

Membership and Enrollment

4-H youth development education programs are created and conducted principally for youth in grades K-12th. To be eligible for membership in Arkansas 4-H, the following age groups will apply:

Membership Category	Ages
Cloverbuds	5-8
Junior Members	9-13
Senior Members	14-19

Cloverbuds become official participants on their 5th birthday. Activities should be restricted to non-competitive educational programs. No competitive events will be conducted for Cloverbuds at the district or state level. Research indicates that this age group's comprehension of competition or judging one over the other is limited and may be harmful to development of a positive self-esteem.

Junior members are youth who are age 9 as of January 1 and become eligible to participate in district or state activities at this time.

Senior 4-H members are youth who are age 14 as of January 1 and must compete as a Senior 4-H member. Senior members may participate and/or compete in 4-H activities and events until December 31 of the year they celebrate their 19th birthday. After that date they may continue in 4-H through the collegiate 4-H program, the alumni program, and/or become a volunteer leader.

Collegiate 4-H is a national organization where 4-H members can extend their involvement in 4-H while attending college. Collegiate 4-H provides a higher level of 4-H experience, with major emphasis on service, leadership, and personal development. Collegiate 4-H is an open and dynamic student organization involving active outreach to young people and their communities. College students conduct youth development programs in leadership, service learning, individual and group development. In turn, members enhance their personal development through community service and participation in social events.

Membership Implications for Fairs - Extension and 4-H do not set policy for eligibility of junior exhibitors for county, district, and state fairs. However, it is our recommendation as professional youth developers that the age for junior exhibitors coincide with the official age for 4-H competition (ages 9-19). This is suggested especially for district and state fairs and preferably county fairs as well. If county fairs do allow younger youth (ages 5-8) to exhibit, it is recommended that the recognition (ribbons, small trophies, etc.) be identical.

4-H membership must be through one of the Cooperative Extension Service's 75 county 4-H programs in Arkansas. A youth becomes a "4-H member" when he/she either completes an individual enrollment form, **FY4-H-617**, or is included in a group enrollment form such as 4-H Youth Participant enrollment form, **FY4-H-603**, which must be on file in the county Extension office. A youth participates in 4-H by belonging to a 4-H club or any recognized unit of membership in the county where he/she resides.

A 4-H member must declare a "home county" for membership in order to qualify for district or state competition. A 4-H member cannot compete for awards in qualifying activities in more than one county. Only one county can report club membership for a 4-H member at a time. A youth may belong to project groups and/or attend and/or participate in educational activities in more than one county if allowed by both counties.

4-H club members transferring from one location to another will be accepted by the county in which they reside and given full credit for their past 4-H work or achievements after verification from the state office they are not under any disciplinary action by a 4-H review board.

Marriage and parenthood are not barriers to 4-H club membership or participation provided age requirements are met.

Dress Code

The dress, grooming, and manners reflect the general climate of any organization; therefore, 4-H'ers are expected to wear appropriate clothing and to present a neat appearance when participating in the program. Moderation in type and style of clothing should be the basic standard. The following clothing items are **not** permitted in casual and business casual attire:

- Pants, shorts, skirts, and dresses which are not longer than the fingertips of hands held at sides (arms length); the tip of the waistband must be no lower than the top of the hipbone.
- Clothing with slits and/or cutout areas which are above the finger tips of hands held at sides.
- Any backless dress, top, or cutoff shirts that expose any part of the midriff or back.
- Clothing with revealing necklines and sleeve openings.
- Mesh type or see-through shirts.
- Visible undergarments.
- Clothing with inappropriate or unsuitable graphics or slogans (vulgarity or obscenity and/or drug, tobacco or alcohol advertisements).
- Any clothing item that an Extension faculty member deems inappropriate.

Appropriate clothing for events which specify casual attire includes walking length shorts (fingertip length), jeans or pants, and T-shirts or sweatshirts. Business casual attire includes blouses or shirts with slacks or pants including khakis and dress denims. Semi-formal and formal attire includes coat and tie and slacks for males and dressy dress or pantsuit or party dress for females. Semi-formal and formal attire should be age appropriate for the youth and should be moderate in type and style. Youth and adults selected to 4-H events should be notified by Extension personnel of appropriate type dress for the event. Extension staff and adult volunteers are responsible for enforcing this policy at all 4-H events.