



Minnehaha County Extension Service
220 W 6th St
Sioux Falls, SD 57104-6001
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Dear New 4-H Family,

Welcome to 4-H! You have enrolled or have expressed interest in enrolling in one of the greatest youth development programs in the nation. In fact, with 6.8 million youth involved nationwide, 4-H is the largest out-of-school educational program in the country.

The purpose of this packet is to give you an overview of the opportunities and resources available to help your family have an incredible experience in 4-H. Please keep in mind that this is just an overview and the best way to stay informed is to read the Minnehaha County 4-H News. Your family will start receiving this free, monthly newsletter once all 4-H enrollment forms have been submitted.

The 4-H program is a very large program and opportunities are so vast that sometimes it may seem overwhelming when you are new. Please keep in mind that your family's 4-H experience can be tailor made to suit your needs and/or interests. This is one reason why the 4-H program is such a great program for South Dakotan families. You can be involved as a whole family, learning and growing together.

When describing 4-H to someone new, we often use the analogy of a super department store. 4-H is like a "store" full of wonderful, fun, positive educational programs. It has nearly every type of workshop, project, contest, trip, conference, camp or activity you are interested in. It is up to the family to decide what and how much you want to do. Please keep in mind things that fit into your schedule and budget. Your club leader and 4-H Program Advisors are like the "greeters" at the front of the store. If you have questions please do not hesitate to call.

Keep in mind that your Club leader is a volunteer. Like all of us, your leader is more than willing to do his/her part, but your leader also needs help. Your Club can accomplish more if parents/guardians share some of the responsibilities with the leader. Ask your leader what you can do to support your child's Club.

The local 4-H Office is located downtown Sioux Falls at 220 W 6th Street next to the Old County Courthouse Museum. Parking is available off street. Our office hours are Monday-Friday, 8:00am-5:00pm.

Welcome to the wonderful world of 4-H!

Handwritten signature of Chuck Martinell in black ink.

Chuck Martinell
Minnehaha County 4-H Program Advisor

Handwritten signature of Nathan Skadsen in black ink.

Nathan Skadsen
Minnehaha County 4-H Program Advisor

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Parent and Guardian Roles

First and foremost, 4-H is a family program – a place where parents and their children can learn and grow together. In 4-H, you, as the parent or guardian, are very important. You are always invited and encouraged to participate in all 4-H club activities. We recognize every family's schedule is different and you may not be able to attend every club function, but there are many different ways that you can contribute to your child's 4-H group.

Your 4-H club leader will want to know about your interests and talents, and how you would like to support your child's 4-H group. Because 4-H has so many diverse experiences, we have discovered that every adult can find a parent volunteer role that matches their interests and the club's needs. Some possible helping roles include providing refreshments, supplies, or other resources for a club meeting, helping members with their projects, chaperoning a club field trip, organizing a club service project, or coordinating the club's end-of-the-year recognition program. Your club leader may have other suggestions.



As a parent or guardian, these are the following roles you need to fulfill:

- ✿ Provide transportation for your child to and from 4-H events.
- ✿ Help your child learn to recite the 4-H pledge.
- ✿ Attend 4-H club functions with your child whenever possible.
- ✿ Children 5-8 should always have a parent or guardian attend meetings with them. Horse club members, regardless of age, should *always* have a parent at each riding practice and horse shows.
- ✿ Guide your child as he or she selects a 4-H project and help develop goals that are challenging, but also realistic. Encourage project work by making it a family learning experience.
- ✿ If your child serves in a leadership role within the club, help him or her fulfill the duties of the office.
- ✿ Read the *Minnehaha County 4-H Newsletter* each month so you will know the details of upcoming events. You will automatically start receiving this publication when you enroll in a 4-H club.
- ✿ The 4-H staff will provide county-wide training on portfolios, demonstrations, and other important 4-H learning experiences. Try to participate in these classes and workshops. By understanding more about our various 4-H programs, you can help your child excel and take advantage of all that 4-H has to offer.
- ✿ Attend your club's end-of-the-year celebration with your child and attend 4-H Achievement Night (the county-wide awards program) as a family. Recognition always means more to children when their family is there to share it with them.

How is 4-H organized?

Many people think of 4-H as an independent organization, but that isn't quite accurate. As part of the United States Department of Agriculture and the Cooperative Extension System of state land-grant universities and colleges, the 4-H Youth Development Program is built on the nation's best research, education and practice.



This means that your Extension staff members are supported with resources from land-grant universities across the nation. Just take a look at our research-based curriculum and you can feel complete confidence in 4-H as a sound, educational organization. And, we have been around for over a century!

There is an Extension office in each county throughout the nation, which will be the local headquarters for 4-H. The 4-H program is administered at the county level by the 4-H Youth Program Advisors with support and leadership from the State 4-H Office and County Government.

Your 4-H Youth Program Advisor works for South Dakota State University. The staff members who support the Minnehaha County 4-H Program are:

Chuck Martinell, 4-H Youth Program Advisor
Nathan Skadsen, 4-H Youth Program Advisor
Deb Knudsen, Administrative Assistant

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4-H Frequently Asked Questions

What is the 4-H Program? As the youth development program of the Cooperative Extension System of the land-grant universities, 4-H is the nation's largest youth development organization, empowering six million young people throughout the United States. Through America's 109 land-grant universities and its Cooperative Extension System, 4-H reaches every corner of our nation – from urban neighborhoods to suburban schoolyards to rural farming communities. With a network of more than 6 million youth, 540,000 volunteers, 3,500 professions, and more than 60 million alumni, 4-H helps shape youth to move our country and the world forward in ways that no other youth organization can.

How did 4-H begin? 4-H began in the early 1900s as Corn Clubs for boys and Tomato Canning Clubs for girls. Although the program has changed a lot through the years, it has always been a program designed to help children become productive members of their communities.

What do 4-H members do? 4-H'ers learn new skills, have fun, make new friends, solve problems, earn awards and recognition, practice citizenship, develop leadership skills, and make a difference in their community.

Do I have to live on a farm to join 4-H? No! Although 4-H began as a program for rural children today 4-H is available for *all children* whether they live on a farm or not.

Is there any research that backs up the effectiveness of 4-H? The Positive Development of Youth: Comprehensive Finding from the *4-H Study of Positive Youth Development* is the first research project of its kind. The decade-long study, completed by a team of researchers at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, Medford, MA is influencing research and practice around the world.

The report shows that 4-H youth excel beyond their peers. 4-H'ers are about:

- ✿ **Four times** more likely to make **contributions to their communities** (Grades 7-12);
- ✿ **Two times** more likely to be **civically active** (Grades 8-12);
- ✿ **Two times** more likely to make **healthier choices (grade 7)**;
- ✿ **Two times** more likely to participate in **Science, Engineering and Computer Technology programs** during out-of-school time (Grades 10-12); and
- ✿ 4-H girls are **two times** more likely (Grade 10) and nearly **three times** (Grade 12) to take part in **science programs** compared to girls in other out-of-school time activities.

Requirements for Participation

Cloverbuds: 5-7 years

- ✿ Cloverbuds is an educational program for children between the ages of 5-7. It is part of the South Dakota 4-H Youth Development program. The primary goal of this program is to promote the healthy development in children by enhancing the life skills of social interaction, self-esteem, physical mastery, making choices, and learning to learn.
- ✿ Age is the only requirement to join Cloverbuds. Each member must be between the ages of 5-7.

Youth: 8-19 years

- ✿ All youth are eligible to participate in 4-H if they turn 8 years old prior to January 1 of the current 4-H year. If the 4-H member turns 19 years of age or older by January 1 of the current 4-H year, they will no longer be eligible to participate.
- ✿ Each 4-H member is required to attend club meetings, complete a journal, give a public presentation, and participate in one of the following: judging, leadership, county event or project.

Parents

- ✿ Assist your children with meeting the necessary requirements for 4-H membership.
- ✿ Support the 4-H club by being volunteers, participating in activities and events and assisting the 4-H Volunteers when necessary.

Volunteers

- ✿ As a volunteer, you are required to complete the Volunteer application form; submit \$10.00 and complete the background check (which will be processed to ensure credibility, to conform with Title IV requirements); and assist the other 4-H volunteers with the planning and organization of activities and events

How to Enroll

Step One – Find a Club

It is quite easy to get involved in the 4-H program. All you have to do is contact the 4-H Office in your county to find out the possible clubs you can be a part of in your community or you can also contact the 4-H club adult volunteer directly (you will find a list of clubs and contact information at the end of the booklet). Below are some helpful questions you may want to ask the club volunteers:

- ✿ Does your club have room for more 4-H members to join? (Some of the 4-H clubs must limit their size, please try another club if your first choice is full.)
- ✿ What age groups are the 4-H members? (It may be helpful to have children in the club in your child's age group.)
- ✿ Do you hold club meetings once a month and where are the meetings held?
- ✿ Does the club collect dues and if so, what is the annual amount?

Step Two – Enroll in 4Honline

Follow the steps outlined in the appendix found at the end of this document to enroll in 4Honline. After completing online enrollment, the Minnehaha County office will need to approve your membership.

4-H Insurance

As a 4-H member, you are also required to purchase insurance. It is an annual cost of approximately \$1.50 for events/activities, \$2.50 if you are enrolled in the horse project, and if you are in the 4-H rodeo project, the cost is approximately \$40 or \$2.50 with an insurance waiver.

4-H Horse Achievement Program

It is MANDATORY for 4-H members involved in the horse project to complete the 4-H Horse Project Achievement Program each year. This program focuses on making sure youth are engaging in learning opportunities within the project while also understanding the importance of safety. Youth involved in the 4-H horse project will need to complete the 4-H Horse Project Achievement Program form and turn it into the 4-H Office along with the Horse Form 1 form by the designated deadline for South Dakota 4-H Horse Show eligibility.

Pork Quality Assurance

It is MANDATORY for 4-H members involved in the Swine project to attend a PQA training or take and pass the PQA test, if eligible to take the test.

Membership Requirements

As a 4-H member, you will have certain responsibilities to fulfill in order to maintain your membership in the club including the following

- ✿ **Dues** – Some clubs have annual dues, which vary from club to club.
- ✿ **Re-enrollment** – You are required to re-enroll in 4-H at the beginning of each new 4-H year (October 1)
- ✿ **Attend Meetings** – Each club typically has a monthly meeting and you will be required to attend at least 6 club or special interest meetings
- ✿ **Public Presentation** – As a 4-H member you will be required to give one public presentation each year in your 4-H club.
- ✿ **Member Journal** – Each 4-H member is encouraged to complete a journal each year recapping your projects and learning experience.
- ✿ **Project Enrollment** – You are required to enroll and complete at least one 4-H project each year.

More information about membership requirements is available upon request. Otherwise they will be a part of the 4-H Member Handbook available to your club.

Further Information or Questions

Please direct any requests for further information or questions to the Minnehaha County 4-H office. The office is located in the County Extension Building at:

220 W 6th St
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

You can also reach the office by phone at 605-367-7877 or by email at minnehaha.county@sdstate.edu.