next rather than having a series of isolated meetings.
- Makes more interesting meetings that have balance between project work, activities, recreation, and service.

- Allows adequate preparation for meetings and events.
- Permits each member to take part in the program.
- Provides experience for boys and girls in planning ahead.
- Gives a feeling of security and permanence to the club.
- Provides a map for reaching the goals that you as a leader would like to accomplish.

Remember that your program will likely need alterations during the course of the year. It is most unusual for a program planned for a club year not to need adjustment.



### **When to plan**

The program plan will have the most meaning to you as a leader and to the 4-H club members if the program is planned soon after the club is organized. You will probably want to elect your officers and determine the project

the club will carry before you begin planning your program. There is some information that you and the club members will need in order to plan. These items should be gathered as the first step in program planning. They will be discussed later.

## **Who Plans the Program**

As a 4-H club leader you will be involved with the 4-H club members and their parents in planning the club program. If your club members are 9, 10, and 11, they will be less prone to plan than will older 4-H club members. Your role as a leader in planning will depend to some degree on the age of the club members. If the club members are in the younger age group, you will cooperate with their parents to determine the kinds of activities that should be included in the program and to determine alternatives. The club members can then choose from the two or three alternatives. If you have older club members, you will want to set the general framework

within which you as a leader would feel comfortable working, and let the club members make their plan within this framework.

When clubs are small, it is possible to have the entire club involved in program planning. If you are working with a larger group, say 15 to 20, perhaps the most efficient way to do the planning would be for the president to appoint a program committee (the vice president usually is chairman of this committee) to develop a plan to be presented to the club for suggestions and acceptance.

Regardless of which approach is used, the planning is done under the guidance of you as a leader.

## **Tools You Will Need in Planning**

- List of the project requirements and of demonstrations, discussions, and judging that would be helpful to the club members in completing their project.
- List of extra activities the club would like, such as tours, parents' activities, picnics, and parties.
- List of special activities, such as health, safety, or grooming that would enrich the 4-H club program.
- List of county dates, such as camps and fairs in which your club members might desire to participate.
- A calendar to use in determining dates of meetings and activities.

## **Establishing Goals**

The next thing that is important in developing a club plan is to have some targets which the club desires to achieve during the year. We sometimes refer to these targets as goals. It is difficult for club members who are just be-

ginning and have not had experience in planning to decide just what they would like to do. Therefore, we are including some goals that your club might choose to work on. If they have other ideas, that is fine too.

Here are some suggestions:

1. The club should hold ten or more regular meetings.
2. The average attendance of members at regular meetings should be at least 80 percent.
3. At least 80 percent of the members should complete their projects and records.
4. Every club member should appear on the program at least twice during the year.
5. The club should have a definitely organized club activity relating to health, conservation, recreation, marketing or safety, grooming, or other areas of interest relating to the project.
6. The club should have a planned community-service program.
7. The club reporter should report each meeting and club event to the local newspaper and place the clippings in a scrapbook or secretary's book.
8. The club should have at least three demonstrations given at meetings other than 4-H.
9. The club should have an entry in the county demonstration contest.
10. Each club member's parents should attend at least two meetings or events during the year.
11. The club should use singing as a regular part of club meetings and events.
12. The club should include recreation as a regular part of club meetings.
13. Each club member should hold an office in the club, either as one of the executive officers or on a committee.

## Suggestions for Adding Variety

It has been said that variety is the spice of life. An occasional program that includes a special activity or presentation can add variety to the 4-H club program. You might try some of the following:

- Outside programs  
Invite a representative of some group in your community or county who could give the club members information relating to his field, such as a member of the Health Department, a highway patrolman, the County Sheriff, or a beautician.
- Special features  
Invite some of the following people to put on a program:  
Talented person in the community.  
International Farm Youth exchangee.  
4-H club member who has been to 4-H Summer School, State 4-H Conference, National 4-H Club Congress, or National 4-H Conference.
- Exchange  
Invite a demonstration team or individual from another club who has ex-

perience in demonstrating to put on a demonstration.

Invite an entire neighboring club to come to one of your meetings. You can have charge of the business meeting and let them put on the program.

- Parents  
Parents can be involved in a program in various ways. They might be invited to present a special feature of the program, to assist with some of the project instruction, or you might have a program where the club members present to the parents a story of their club and its activities.

### Roll call ideas

To add sparkle to your club meetings and stimulate study on the part of the club members between meetings, have a topic for roll call. The club member responds with the topic rather than "yes" when his name is called. The subject or topic assigned might relate to project work or any type of activity the club might be carrying. Roll call topics might relate to a specific club program.

Following are some roll call suggestions:

- Why I joined the 4-H club.
- An interesting thing learned in 4-H.
- Name a good health habit.
- Name a common courtesy.
- Name a characteristic of good posture.
- Name a table courtesy.
- A New Year's resolution.
- Name an interesting fact about Washington or Lincoln.
- Name an interesting fact about the U. S. President.
- Name an interesting fact about our Governor.
- Name a safety habit for the home.
- One thing I would like to change in our home.
- Name your favorite 4-H event.
- Name your favorite church hymn.
- The number of years you have been a 4-H member.
- An interesting fact about the U. S. flag.
- Fire prevention rules.
- The thing I most enjoy doing with my parents.
- A Christmas tradition in our family.
- How to improve our 4-H club program next year.
- How I can show appreciation to my parents.

## Recording the Program

With club members' cooperation and the suggestions in the foregoing pages, you are now ready to think through with the members those things that they would like to do and determine the program for the year. You will want to record the goals established by the club. Perhaps you will want to have sufficient copies for each club member to share with his family.

The program should also be written. You might find the headings shown below useful in recording your program.

When the time draws near for each meeting, you will want to develop more details so

that the club members will know what they should do before the next meeting or what they should bring to the next meeting.

### Remember

It takes time to plan, compromise is necessary in program planning, 10-year-olds are less prone to plan than 15-year-olds, and flexibility is important.

Decision by both members and leader with counsel from parents = Sound program planning.

Date	Place	Topic to be discussed	Project work

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