

What is 4-H?

What is 4-H? Friends, fun, and learning about nature, cooking, growing plants, photography, animal care or working together to help others; 4-H is Positive Youth Development.

Who can belong to 4-H? Anyone kindergarten through 12th grade. You'll find 4-H throughout your county, state, country and the world. Kindergartners through third graders can join 4-H Cloverbud clubs. 4-H Cloverbuds are an informal educational program designed specifically for children in grades K-three. The program appeals to young children's natural curiosity, enthusiasm for learning and high energy levels by providing an opportunity for active learning in a non-competitive environment. In Morrow County, there are roughly 250 4-H members and volunteer leaders.

What you can do in 4-H? Members can be enrolled in animal science, natural science, home economics, leadership and public speaking, sciences and expressive arts project areas, just to name a few. A project list is available at the 4-H office. If you can think of it, 4-H will try to make it happen.

What do you do in 4-H? It depends on each individual and what they make of their 4-H experience. 4-H members may be a friend in the same grade or school or include people from other communities. Clubs decide how often to meet and elect officers to conduct club business. A club may decide to be active in the community, raise money for charity, become involved in recycling projects or build nature trails. Members can go on field trips or to 4-H camp. The choices

and opportunities for leadership and advancement grow as members get older.

Does 4-H cost a lot? There are no national dues or required uniform. The state requires a \$18 per member enrollment fee, \$36 family maximum, which goes to help county 4-H programs such as lowering costs of state publications. There is an additional \$5 per member county enrollment fee that goes towards project materials and insurance in most clubs. A 4-H club may decide to collect dues to fund special activities. Scholarships are available for enrollment fees if needed.

How do you join 4-H? It's easy. Choose the project you like, ask some friends or brothers and sisters to join you. Ask parents, grandparents, adult friends or neighborhood adults to be the leader. Several adults can share this responsibility. Only two members are needed, but there can be as many as you like. Or members can also study the project independently on their own with the supervision and assistance from an adult leader. Determine the projects your club would like to enroll in and visit the Extension office or call the 4-H agent for help. There are also numerous active clubs that welcome new members.

4-H is learning today, leading tomorrow and learning by doing. Learning how to set goals and work toward those goals; responsibility for an animal, finishing projects, choosing how much to learn and deciding how involved in 4-H to be; leadership, decision-making, cooperation and how to present yourself and ideas to others. For information about the 4-H Youth Development program, contact 4-H Agent Erin Heideman, at the OSU Extension office in Heppner, 541-676-9642.

4-H projects are a family affair

My boys' 4-H heifers were out this morning frolicking in the new grass Deacon and I put it. I was grateful he was harvesting somewhere else and not here to see it or hear me. The small things. I debated waking up my younger two boys to help me get them back in and decided that it would be less work if I just did it myself and let them sleep. After all, it was 5:15 a.m.

It's time like this, when I'm exhausted, up early, to bed late and with lists upon lists leading up to county fair that I am reminded that 4-H projects are a family affair. It's an "all hands on deck" kind of event. Until you have participated and experienced it, it's really hard to explain. There is a level of fatigue that is unmatched by nearly everything else once you've completed a week at county fair. And the preparation is staggering. Months and months and months. Couple that with harvest that may or may not be done and maybe a sport practice or two in there as well during the week, and we're all pooped.

But I will always support a multi-dimensional kid and try to be flexible with my planning; kids that do more than that one event/sport. The kids that when you look at their resume, you're blown away by the

number of things they've participated in. Not that they were numero uno necessarily, but they have learned how to juggle and work and keep all those plates in the air. Impressive.

These involvements will help them be tremendous employees, employers and community members that can relate to more than just a gym or field. So thank you Morrow County 4-H parents for supporting the youth of our county in their 4-H participation and working harder to help guide and push them to do more because we know they can. Especially when the whining surfaces about having to feed their heifer again. You know, because they eat everyday...

Erin Heideman, Morrow County 4-H



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