So you want to be a 4-H Volunteer...?

Volunteers are the key to success for the 4-H program. They provide the much needed energy, skills, and resources that make our 4-H program a positive development experience for our young people. Many of our 4-H volunteers are involved directly with 4-H members. They provide the caring adult experience that 4-H has become known for over the years. 4-H volunteers provide the knowledge and skills to develop our young people into responsible and productive adults. Volunteers provide the leadership to the local and county 4-H program. They work with their County Extension staff members on planning, implementing, and evaluating the 4-H program and activities.

4-H Clubs consist of a leadership team that is made up of two or more non-related adult volunteers. These volunteers must be enrolled on 4-H online, complete all Youth Protection requirements, and receive at least 4 credit hours of training each year. These leaders work together to establish, support, and maintain a 4-H Club. There are multiple leadership roles a volunteer may take on.

- **Organizational Leader**: This person is considered the “Club Leader.” The club leader is responsible for the club program development process, the origination and guidance of club officers, communication of club meetings and activities, and delegation of responsibilities to other volunteers, families, and adults. The County Extension staff is an important resource.

- **4-H Project Leader**: This person is responsible for the club development process, assisting the club leader, communication activities, and working with other volunteers. The project leader guides 4-H members in setting project goals and conducting “Learning by Doing” experiences. A club may have multiple project leaders to meet the needs of its members.

- **4-H Activity Leader**: The activity leader is responsible for organizing the club’s social, educational, community service, and fund-raising activities. A 4-H Club may need several activity leaders, and these volunteers work closely with club officers to encourage youth leadership.

4-H Volunteers are essential to the success of our 4-H program. The County Extension staff strives to provide all volunteers with relevant trainings, useful resources, and outstanding support.

Thanks for your interest in our 4-H program,

*Sara Beth Waller*

Sara Beth Waller
County Extension Agent – 4-H
4-H Volunteer Requirements:

- Enroll on Arkansas 4-H Online annually (4-H year is 10/1-9/30)
  - Visit [http://arkansas.4honline.com](http://arkansas.4honline.com)
  - Must mark “Yes” when it asks if you are a Volunteer
  - Your first year to enroll you will be required to complete the volunteer screening information
  - This screening will be conducted every three years

- Complete the “Authorization for Release of Confidential Information” contained within the Arkansas Child Maltreatment Central Registry
  - Also known as the EHIRE-164
  - Must be notarized by an Arkansas Notary
  - Must be completed your first year as volunteer, and then every three years after (Part of Volunteer Screening)

- Participate in a minimum of 4 credit hours of leader training annually

- Participate in the 4-H Overnight Chaperone Training if providing an overnight experience and/or transporting youth

County Extension Agent Responsibilities:

- Management, leadership, and direction of total county 4-H program
- Provide adequate training for all 4-H volunteers
- Supply all 4-H volunteers with timely, relevant information essential to the success of their 4-H club
- Make available useful resources to 4-H volunteers, members, and clubs
- Work cooperatively with volunteers, families, and 4-H members
Mission: The mission of the 4-H youth development program is to help children, youth, and families realize their full potential and to improve the quality of life for Arkansas children, youth and families. The 4-H youth development program provides opportunities for youth to acquire knowledge, develop skills, form attitudes, and practice behavior that will enable them to become self-directing, productive, and contributing members of society.

Motto: “To make the best better” is intended to inspire young people to continue to learn and grow, to make their best efforts better through participating in educational experiences.

4-H Educational Philosophy: “Learning by Doing.” Young people learn best when they are involved in their learning.

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.

Membership: The 4-H year runs from October 1 through September 30. 4-H’ers can begin on their 5th birthday and can remain members until December 31st of the year they turn 19. 4-H age is determined by their age as of January 1st of the current year. Cloverbud members are 5-8 years old; Junior members are 9-13 years old; Senior members are 14-19 years old.

4-H Clubs:
- Are organized groups of a minimum of six youth from at least two families.
- Conducts a minimum of six meetings throughout the year.
- Are advised by two non-related trained volunteer leaders.
- Elects officers that are actively engaged in conducting meetings.
- Includes opportunities to learn skills through a variety of project experiences.
- Offers opportunities for leadership and citizenship/community service.
What is 4-H?

4-H is the youth development program conducted by the University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture, Cooperative Extension Service. 4-H programs are available in each of Arkansas’ 75 counties.

Project Areas:


4-H Opportunities:


Leadership Opportunities – 4-H Teen Star & Ambassador, 4-H Teen Leader, State Officer, Camp Counselor

4-H Scholarships – Over $30,000 in scholarships offered at the state level

4-H Trips – Kansas City Global, Washington Focus, National 4-H Conference, National 4-H Congress

Competitive Activities – Record Books, Broiler BBQ, Ross Photography, Giant Pumpkin & Watermelon, Shooting Sports, Wildlife Habitat Evaluation, Poultry Chain, County, District, and State Fairs, Horse shows, Forestry, and County, District, and State O’Rama


Benefits of 4-H:

The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development, a longitudinal study conducted by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University, shows youth engaged with 4-H are:

- Nearly two times more likely to get better grades in school;
- Nearly two times more likely to plan to go to college;
- 41 percent less likely to engage in risky behaviors; and
- 25 percent more likely to positively contribute to their families and communities.