



# Welcome to Butler County 4-H:

## A New Family's Guide



**K-STATE**  
Research and Extension

Butler County

# Welcome to 4-H!

4-H members and leaders live in all 105 counties in Kansas, in all 50 states, and in 82 counties around the world. Members are 7-18 years old, and live in cities, towns, and farms. There are more than 17,000 4-H members living in Kansas, and we are excited to welcome you and your family as our newest members!

4-H is focused on meeting the needs of young people through positive youth development. We are preparing the next generation of leaders who will be **Beyond Ready** to enter the workforce and make a positive difference in their communities.

We understand that you may have many questions in your first few years in the program, so we developed this guide to help! Also, you can always call your 4-H community club leader or your local extension agent for help.

## Emblem, Color, Pledge, & Motto:

The four-leaf clover is the official 4-H emblem. The four H's stand for **head, hearts, hands, and health**. Our colors are green, nature's most prominent color, which symbolizes growth, and white, which symbolizes purity and high ideals..

### The 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.

H<sup>💡</sup>AD  
HE<sup>♥</sup>RT  
H<sup>🖐️</sup>NDS  
HE<sup>🍏</sup>LTH

The 4-H motto is **“To Make the Best Better.”** Our members and volunteers learn the pledge and use it in their daily lives. The motto is there to remind us to always strive for improvement, to continually set goals, and give every effort your best.



# The History of 4-H:

4-H Youth Development is one of the oldest and largest youth development organizations in the United States. The establishment of 4-H reflects a unique American societal commitment to collaboration for the well-being of communities through the intentional program design, collaboration, and investment in youth from local, county, university, and national resources.

Since 1902, 4-H has been recognized as the primary youth development organization of the nation's Cooperative Extension Service of more than 100 public land-grant universities in cooperation with the USDA. Since 1905, in Kansas, 4-H is a community-based university program governed, administered, and delivered jointly by K-State Research and Extension (KSRE) and local Extension Boards.

4-H influences youth from diverse backgrounds who live in rural, suburban, and urban communities. Adults are involved as volunteers, working with youth as club or project leaders, or on committees and boards providing the framework for the 4-H Youth Development program.

## 4-H Membership and Programs:

4-H members must be at least 7 years old and not have had their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday by January 1 of the current year. Membership is open to all youth regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or disability. The 4-H year runs from October 1 through September 30.

Available 4-H programs include:

- **4-H Community Clubs:** A group of youth with two leaders under the sponsorship of K-State Extension - Butler County. Most clubs hold monthly meetings with a planned program.
- **4-H Cloverbuds:** A group of 5- and 6-year-olds who learn cooperatively. Some 4-H Cloverbuds may meet monthly for developmentally appropriate activities.
- **SPIN Clubs:** A SPecial INterest Club is a group of youth with two leaders under the sponsorship of KSE - Butler County. This group meets only 6-8 times, and they focus on one topic of interest.
- **School Enrichment:** A learning experience presented or coordinated by extension personnel with school officials as part of school classroom activities.



# Who Helps in 4-H:

At its core, 4-H is a family program. Parents and family members help with project work and other activities. 4-H members are also helped by volunteer leaders. Each club needs one or more adult leaders. These leaders teach, organize the club, help officers, assist in meetings, and orient new parents

There are various kinds of leaders in 4-H:

- **Community Club Leaders:** Responsible for the general club organization.
- **Project Leader:** Helps members with their project work and hosts project meetings.
- **Junior Leaders:** 4-H teens who work with an adult project leader to give leadership to activities, events, and/or projects
- **Parents/Guardians:** Show interest and concern for their children by attending meetings, serving as volunteers, helping with club activities, and serving on committees.

All registered volunteers must complete a background check, orientation, and be approved by the local Extension Board.



# What Do You Do in 4-H?

In 4-H, youth learn by doing! Here are examples of activities:

**Project work:** Choose at least one project or area of interest each year.

**Demonstrations:** Learn to share what you have learned with others.

**Recreation:** Play games and make new friends.

**Community service:** Improve your community.

**County contests:** Choose to enter contests and compete against other members.

**Exhibits:** Show your best project work at the Butler County Fair!

**Camps:** Participate in day camp, overnight camps, or camps on the K-State campus.

**Exchanges:** Learn about the lives of other 4-H members from across the state, county, or world.

**State Events:** Strengthen your leadership and citizenship skills while making friends from across the state.

# Club Meetings:

4-H members are given the opportunity to learn and practice decision-making in group situations. Members are expected to attend their club's gatherings, and parents are encouraged to attend as well, as 4-H is a family affair.

There are two types of club gatherings; however, each club is unique, and there are many ways a club might structure its meetings.

- **Club Meetings:** Members plan and carry out what they want to do as a group. A good club meeting has four parts with defined activities:
  - Opening: Call to order, Pledge of Allegiance, and 4-H Pledge
  - Business: Roll call, officer reports, committee reports, old business, and new business
  - Education: program, demonstrations, and guest speakers
  - Fun: Recreation, songs, skits, refreshments, and entertainment
- **Project Meetings:** Members work together on their projects. Meetings can include guest speakers, field trips, and other activities.

## What Do Club Officers Do?

4-H Club officers are elected by members. Each officer has a specific role.

**President:** Presides over the business meeting, keeping members involved and discussions organized.

**Vice President:** Leads in the president's absence, introduces guests, and is the program chair.

**Secretary:** Writes meeting notes, keeps attendance records, and keeps all communications.

**Treasurer:** Takes care of the club's money, pays bills, reports at each club meeting, and prepares the annual financial review.

**Reporter:** Sends news stories to local newspapers and/or radio stations and plans social media platforms.

**Recreation:** Leads games and other fun activities

**Song Leader:** Leads the group in singing

**Committee Chairs:** Your club may have several committees, depending on the club's size and focus. Committees may include: program, membership, recreation, community service, fundraising, and social events.

# Danish Ribbon System:

The Danish system of judging is a method of evaluation in which a 4-H exhibit, presentation, or process is evaluated against a set of standards and awarded according to the degree to which the standard has been met. The standards of excellence are often printed on a judge's scorecard, and allow for the 4-H exhibitor to be judged on one's own merit, and not in comparison with others in the class. The following ribbons apply:

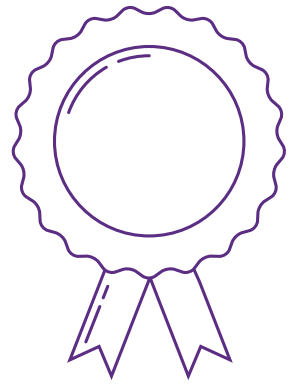
**Purple:** Superior, outstanding on all standards.

**Blue:** Excellent, minor improvements needed. Exceeds minimum standards.

**Red:** Good, some improvements needed. Meets minimum standards.

**White:** Fair, denotes much improvement needed. Fails to meet minimum standards.

**Green:** Denotes exhibit has been disqualified.



## Record Keeping

You will be encouraged to keep a record for each area of project work to help you keep track of what you are learning during your 4-H experience. Completed records are signed by the parents and one club leader at the end of the 4-H year.

Good record keeping will reflect accomplishments and therefore serves as the basis for awards, scholarships, and other forms of recognition, as well as teaching a desirable habit for keeping track of financial and business matters. Members are encouraged to work on records throughout the year as they complete project work.

There are three different types of record forms:

**Personal Page:** Contains space for a picture of the members and a project list. A new personal page is completed each 4-H year.

**Permanent Record:** A summary of all projects, exhibits, officers held, events attended, and other participation. Only one permanent record is necessary for all years as a 4-H member.

**KAP (Kansas Award Portfolio):** Used for one specific project that a 4-H member is enrolled in. The KAP form provides space for setting goals, knowledge and skills learned, work accomplished, leadership, photos, and other project information. A new KAP form should be completed each 4-H year for each project.

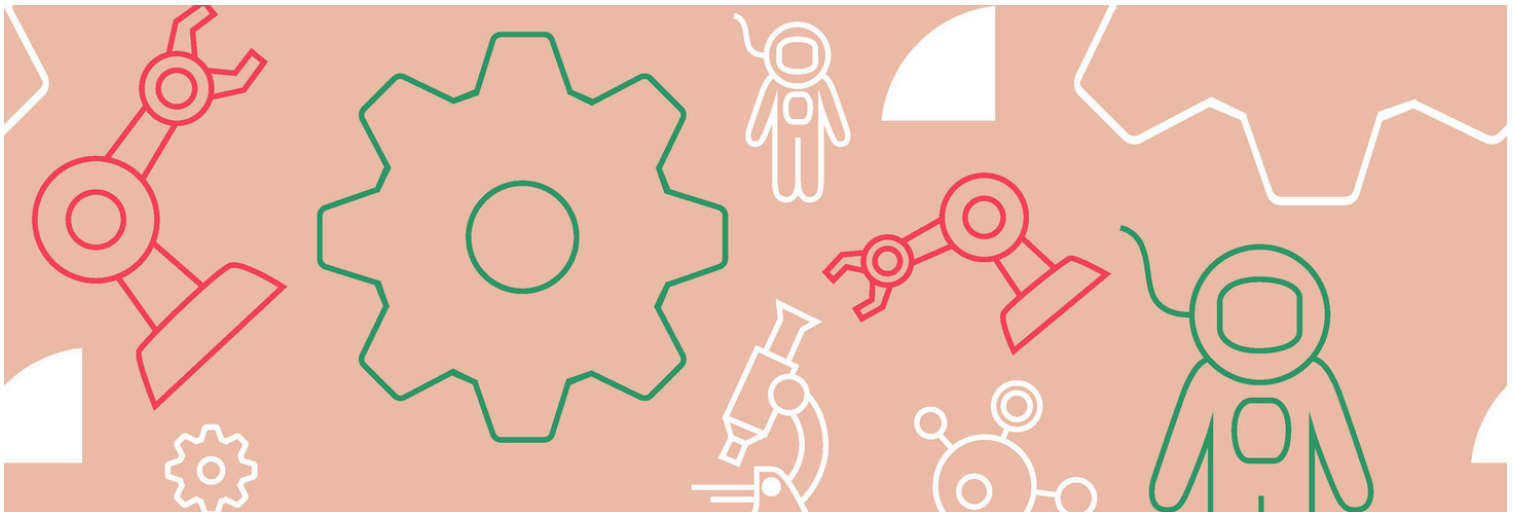
4-H members may submit completed achievement applications to the K-State Extension- Butler County office for awards and recognition consideration. Members who submit any achievement applications are invited to attend the annual Achievement Celebration held each fall where awards are announced and celebrated.

Other forms of recognition include:

**Achievement Pins:** Awarded to 4-H members who meet the requirements and turn in an application. A total of 10 pins are awarded in a series.

**Project Award Pins:** Members must complete their KAP to be eligible for a project award pin. Winners in various projects are eligible to compete at the area and state levels (some age restrictions apply).

**Special Awards:** Awarded to members 4-H age 14 and older that recognize outstanding achievement in areas of leadership, citizenship, and personal development.



## How Can You Best Help Your 4-H Member?

You can help them get more from their 4-H experience in several ways:

- Council 4-H members in the selection of suitable projects by showing interest, but do not complete the work for them. Make sure the work they start is completed.
- Encourage them to attend meetings regularly and attend with your 4-H members so you can help the child remember upcoming activities and deadlines.
- Offer to host occasionally for a club or project meeting.
- Become a registered volunteer and share your knowledge, special skills, and hobbies as a club leader or project leader.
- Keep informed of local 4-H information.

# For More Information, Please Contact:

## K-State Extension - Butler County

206 N Griffith St.

Ste. A.

El Dorado, KS

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**Beyond  
Ready**



**4X**  
THE IMPACT

4-H'ers are 4X  
more likely to  
contribute to their  
communities\*



**2X**  
THE IMPACT

4-H'ers are 2X  
more likely to make  
healthier choices.\*



**2X**  
THE IMPACT

4-H'ers are 2X more  
likely to participate  
in STEM activities  
outside of school\*