

Taylor County 4-H

Family Handbook



**A GUIDE FOR NEW 4-H MEMBERS
AND THEIR FAMILIES**



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4-H is a youth organization for young people who want to learn and to have fun. 4-H is **family focused** and volunteer led by **youth and adults in partnership**. Youth “learn by doing” through local clubs and projects. County project events and activities are intended to increase opportunities for young people and supplement and support the 4-H Clubs.

Welcome to Taylor County 4-H!

We are excited to see that you are interested in the Taylor County 4-H program and would love to help you learn more about the program, processes, and background of 4-H.

In this packet, you will find a lot of helpful information that you can look over to help you understand the program and to use to assist you on your 4-H journey. You can also talk to families already involved in the program to learn more. I'm a great resource for you to use as well. Please never hesitate to ask questions—I want to be sure you know what's going on and how to do things, so you have the best experience possible.

Please feel free to contact me about any questions you may have or about other opportunities offered for youth in 4-H. I'm here to help!

Hope to see you around,

Julie Diepenbrock

Taylor County 4-H
Program Educator





About 4-H: The Basics



What is 4-H?

4-H is a youth organization that belongs to the members, their families, and other interested adults who serve as volunteer leaders. It is a community of young people across America, learning leadership, civic engagement, and life skills.

Professional leadership is given by the University of Wisconsin Division of Extension faculty and staff. 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 4-H year is from October 1 until September 30.

The re-enrollment period is from the first week in September through November 1 through 4HOnline.

Who can join 4-H?

Any youth in kindergarten through the year following high school can be a member of a 4-H club. Cloverbuds are ages Kindergarten-2nd grade.

Who conducts the 4-H Program?

4-H educational opportunities for youth are provided by volunteers who serve as a part of the 4-H program in their community. Volunteers who give leadership to the local 4-H program consist of youth, parents, and other interested adults in the community. The Extension office is also home to the Taylor County 4-H Program Educator, who assists with the overall 4-H experience, volunteer development, and outreach.

What are the 4-H Emblems & Symbols?

The National 4-H emblem is a four leaf clover with the letter “H” written on each leaf. It is a federally recognized logo, so there are policies that need to be followed for printing (i.e. t-shirts, etc.).



The colors of 4-H are green and white. The white background of the flag symbolizes purity. The green 4-H emblem is nature’s most common color in the great outdoors, and the green is also the color of springtime, life, and youth.



The four H’s stand for HEAD, HEART, HANDS, and HEALTH. These four H’s represent the fourfold training and development in which members participate—which is described in the 4-H pledge.

The 4-H Pledge

4-H members should learn the national 4-H pledge, as it, and the Pledge of Allegiance, are generally said at the beginning of each club meeting. There are hand gestures that go with the pledge as well. These can be learned at a club meeting. The 4-H pledge is shown to the right.

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.



The Learning Experiences



4-H is about creating experiences that help youth, and adults, learn in new ways and gain new experiences. Below, you will find the general learning experiences that you will be involved in through the 4-H program:

4-H Meetings.... are held for a variety of reasons. Most organized community clubs meet monthly to discuss general business, conduct recreation, and learn something new. Project groups may meet more or less often.

"Learn by doing."

Is the 4-H slogan and can be seen in all of the 4-H practices.

These learning experiences highlight just that.

4-H Projects....should fit individual member's interests and should fit into the member's home and community life. By "project" we mean work done with animals, articles made, crops grown, or some other definite undertaking planned and carried out by the 4-H'er. For a list of projects available in Taylor County for members and leaders, check out our website. Through project work, 4-H members can learn improved ways of doing things, which serve as examples for others and for the community. Members can also learn about subjects that interest them as possible career choices.

4-H Activities....such as demonstrations, public speaking, exhibiting, and tours that center on 4-H projects. They supplement the project and add greater depth to it. Various activities related to project areas are planned and conducted on county, state, and national levels. Singing at a nursing home, playing softball, and making animal toys/treats for the humane society are examples of these types of activities.

"To make the best better."

Is the 4-H motto and truly is the focus behind the program. It is all about growing and developing to become the best that you can be.

4-H Events....are most often thought of as once-a-year happenings, such as an annual recognition program for youth and adults, a music/drama festival, a family 4-H picnic, the fair, state level competitions, or summer camp. During these types of events, 4-H members might present aspects of their 4-H projects and activity work.

What it means to be a 4-Her

- 4-H teaches members how to think, not what to think.
- Every 4-H member needs to be noticed, to feel important, and to be praised.
- 4-Her's should be their own best exhibit.
- Good examples and attitudes are the best help members can receive.
- Learning how to do a project is more important than the project itself.
- Imagination is more important than knowledge.
- 4-H members look to involve family members and friends in what they are doing and working on.
- Generally speaking, there is more than one good way of doing most things.
- Competition is a natural human trait and should be recognized as such in 4-H work. It should be given no more emphasis than other 4-H fundamentals.
- No 4-H award is worth sacrificing the reputation of a 4-H member or leader.
- 4-H is not trying to replace the home, church, or school...only supplement them.

4-H Terminology



If you are new to the 4-H program, it can be a lot. 4-H has a long and rich history—we are over 119 years old! Sometimes this means that volunteers, families, and staff may forget that the terminology we use is not something that everyone understands yet. Hopefully this will help you out a bit on that front, however, **NEVER** hesitate to ask questions!

- **4-H Program Committees:** Groups of youth and adult volunteers whose purpose is to meet the educational need of 4-H members in the project or activity area and plan and conduct county level activities and meetings.
- **4-H Program Educator:** A professional who guides, teaches, and administers the 4-H program. An individual who works for the University of Wisconsin Madison Division of Extension (Extension office).
- **Awards Banquet:** An event where youth, volunteers, and parents receive recognition for their hard work and dedication within the 4-H program. This event is typically held in November.
- **Charter:** A 4-H Charter is granted to 4-H clubs when the minimum requirements are met to have a 4-H club. Club leaders with club input are in charge of ensuring that club charters are completed each year (due on September 1).
- **Cloverbud:** These are youth who are in kindergarten through 2nd grade. Cloverbuds can only enroll in the Cloverbud project.
- **General Club Leader:** An adult volunteer who is responsible for the organizational part of the club.
- **Educational Experiences:** Opportunities available through county, state, national, and international programs for youth to travel to develop life skills.
- **Enrollment:** How one becomes a part of the 4-H program is through completing enrollment on 4hOnline. Each year, following when you first join 4-H, you will have to fill out re-enrollment (starting at the beginning of September).
- **Event/Program:** A planned, educational opportunity for 4-H members to learn through group participation. Events are held at the club, county, regional, state, and national levels.

- **Fair:** An event where 4-H members may exhibit their projects. Information about the county fair is distributed from the Taylor County Fair Board, which is a separate entity to Extension. They plan and execute the event.
- **Federation of Taylor County 4-H:** This organization is made up of all 4-H volunteer leaders in the county. This is the 4-H policy-making group, as well as private funding source for a number of county-level 4-H programs.
- **Market Animal Show and Sale (MASS):** A group that is a separate entity from 4-H, but serves as a means for youth to participate in the livestock show and sale.
- **M.P.E. Process:** The application process for requesting funding from the Federation of Taylor County 4-H for educational experience sponsorships and 4-H Key Awards. The process includes the completion of a record book, one page letter of interest, an interview, and following the member expectations.
- **Projects:** Areas of interest for learning and skill development which can be chosen from the list of available projects in the county.
- **Project Leader:** A volunteer who helps 4-H members learn and master skills in a specific area of interest.
- **Project Literature:** The information is written by University specialists and serves as suggested areas to study in your 4-H projects. (Most literature is financed by the Federation of Taylor County 4-H.)
- **Record Book:** A report of 4-H accomplishments in projects and activities during the current year. Members who complete a record book must submit it to their Club/General Leader. These Leaders turn in the record books to the Extension office by September 1 to be judged at the county level to determine achievement, awards, and educational experience sponsorship.
- **Youth Leader:** A 4-H member who is 11 years of age or older and is enrolled in the Youth Leadership project. They take an active part in helping the younger members in their club. By doing this, they grow, mature, and learn leadership skills.
- **Youth Leaders Organization (YLO):** A group of young people in grades 6-12 that meet to focus on building their leadership skills through community service, planning educational opportunities, and more.



Stay Informed



It is important to have good communication and we do the best to make sure you know what is happening in the 4-H world. Here are some things you should know about how to stay informed about upcoming 4-H events, deadlines, and opportunities:

- **Taylor County Newsletter:** The bi-monthly Taylor County 4-H newsletter mailed to each 4-H family. It contains valuable countywide meeting information, project news, educational information, and family fun ideas. It is also posted on the Extension Taylor County website.
- **Taylor County 4-H Email Blasts:** These email blasts are generally sent out bi-weekly and include updates and deadlines for events, programs, and meetings. These are also posted on the Extension Taylor County website.
- **Taylor County 4-H Facebook Page:** The Facebook Page is used to share upcoming events and view photos of past events. Some clubs and projects use this for communication.
- **Taylor County 4-H Website:** The Extension website has a whole area dedicated for 4-H. It includes forms and applications, enrollment and re-enrollment information, facts about 4-H, club information, project information, current and previous newsletters, upcoming programs, and so much more! The website can be found here at: <https://taylor.extension.wisc.edu/>
- **Leaders:** If you have questions, always ask your club or project leaders! The 4-H Program Educator is always here to help as well!

Parents are very important to the success a child will have in the 4-H program.

Parents are encouraged to attend monthly meeting and project meetings with their child. All countywide events are open, and parents are encouraged to attend them with their children. The parents' key roles are supporting the child's commitments, helping the child think through decisions, and seeing the child reach their goals.

What is a 4-H Club?

A 4-H Club is a group of 4-H members who meet regularly to conduct business, learn about projects, take part in community service events, and enjoy recreation. These groups have elected officers, bylaws, and a treasury maintained by fundraising efforts.

Most 4-H clubs meet monthly. Members plan a yearly program for meetings and events in advance. All 4-H members, volunteers, and parents are encouraged to attend to share information about the club and about county, regional, state, and national 4-H events.

Clubs have a set of written rules for the operation of the club and these are called the club bylaws. Be sure you become familiar with your club's rules early in the year. If your club needs help developing or revising bylaws, contact the Extension Office.

Taylor County has seven 4-H clubs, which are all listed on the next page with the location they are located in, the club leader and their contact information, as well as their scheduled meeting times.

Please note that the meeting times can change, so it is always important to check in with the club leader before attending a meeting.



Taylor County 4-H Clubs

The 4-H club you belong to should be a fun learning experience for youth and families alike. Each club has the same generic principles and policies, but they all do things in their own unique way. Find a club that best fits you and your family! Also, if you join the program and then find another club fits you and your family's needs better, you can switch clubs.

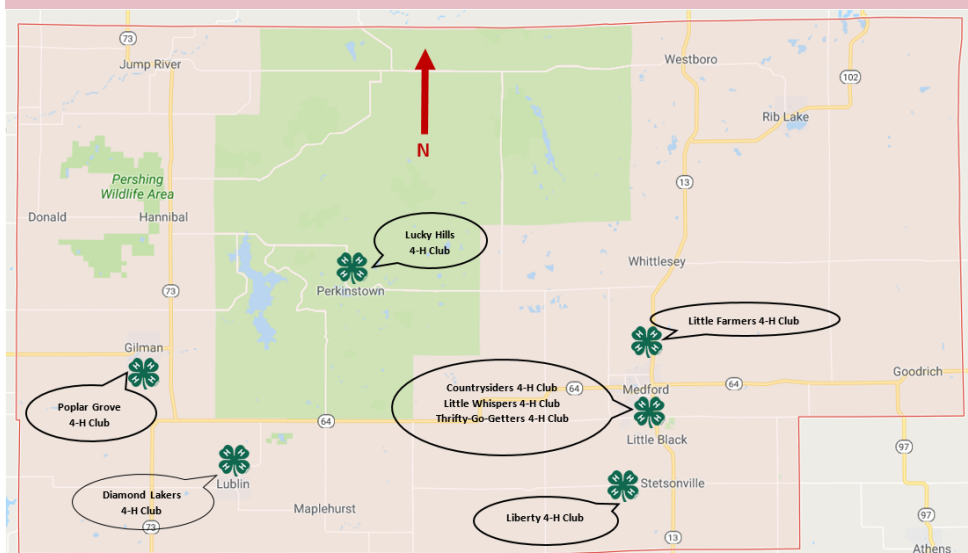
Just let the Extension Office know.

- Countrysiders
 - Club Leader: Wendy Rudolph (715)748-0961
 - Meetings: 2nd Sunday of the Month @4:30 in Medford
- Diamond Lakers
 - Club Leader: Paula Dubiak (715)512-0250 & Dorothy Halida (715)669-3655
 - Meetings: 1st Monday of the Month @6:30 in Lublin
- Liberty
 - Club Leader: Kathy Schumacher glws@tds.net
 - Meetings: 3rd Sunday of the Month @6:30 in Medford
- Little Farmers
 - Club Leader: Violet Jensen (715)748-4481
 - Meetings: Days and times vary
- Little Whispers
 - Club Leader: Christy Tomandl (715)748-9816
 - Meetings: 1st Monday of the Month @ 6:30 in Medford



- Poplar Grove
 - Club Leaders: Cheryl Bolstad (715)447-5428 & Wendy Okerlicki (715)644-0854
 - Meetings: 2nd Sunday of the Month @ 7:30 in Gilman
- Thrifty-Go-Getters
 - Club Leader: Amanda Jensen (715)748-3119
 - Meetings: 1st Monday of the Month @ 7 in Medford

Please note that the date and location of club meetings is subject to change. If you are looking to visit a club meeting be sure to contact the club leader in advance to ensure you have the most up-to-date information.





4-H Leaders Federation



What is its purpose?

To plan, implement, support, and evaluate the Taylor County 4-H Program. The purpose of the Federation of Taylor County 4-H shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Promote positive youth development through the promotion of the Taylor County 4-H program.
- Plan, conduct, and evaluate the county 4-H program through the use of an elected Executive Committee, standing committees, and ad-hoc committees with the assistance of the county extension office and other outside resources.
- Review ideas, plans, and suggestions brought up by county committees, local clubs, and leaders.
- Provide recognition for members for county project achievement.
- Fairly select members for educational experience sponsorships and scholarships.

Funding Requests to the Federation of Taylor County 4-H are for YOU to utilize.

The Federation of Taylor County 4-H includes money in their budget to help defray some costs of 4-H educational experiences or activities in which Taylor County 4-H members and leaders participate. The amount the Federation is able to contribute in a given year depends on the success of fundraising efforts, the amounts spent in other budget areas, and the number of applicants and level of requests. To submit a funding request, fill out the 'Reimbursement Voucher'.

Instructions and the form can be found at:

<https://taylor.extension.wisc.edu/4-h/forms-applications>

Who can participate?

All youth leaders and certified project and club leaders currently enrolled in the Taylor County 4-H program can be members of the Federation of Taylor County 4-H. To become an executive board member, you must attend the Annual Meeting in November for elections.



Wisconsin 4-H Policy



Wisconsin 4-H has their own 4-H policy, based off of the national requirements, that are expected to be followed. Be sure to read over this policy when joining the program. Below are some quick facts about the policy to get you started. The complete policy can be found on our website at: <https://taylor.extension.wisc.edu/files/2021/05/WI4HYouthDevelPolicies-updated-6-2017-no-highlights.pdf>

CLUBS: To be officially recognized as a 4-H Club in Wisconsin, you must meet the needed requirements.

- The 4-H club year is October 1 to September 30
- There must be at least 5 youth from 3 different families
- Meetings must happen on a regular basis
- Clubs must submit an annual charter

MEMBERSHIP GUIDELINES: 4-H membership is an educational program whose membership/participation is based on grade, rather than age. Taylor County has an additional set of membership guidelines that are posted on the website and are in each newsletter. Please be sure to read these guidelines prior to enrollment.

YOUTH PROTECTION: We follow the Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development Youth Protection process. To learn more, please visit our website. For volunteers to be part of the 4-H program, they must follow the volunteer screening process which includes a background check, Volunteer in Preparation (VIP) training, and mandated reporter training.

PROGRAM SAFETY REGULATIONS: There are safety requirements and expectations put into place for 4-Hers. Read full policy for more details.



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Record Books



Are an individual report of the 4-H accomplishments in projects and activities during the current year. Members should complete and submit a record book to be eligible for county awards, sponsorships, and scholarships. Record books are usually submitted to the Extension office in early September.

The purpose of Record Books are to:

- Tell what you did in 4-H this year. (Oct. 1 to Sept. 30)
- Strive for an overall storytelling effect.
- How well does your record book's combination of goals, learning experiences, accomplishments, teaching experiences, pictures, clippings, and activities report your 4-H story?
- Help the 4-H'er learn how important record keeping is in everyday life and their future.
- Help the 4-H'er develop a good habit of record keeping.
- Help the 4-H'er reflect on their learning.
- Create a memory book of all their involvements, accomplishments, and knowledge gained through 4-H!

How to complete a Record Book:

Information and forms for Record Books are found on our website or can be picked up in the Extension Office. You will also see reminders in the newsletter and email blasts about when record books are due to the Extension Office. Here is the

link to find more Record Book Information: <https://taylor.extension.wisc.edu/4-h/4-h-clubs/record-books/>

FUN FACT: Record books come in SUPER handy when you start filling out scholarship applications, college applications, or job applications. They are a nice resume of your experiences that are handy to pull from when going through the stress of having to apply for jobs, scholarships, or colleges.

Picking the Right Projects

A “project” is simply a topic that you can explore. Projects are generally shown at the County Fair, and sometimes throughout the year at other 4-H events (i.e. Festival of the Arts, Livestock shows, etc.). Projects give you the opportunity to try new things, keep doing the things that you love, or learn about something that you are interested in.

4-H has over a hundred projects—ranging from art to woodworking, computers to rabbits, and clothing to small engines. There are a LOT of opportunities to explore projects through the 4-H program.

Check out more on projects through this website: fyi.uwex.edu/wi4hprojects/

Don't forget, some projects have specific requirements (like certain animal projects) that require things to be completed before a show. Also, in order to show projects at the Taylor County Fair you must have them entered into 4hOnline by **March 1**.



4-H Enrollment



Log on to 4hOnline to enroll in the Taylor County 4-H Program. You simply need to follow the instructions at the top of the page and begin entering your family information to start the enrollment process.

The website is as follows: <https://v2.4online.com>

Enrollment deadlines include:

- Enrollment and re-enrollment is open at the beginning of September
- November 1: Deadline for re-enrollment in 4hOnline
- March 1: Absolute last day to enroll (through 4hOnline) in projects

New members must be enrolled by March 1 to be eligible to show at the Taylor County Fair.



4-H Parent/Guardian Role



Responsibilities: To assist or encourage your child and other children in the club or group to:

- Set realistic project and achievement goals
- Accomplish those goals, where appropriate
- Participate in club, regional, state, national, and international programs
- Use positive reinforcement of each child's part in the group
- Provide transportation to and from meetings and special activities
- Attend meetings and special events of the club or group

Time Required: Approximately 1-5 hours per month (providing transportation, attending meetings, helping child with projects or activity work; varies according to task)

Training Opportunities: Contact Extension office for Adult Volunteers in Preparation (VIP) Training. This training is required for any adult who would like to be a project leader, activity leader, club leader, or chaperone.

Parents who wish to enroll as a leader are encouraged to, but it is not required.



Contact Information

Below is a space for you to write down some important club and contact information for your record.

4-H Club/Group Name: _____

Location of Meetings: _____

Meeting Time/Date: _____

Club/Group Volunteer Leaders and Important Contacts:

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Title (if applicable): _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Title (if applicable): _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Title (if applicable): _____



Extension Taylor County

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Taylor County Extension Office

Located in Taylor County
County/USDA Service Center
925 Donald Street, Room 103
Medford, WI 54451
Phone: (715) 748-3327
Fax: (715) 748-9772
<https://taylor.extension.wisc.edu/>

Julie Diepenbrock

4-H Program Educator
Office Phone: (715) 748-3327 x4
Cell: (608) 381-2435
Email: julie.diepenbrock@wisc.edu

Taylor County 4-H Program

Direct Website: <https://taylor.extension.wisc.edu/4-h/>
How to join: <https://taylor.extension.wisc.edu/4-h/4-h-youth-members/>
4hOnline Website: <https://www.wi.4honline.com/>

Taylor County Extension Staff

4-H Program Educator.....Julie Diepenbrock
Community Resource Development Educator.....Michelle Grimm
Food Wise Nutrition Educator.....Brenda Fierke
Agricultural Educator.....Sandy Stuttgen
Program Assistant.....Kelly Phillips