Kansas 4-H Cloverbuds’
Tips for Parents and Children

The Kansas 4-H Office joins with county and district K-State Research and Extension offices in answering frequently-asked questions about the Kansas 4-H Cloverbud program.

1. Q: What is 4-H Cloverbuds?
A: 4-H Cloverbuds is an educational, youth development opportunity specifically for 5- and 6-year-old children.

The 4-H Cloverbuds program is an optional 4-H program. Local Extension units can choose whether to make it available.

2. Q: Who can be a 4-H Cloverbud?
A: To be eligible to participate, a child must have celebrated his or her 5th or 6th birthday before January 1 of the current year.

When a child reaches the age of eligibility for traditional 4-H programs (age 7 or older), the child and his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) can decide whether to transition their child into 4-H club membership.

3. Q: How can our family get involved?
A: Interested families are encouraged to contact the local Extension Office to inquire about educational opportunities with the 4-H Cloverbuds program.

4. Q: How can a 4-H Cloverbuds group be organized?
A: A minimum of five youth who have reached the qualifying age of eligibility are required to establish a 4-H Cloverbuds group. Cloverbuds groups can be organized and lead by a local 4-H club or facilitated as a county/district-wide option. Cloverbuds groups may also be organized within neighborhoods or school groups.

5. Q: Who leads 4-H Cloverbuds?
A: The 4-H Cloverbuds program requires two volunteer leaders for every 12 children participating in 4-H Cloverbuds activities. The volunteers may be adults or teens who enjoy working with 5- and 6- year old youth. Volunteers are required to have completed 4-H Volunteer Information Profile (VIP) and 4-H Cloverbuds training to serve.

6. Q: What happens during a 4-H Cloverbuds meeting?
A: Leaders are encouraged to review the Cloverbuds’ Guide to choose a format that will work best for their group. A typical 4-H Cloverbuds meeting lasts one hour. The meeting is called to order, the 4-H pledge recited, and attendance is taken during the first 10 minutes. A lesson from the 4-H Cloverbuds curriculum typically takes about 30 - 40 minutes. Remaining time is spent enjoying friendship and fellowship.

7. Q: Where are 4-H Cloverbuds meetings held?
A: Ideal meeting places are centrally located, have good lighting, a comfortable temperature, adequate space and restrooms. If a 4-H Cloverbuds group is meeting simultaneously in the same facility as a 4-H Club, its meeting place should have a separate room with space for activities and enough space to arrange tables and chairs in a square or circle for all to see and hear each other.

8. Q: Who pays for 4-H Cloverbuds activities?
A: The 4-H Cloverbuds program does not require a membership fee. A local 4-H club or 4-H Council may sponsor a 4-H Cloverbuds group. A Cloverbuds Leader may ask 4-H Cloverbuds’ parent(s) or guardian(s) to contribute to cover expenses for supplies or activities, such as a field trip.

9. Q: Does 4-H Cloverbuds count for achievement pin recognition?
A: No, Cloverbuds’ recognition is based on participation.

10. Q: If a 4-H Club sponsors a 4-H Cloverbuds group, do Cloverbuds count towards the club seal?
A: 4-H Cloverbuds is a special enrollment category separate from the 4-H Club and does not count toward club seal requirements.

Please turn page
11. Q: How are Cloverbuds recognized?
A: 4-H Cloverbuds receive recognition for participation, rather than placements or other competitive awards. Cloverbuds who participate together receive the same recognition.

12. Q: What special activities will be available for Cloverbuds?
A: 4-H Cloverbuds are eligible to participate in community service projects and supervised field trips. Examples may include recycling cans or newspapers, sponsoring a food drive, or planting flowers in a park or other public area, etc. For more information on 4-H Cloverbuds’ programs and activities, contact the local Extension Office.

13. Q: May 4-H Cloverbuds go to camp?
A: 4-H Cloverbuds are encouraged to attend Day Camps designed to meet their developmental characteristics and needs.

A 4-H Cloverbuds day camp involves youth in a one-day, camp-like setting where educational, hands-on activities occur. 4-H Cloverbuds are not yet eligible to attend overnight 4-H camps.

14. Q: Can 4-H Cloverbuds select a 4-H project to complete?
A: No, 4-H Cloverbuds is activity-focused, meaning that 4-H Cloverbuds participate in supervised, noncompetitive, and age-appropriate events and activities, rather than projects.

15. Q: Why is the 4-H Cloverbuds Program activities-based rather than project-based?
A: Developmentally appropriate activities for 5- and 6-year-olds focus on processes that help a child begin building life skills, such as learning to learn and making friends. The curriculum for 4-H Cloverbuds is designed to help youth begin building a foundation of transferable skills that he or she will be able to apply to a variety of activities as they grow.

16. Q: Are project records kept?
A: Projects are not part of the 4-H Cloverbuds curriculum, keeping a record book is not necessary.

17. Q: Can 4-H Cloverbuds exhibit at the county fair and/or participate in shows and exhibitions?
A: 4-H Cloverbuds are encouraged to showcase a product, poster or notebook of 4-H Cloverbuds activities. Suggested locations include noncompetitive show-and-tell-type displays at county fairs, libraries, schools, 4-H Parents’ Nights, 4-H Achievement Nights, churches, community festivals, parades, etc.

Pets used as part of a show-and-tell presentation cannot be included in overnight exhibits at the fair.

Establishing a separate 4-H Cloverbuds division to showcase entries at the county fair is recommended. To maintain the noncompetitive nature of the showcase, Cloverbuds who participate together receive the same recognition.

A show-and-tell-type experience between a 4-H Cloverbud and an adult or older teen is encouraged to provide positive feedback for their effort.

18 Q: Can 4-H Cloverbuds exhibit livestock?
A: No, Kansas 4-H Cloverbuds do not allow exhibiting livestock. The 4-H Cloverbuds program is tailored to youth, with concerns for a child’s physical, mental and emotional development. The physical difference in stature between a child and livestock can endanger a child. A child’s maturity level and lack of understanding of animal behaviors also can increase the risk to the child. And, while a child may seem capable of handling livestock on the family farm and/or in familiar settings, managing livestock in a public setting can add stress and increase the risks for the child, the livestock and others who may be in the area. Allowing a young child to exhibit livestock in a public arena also increases the liability for all concerned.

Brand names appearing in this publication are for product identification purposes only. No endorsement is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned.

Contents of this publication may be freely reproduced for educational purposes. All other rights reserved. In each case, credit Pamela I. Van Horn, Kansas 4-H Cloverbuds’ Tips for Parents and Children, Kansas State University, May, 2009.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.