

## New 4-H Family Information Guide



### Introductory information on the Ottawa County 4-H Program

Ohio State University Extension, Ottawa County  
240 W. Lake Street, Unit C  
Oak Harbor, OH 43449  
(419) 898-3631  
[ottawa.osu.edu](http://ottawa.osu.edu)

## **Welcome to Ottawa County 4-H!**

This handbook will help guide you and your family as you experience the Ottawa County 4-H Program. Throughout your 4-H experience, please do not hesitate to contact our office with any questions.

### **What is 4-H?**

4-H is a non-formal, educational youth development program. Youth are involved in hands-on learning that allows members to learn by doing. All 4-H programs focus on active involvement and quality experiences. More information about 4-H may be found at [ottawa.osu.edu](http://ottawa.osu.edu) under the 4-H Youth Development tab.

### **Who is in charge of 4-H?**

County, Regional and State 4-H professionals, who are staff members of Ohio State University Extension, are responsible for the management of the 4-H program. In each county, adult volunteers go through a selection and training process. These volunteers have day to day contact with the youth.

### **What is a 4-H Club?**

A 4-H club is a group of boys and girls organized with officers and with one or more leaders under the guidance of OSU Extension.

### **What are the age requirements?**

Cloverbuds can begin when a child is age 5 and is enrolled in kindergarten as of January 1 of the current year. Membership to the 4-H club program begins when a child is at least age 8 and enrolled in 3rd grade as of January 1 of the current year. Ohio 4-H membership ends December 31 of the year in which an individual attains the age of 19. Membership begins when an eligible individual is enrolled in a club or group that is under the direction of a trained advisor and within the scope of Ohio State University Extension.

### **What is a 4-H Project?**

Projects are planned learning experiences and activities that focus on a particular topic. The project is a teaching tool that can be used to develop your child to their maximum potential. Therefore, the basic objective of 4-H is the development of the child. There are more than 200 projects to choose from!

### **How do I select a project?**

To view the projects available, you may request a copy of the Family Guide from the club advisor or the OSU Extension Office. The 4-H Family Guide may also be viewed at the following website: <http://www.ohio4h.org/familyguide/index.html>

Consider these factors during project selection:

- The project should meet the needs and interests of the child
- The project and topic should be appropriate for age and ability of the child
- Consider additional costs and time involvement

## How do I Join?

Joining the right club is important to enjoying the 4-H experience. A list of 4-H clubs will be provided for you. Parents are encouraged to contact potential clubs. Please keep in mind that you will want to make these contacts in the near future, as clubs typically begin meeting right after the first of the year. Here is a list of suggested questions to ask club advisors:

- How often and where they meet?
- Are there any club dues?
- What projects are in their club?
- What types of activities does the club do?
- How big is the club?
- How many leaders and parents do they have?
- Do they have cloverbuds in their 4-H Club?
- What are the expectations of the parents?

## 4-H Enrollment

Your child must be enrolled with a club and project(s) chosen by April 1st to be eligible for full county 4-H involvement. 4-H enrollment packets are available from the Ottawa County OSU Extension Office, club advisors, or online at [ottawa.osu.edu](http://ottawa.osu.edu) (click on “4-H Youth Development” then “How to Join 4-H”). Members fill out an enrollment form with the help of the club’s organizational advisor. The club advisor submits the forms to the Extension office and purchases project books at this time.

## What Will 4-H Cost?

County 4-H Fee – Currently Ottawa County 4-H members are not assessed a fee to join the Ottawa County 4-H Program to enjoy full 4-H opportunities and awards including Junior Fair Participation. The only cost to the member is the project book fee. Most project books are \$7. Some projects require an additional Resource Handbook that is purchased once by the family and used for all the projects within an area by all members in the family. Check with your 4-H advisor for Project Book costs.

Club Fees – Some clubs may charge a per member and/or family fee based on their club’s activities. The amount is based on what the club covers with the fee. Club fees may be used towards refreshments, project book cost, club t-shirt, supplemental insurance, etc. Please ask your club advisor about their club fee structure.

Project Items – Every project has some cost beyond the 4-H book. Some projects require supplies or materials that you may already have at home, or you may need to purchase items. Please keep this in mind when selecting projects with your child.

Fair – If members plan to participate in the county fair, they may have some additional costs associated with their 4-H experience.

- Some animal projects will need to be tagged or identified.
- Fair Passes for parents- Check Fair web site for current prices. [ottawacountyfair.org](http://ottawacountyfair.org)

## What Does My Child Need to Do in 4-H?

### For Club Meetings

- Attend 4-H club meetings/activities.
- Participate in community service, fundraising, leadership and recreational activities.
- Come with a positive attitude, eager to “Learn by Doing” the 4-H Way through project work, demonstrations, and hands-on activities.
- Serve as a club officer, on a committee, or as a Junior Leader.
- Strive to excel in the four H’s...Head, Heart, Hands and Health by supporting club goals and activities

### For Projects

- Select one or more 4-H projects to complete from the 4-H Family Guide and list each project name and number on the enrollment form.
- Meet all project requirements and guidelines. Refer to the individual area 4-H Project Guidelines for details on completing the project(s) which can be found in the Ottawa County 4-H Project Guide or on the Ottawa County 4-H website ([ottawa.osu.edu](http://ottawa.osu.edu))
- Attend required programs for project participation... Tag-Ins/Weigh-Ins/ID Days, Livestock Quality Assurance, Horse Safety Programs, Skill-a-thon/Project Judging, Clinics, etc.

### For Skill-a-thon/Project Judging

- Attend Skill-a-thon and/or Project Judging to complete project at the county level and be eligible for County and State Fair participation.
- Bring up-to-date and/or complete project/record book.
- Be prepared for a one-on-one interview with an adult to answer questions about your 4-H and project experience.
- Be patient while waiting for your turn to be judged or to go through the skill-a-thon process. Review your project book, bring a book to read or plan to be there with a friend to spend some time talking about your 4-H experiences while waiting your turn.
- ✓ *Animal Projects:* Be prepared to participate in six hands-on skill stations. Use your project book, Resource Handbooks, Skill-a-thon Kits, Quality Assurance training experience, and attend Project Clinics and Workshops to prepare.
- ✓ *General Projects:* Bring item made, created, produced, grown or designed and/or educational display (see General Guidelines for details).

### For Fair

- Participate in booth setup before fair.
- Fair wristbands will be given to the 4-H member once their project is on display at the fair. Wristbands are distributed through the Jr. Fair Office.
- Help with the planning and work needed for your club to have a great fair.
- Bring 4-H projects by required exhibition times to the fair. Check fair book and guidelines.
- Care for animal projects throughout fair week. Keep stalls and animals clean, fed, watered and presentable to the public at all times.
- Show good sportsmanship before, during and after the Fair.

## **Responsibility of 4-H Club and Advisors**

- Notice of 4-H club meetings and/or a printed schedule of club meetings for the year.
- Information provided at one of the first meetings:
- 4-H Project Requirement Guide
- 4-H Club attendance expectations
- Project selection help and information on guidelines
- Calendar of activities
- Information provided at all meetings:
- Review of the 4-H calendar, 4-H newsletter or recent mailings from the Ottawa County OSU Extension Office
- Reminders of upcoming deadlines, requirements, etc.
- What's coming up in the club and how my child and I can get involved?
- Help in selecting, ordering and receiving Project Books for my child.
- Hands-on and mind-on learning experiences for my child... project work, demonstrations, practice skill-a-thons and/or project judging, livestock quality assurance and/or horse safety programs, field trips/tours, etc.
- Opportunity for my child to give back to the community through at least one community service project... flower gardens at the fairgrounds, adopt a family, picking up trash, etc.
- Opportunity for my child to build leadership skills through serving as a club officer, on a committee, leading the American or 4-H pledges, participating in a business meeting, etc.
- Opportunity for my child to have FUN with friends (new and old) through recreational, social, educational and/or competitive activities.
- A welcoming place for my child and I to learn and grow through the 4-H Program and work together to "Make the Best Better".

## **Responsibility of Parents**

- Attend club meetings, activities and events with your child. Notify the club advisor if your child can't attend a meeting/activity. Encourage your child's participation in club, county, and 4-H events.
- Help with the club and/or county fundraising events and pay your child's club dues if applicable.
- Attend and participate in special events planned by the 4-H club.
- Assist your child in selecting a 4-H project he/she can do and enjoy. Encourage and guide your child's project work. Don't do their work.
- Read the 4-H newsletter, mailings, Project Requirement Guide, Junior Fair Book and other information with your child. Use the county 4-H website to print off forms, find project requirements and find answers to questions.
- Encourage your child to participate in club/county skill-a-thons/project judging, clinics/workshops, 4-H camp(s), public speaking opportunities, Jr. Fair events, and much more.
- Encourage your child to keep up-to-date records and complete project.
- Model a positive attitude, good sportsmanship, respect and cooperation

### **Responsibility of Parents (cont.)**

- Assist with 4-H club activities in your areas of interest and expertise...teach a project skill, help with a community service project, plan a field trip, assist with fundraising, etc.
- Help out the club... host a meeting, provide refreshments, sponsor an award.
- Support the club by cooperating with club advisors and exhibiting a positive attitude towards your child's personal and club 4-H goals

### **Responsibility of Members**

- Model positive behavior and good sportsmanship
- Participate in club meetings and events
- Read 4-H newsletters so important deadlines or events are not missed
- Start projects early, ask for help, and help others if needed
- Follow through with officer duties, committee responsibilities, and help fulfill club goals

### **Ottawa County 4-H Volunteer Committees**

4-H Advisory Committee – provides oversight to the entire county program, in addition to fundraising for various programs, scholarships, and other 4-H related expenses.

4-H Horse Advisory Committee – provides oversight & programming to the horse project area.

### **Important Dates**

All of the Ottawa County 4-H Program dates can be found on the 4-H Calendar emailed to families and also online at [ottawa.osu.edu](http://ottawa.osu.edu)

- 4-H Enrollment Deadline – April 1. Your child must be enrolled with a club and have chosen his/her project(s) by this date to be eligible for full county 4-H opportunities including Fair participation.
- Project Possession/Tagging/Weigh-in – all animal possession and tagging/weigh in dates are found in the Jr. Fair Handbook or found online at [www.ottawacountyfair.org](http://www.ottawacountyfair.org).
- Project Judging/Skill-a-thon – All projects and skill-a-thons are completed in July during 4-H Project Judging week. To confirm the date each year for judging reference the Project Requirement Guide or 4-H Family Newsletter at [ottawa.osu.edu](http://ottawa.osu.edu)
- Ottawa County Fair – held third week in July each year.
- 4-H Cloverbud Camp – held in June each year. For youth K-2nd grade.
- 4-H Jr. Camp – held in June each year. For youth 3rd-7th grade.
- 4-H Awards – Dates and Application Deadlines
  - ✓ *County Sponsored Trips* – applications due mid-January
  - ✓ *Scholarships* – applications due March 1
  - ✓ *Camp Counselor* – applications due in December
  - ✓ *Achievement* – applications due late December

## Who Can Answer Questions?

**Club Advisors:** Start with your local club advisor(s) first. Make sure you have a phone number and/or e-mail address to communicate with them.

### **Extension Staff: Call (419) 898-3631 or e-mail at any time.**

4-H Youth Development Educator  
Molly Avers  
[avers.15@osu.edu](mailto:avers.15@osu.edu)

4-H Program Assistant  
Amy Michaels  
[michaels.97@osu.edu](mailto:michaels.97@osu.edu)

## Where Do I Go For Information?

OSU Extension Office, Ottawa County

240 W. Lake Street, Unit C  
Oak Harbor, OH 43449

- Purchase and/or pick up 4-H project books
- Drop off 4-H Event entries and registrations
- Reserve and pick up 4-H guidelines and Jr. Fair registrations
- Access all forms, requirements, information on the web at [ottawa.osu.edu](http://ottawa.osu.edu)

### Ottawa County Fair Office

7870 St. Rte. 163  
Oak Harbor, OH 43449  
(419) 898-1971  
<http://ottawacountyfair.org/>

- Make open class fair entry
- Purchase and pick up fair passes
- Pick up fair books and info
- Obtain camping information and turn in camping permit
- Access Fair Events and Activities scheduled on the fairgrounds from the web.

### Ohio 4-H, [www.ohio4h.org](http://www.ohio4h.org)

- Visit for the latest information about Ohio 4-H programs, events, activities, policies, etc.

### Ohio State Fair, [www.ohiostatefair.com](http://www.ohiostatefair.com)

- Fair Book and Entry Forms to make entry for Livestock, Poultry, Rabbit, Small Animal, Horticulture, etc.
- Fair Schedule for All Ohio State Fair Events
- Fair Results from 4-H and Open Class Shows

## **4-H Language/Lingo**

**Achievement Awards**— 4-H members, age 14-18 as of January 1, may apply for one of twenty State Achievement Project Awards as well as the opportunity to serve on State Junior Fair Board and/or attend a variety of State and National Conferences.

**CARTEENS**—Youth aged 15 and up can be instructors for the traffic safety program, which targets first time juvenile traffic offenders.

**Camp**—Members enjoy outdoor fun and adventure while learning and making new friends at 4-H Camp. Camping opportunities are available for cloverbuds, members and teens with some focused in a particular project area.

**Cloverbuds**—4-H members age 5 and in Kindergarten through 2nd grade or until they reach the age and grade requirements for 4-H project membership. Cloverbuds may not enroll in competitive 4-H Projects.

**DUNF** – Drug Use Notification Form. This form indicates your project animal has met all drug withdrawal periods at time of exhibition. ODA requires this form for exhibition of market beef, market hogs, market lambs, market goats, turkeys, meat chickens, meat rabbits, lactating dairy goats or dairy cows. One per animal/pen. This is now an online entry form that needs completed by move-in day of fair.

**Fair Registration Forms**—Each animal must be registered in Blue Ribbon Online Registration by June 1st. Registration is required for participation in the Ottawa County Junior Fair.

**Family Guide**—Resource that lists all the 4-H projects including a brief project description, age guidelines, skill level and State Fair eligibility.

**Horse Safety/Equine Ethics Program.** 4-H horse project members and their parent/guardian must complete this program before being eligible to participate in the 4-H Horse Program. Member and his/her parent/guardian must annually sign the Permission to Participate in Ohio 4-H Activities Form and file with the Extension Office

**Older Youth Opportunities.** Teens may serve as leaders within a club as officers and at the county level as members of Jr. Leadership, Camp Counselors, Advisory Committees, CARTEENS, Ambassadors, Teen Council, Jr. Fair Board and others.

**Livestock Auction Check.** Paid by the livestock sale committee for animals sold through the Jr. Fair Livestock sale.



**PAS.** Horse project members may choose to participate in Performance Against Standards (PAS) Show(s) to qualify to participate in the State Fair Horse Show. A member may show in a maximum of four classes and must qualify in two classes to show at the State Fair. Members that qualify in more than two classes must select the two classes they intend to show in at the State Fair.

**Project.** The members use to explore a topic or interest area through hands-on activities, sequential learning experiences, goal setting and evaluation. 4-H'ers keep records and documentation of project experiences in a Project Book.

**Project Judging.** Evaluation of a project member's knowledge through interview with an adult judge, review of project book records and exhibit of project item and/or educational display. Project Requirements. Outlines deadlines, project judging/skill-a-thon guidelines, resources, Fair rules, judging dates, county and beyond county opportunities and much more. Format and delivery varies between counties.

**Skill-a-thon.** Evaluation of livestock and dog member's project knowledge through participating in hands-on skill stations that allow the member to apply knowledge/skill to real word situations.

**State Fair Selection and Alternates.** Member(s) selected to represent the county at the Ohio State Fair for a given project or project area. Counties may select one member per project or State Fair class to participate.

**Tagging Day and Weigh-In.** Important events for Market Animal projects

**Volunteer or Club Advisor.** Dedicated, enthusiastic, caring adults that have completed a selection, screening and orientation process by OSU Extension. The current Ohio 4-H Volunteer Selection process includes a written application, reference checks, BCI background check, interview with Extension Educator and volunteer orientation.

**Youth Food Animal Quality Assurance.** Annual program (QA) required for members exhibiting market and lactating project animals by the Ohio Department of Agriculture. Members can meet this requirement by attending a one hour+ quality assurance program focusing on the 10 Good Production Practices. Youth, age 12 to 18, may have the option to test out of QA attendance. Extension Educators in cooperation with local Agriculture Societies determine county QA delivery and completion requirements within the State's minimum standards.

12/10/2021

Adapted from Trumbull OSU Extension New 4-H Family Informational Guide

Adapted from Erie OSU Extension 4-H Family Guide and Ashtabula OSU Extension 4-H Parent Guide