Many people in 4-H are ready and willing to help you as a new family in the program.

- **Local 4-H Club**
  You can contact your club leader or another family in your club.
- **County 4-H Office**
  You can contact your County UW-Extension Office. Ask for the county 4-H youth development agent, who is responsible for administering the county 4-H program. Other 4-H staff may also be available to help you.
- **County 4-H Leaders Organization**
  Your County also has an organization of volunteers which supports the 4-H program.

There are many ways for your family to be involved in 4-H. Be active in your club. Participate in club meetings, events and activities. There are many county events and activities as well that your family will enjoy. Watch for information in your county 4-H newsletter. Just a few of the many ways to get involved include: speaking, demonstrations, camps, trips and tours, 4-H project workshops and county fair.

Youth may need adult encouragement to stay involved in 4-H. Many adults become 4-H leaders when their children join 4-H. Leaders do appreciate any assistance parents can give. Your help can range from driving members to activities to supplying refreshments for club meetings. If you decide that you do want to become a leader, you will need to be approved through the Youth Protection process. Ask your 4-H youth development agent or contact your UW-Extension Office for more information.

Adults can help by:

- **Sharing**
  Take an interest in a child's 4-H projects and activities. Listen, look and offer your suggestions, but don't "take over." Learning by doing is the 4-H way. A child learns by his or her mistakes and successes.
- **Preparing**
  Help a child understand the value of projects and presentations done well and on time. Help a child understand the importance of follow through.
- **Being There**
  A child will gain more from 4-H by regular attendance at club meetings and involvement in 4-H activities. Attend meetings with them. Get to know the 4-H club leader. Lend a hand whenever you can.

UW Extension "An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and American with Disabilities (ADA) requirements."

© 2004 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. Developed by the Wisconsin 4-H Office, 431 Lowell Hall, 610 Langdon St., Madison, WI 53703.

The 4-H name and emblem are federally protected under Title 18 US Code 707.

To order multiple copies of this publication, call tollfree: 1-877-WIS-PUBS (947-7827). To see more Cooperative Extension Information, visit our web site: http://cecommerce.uwex.edu.

Wisconsin

Welcome to the Family!

Wisconsin 4-H

4-H is a family affair where youth and adults get together to learn new things, meet new friends and have fun. This guide is designed for new 4-H members and their families.

We're pleased that you've joined us!

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AS A NEW 4-H MEMBER

4-H is for all boys and girls in grades 1-13 (one year out of high school), wherever you live. If you're in first or second grade, you may participate in 4-H as a Cloverbud. Cloverbuds can participate in most 4-H projects and activities, including the county fair.

A 4-H project is a topic that you want to learn more about during the year. 4-H members usually sign up for one or more projects each year. You'll have many projects to consider, from art to woodworking, from trees to rabbits, from clothing to small engines. Project leaders will help you with your projects through meetings and project materials.

4-H events and activities are additional fun things to do in a club. Examples include music, drama, team sports, camps and trips. The activities available to you will vary with your club. Check them out.

A 4-H leader is an older youth or adult who volunteers to help lead a 4-H club. They work with you to plan and conduct meetings, projects and activities. They guide you as you learn new skills in 4-H.

As a 4-H'er you will belong to a 4-H club in your community or school. To find out which 4-H club you belong to, contact your local County 4-H Office. Look in the phone book under County Government.

Some facts about 4-H:

4-H Colors.....Green and white

4-H Emblem.....Green four-leaf clover, with a white "H" on each leaflet

4-H Pledge.....Said while recognizing the 4-H flag:

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.

4-H Philosophy..... "To learn by doing"

4-H Membership..... 10 million members worldwide

My 4-H Club Name: _____

Meets (where): _____

My Club Leaders (name, phone):

_____

_____

My 4-H Club Members (name, phone):

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Try to attend all of your club meetings. Arrive on time and plan to stay until the meeting ends. If you're going to miss a meeting, let a club leader know in advance. 4-H meetings are held to:

- Make decisions about your club and projects
- Discuss new ideas
- Build your leadership and life skills
- Get to know other members
- Participate in community service projects
- Learn and have fun

Read your county 4-H newsletter! It's written for you and your family. You'll find out about upcoming 4-H events for you and your club. Keep your newsletter and other 4-H materials in a safe place.

What you need to know as a new member of the 4-H family:

History

4-H started out as corn clubs for boys and canning clubs for girls. They were organized early in this century by public school educators who wanted to broaden the knowledge and experience of their students. 4-H became an official part of the Cooperative Extension Service in 1914. By the mid 1920's 4-H was well on its way to becoming a significant national program for youth. 4-H is an American idea that has spread around the world. Throughout its long history, 4-H has constantly adapted to the ever-changing needs and interests of youth.

4-H World Wide

4-H programs are conducted in over 3,000 counties of the United States, as well as District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and The Virgin Islands. More than 80 countries around the world have youth programs similar to 4-H, with an overall enrollment of about 10 million young people.

In Wisconsin, 4-H is a youth organization that belongs to the members, their families, and other interested adults who serve as volunteer leaders. Professional leadership is given by Cooperative Extension faculty of the University of Wisconsin. Support for 4-H programs is a joint effort of local county government, the University of Wisconsin and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The purpose of 4-H is to provide real-life experiences for youth through a fun and practical, learn-by-doing, educational program and to provide opportunities for adults to work with youth in their development.

4-H is open to any youth within the grades of 1-13, regardless of race, color, creed, or religion, national origin, ancestry or gender.

Who Can Join

To sign up your child for 4-H, he or she will need to complete a 4-H Member Enrollment Form. Your 4-H club leader will have a copy. Please follow the instructions and make sure that all parts of this form are completed. When your child is an official 4-H member, her/his name will be added to the county 4-H mailing list.

Cost?

4-H costs are minimal. Individual clubs may charge dues to cover expenses. Many projects have literature expenses. Some project areas, such as photography and livestock, may require extra investments for supplies and equipment.

4-H Clubs

A chartered 4-H club is a group of five or more youth, guided by an adult 4-H leader approved through the Youth Protection process. Each club has an educational plan which meets the purposes of the 4-H program. The club meets on a continuing basis, usually once a month. Youth are involved in leadership and decision-making roles because the club "belongs" to members. Many clubs have officers (president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and reporter) that are elected by the club members. Dues are optional and decided by the club.

WELCOME AND ENJOY YOUR FIRST 4-H YEAR!