



May, 2019

Dear Area 4-H Health and Safety Speaking Participant:

Congratulations on being selected as one of your county's representatives to this year's area 4-H Health and Safety Speaking Contest. We invite you to participate in the contest based on your area that follows:

Area II, July 8, 2019, OARDC, Fisher Auditorium, Wooster, Ohio

Area III, June 28, 2019, Nationwide and Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center, Columbus, Ohio

Area IV, July 2, 2019, Nationwide and Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center, Columbus, Ohio

Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. with the contest orientation beginning at 10:00 a.m. The Senior, Junior and Team/Skit Divisions will be conducted simultaneously. Up to three (3) Senior contestants will your area's representatives to the Ohio State Fair competition on Wednesday, July 24, 2019. Up to three (3) junior contestants and up to three (3) team/skit winners will also be selected to participate in the state contest on July 24 if the minimum score of 70 is met.

A reception for all participants and guests will be held immediately following the contest (approximately 12:00 p.m.). The contest awards and reception are sponsored by Ohio's Electric Cooperatives, Inc. Winners for each category will be announced near the end of the reception. All county 4-H youth representatives will receive recognition for their participation. Combined score sheets from the judges will also be available after the reception to help 4-H members progress in their speaking abilities.

As a participant you need to be aware of the rules regarding this speaking activity. Both health and safety topics are permitted in all contest categories as long as they are "human related". If you do not already have a copy of the health and safety speaking contest rules, you should visit the Ohio 4-H website <[www.ohio4h.org](http://www.ohio4h.org)> for a complete listing of contest rules and score sheets under the *Families >>>Ohio State Fair>>>Non-Livestock 4-H Guide Book* section.

Rules to review prior to the area (and/or state contests):

- Select a topic of health or safety that affects you personally, or your friends, family, community or the general public. A local example and supporting statistics (with sources cited in the speech) are required. Speeches should be written/prepared by the 4-H member(s) giving the presentation.
- Review individual or team/skit score sheets for time limitations and specific speaking time requirements for team/skit presenters. Score sheets also give specific scoring guidelines for content, organization, delivery (individuals) and overall performance (skits only). Pay particular attention to the local example and statistics (with references cited) areas as these sections are where participants are commonly marked down in evaluation scores.

- Prompting (i.e., scripts, verbal coaching, signaling and note cards) may not be used in any speaking category at area and state contests. Individuals or teams using prompting will be penalized 10 points. If a participant stumbles in their thoughts, no specific points will be deducted, but if a participant(s) sits down and then re-starts, the ten point deduction will be taken.
- Dress appropriately for the speech being given, including shoes for all participants. No costumes will be permitted for individual talks. Teams/skits may use costumes, but must be fully clothed and wearing shoes at all times.
- **NO** visual aids are permitted for the individual speeches. Props **are** permitted in the team/skit category, but should not include trademarked or “brand names” of products and illegal items. Live animals may not be used as props. No posters or printed materials that could be used as prompts will be allowed. Individuals other than the team/skit participants may assist in bringing props to the presentation area, but shall have no further physical contact with props after that point. Coaching for placement of props **prior** to the presentation start time is permitted for teams/skits.
- Participants will be introduced by number and title of talk. Please refrain from re-introducing yourself as this may deter from getting the attention of the audience at the start of your presentation.
- Topics should be appropriate for youth and adult audiences.
- Avoid the use of brand names (both divisions) and products (skits).
- Microphones will NOT be used at the area level.
- You may NOT speak directly to the judges until after the reception winners’ announcements. At that point, only conversations related to understanding your scores and learning will be permitted.
- A member who has been a winner in the county or area contest prior to the current year is eligible to participate as long as he/she did not win the Ohio State Fair Health and Safety Speaking Contest the previous year in the same division.
- Winners of previous and current trips to National 4-H Congress are eligible to participate.

If you have any questions, please contact your county Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development or the state coordinator, Dr. Judy Villard Overocker, at the Richland County Extension Office (419-747-8755 or [villard.1@osu.edu](mailto:villard.1@osu.edu)).

Congratulations on representing your county at the area Health and Safety Speaking Contest. Good luck with your presentation at the area contest on June 28, July 2 or July 8.

Sincerely yours,



Judy Villard Overocker, Ph.D.  
 Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development  
 County Extension Director and  
 State Health & Safety Speaking Coordinator

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY JUDGES HEALTH & SAFETY SPEAKING CONTESTS

1. Can people leave the competition? People are encouraged to stay in the presentation room for the duration of the contest. If they must leave, they are to do so quietly and between speeches.
2. What is the proper attire for the contests? Appropriate and suitable presentation dress is required in all contests, including wearing shoes at all times. Contestants in Senior and Junior Divisions may not wear a costume, T-shirts with a printed message, hats or other types of added apparel. Creative dress/costuming is encouraged, but not required in the team/skit division. Participants in all divisions must wear shoes.
3. Can contestants use note cards? Note cards are not permitted for the junior, senior or team/skit participants at the preliminary and state levels. Deductions will be made for those using note cards.
4. Are the contests timed? If so, who keeps the time? Each contest is timed according to the time limits printed at the bottom of each division's score sheet. Points shall be deducted for participants who do not meet the designated time restrictions. In the team/skit division, each participant **MUST** have at least one minute of speaking time (shall be noted by the judges of that division). The Room Coordinators are responsible for timing each presentation. After the presentation, the Room Coordinator shall physically show the time of the presentation to the judges so the time may be recorded on the score sheet. Timing will begin when the contestant(s) begins with their first words (or action in the team/skit division).
5. What is the procedure of profanity is used during a speech? Profanity does not portray a positive image of the 4-H program; therefore, profanity during a presentation or printed on a T-shirt or prop is forbidden. Judges shall grade presentations negatively for use of profanity.
6. Can prompters be used? Prompting (i.e., scripts, verbal coaching, signaling and note cards) may not be used in any speaking category at preliminary and state contests. Individuals or teams using prompting will automatically be penalized 10 points. If a participant stumbles in their thoughts, no specific points will be deducted, but if a participant(s) sits down and then re-starts, the ten-point deduction will be taken. Completion of a speech is always encouraged.
7. Can visual aids be used? **NO** visual aids are permitted for the individual speeches (Senior or Junior Divisions). Props **are** permitted in the team/skit category, but should not include trademarked or "brand names" of products. Live animals may not be used as props. No posters, T-shirts, or printed materials that could be viewed/used as prompts will be allowed. Individuals (i.e., guests of participants) other than the team/skit participants may assist in bringing props to the presentation area, but shall have no further physical contact with props after that point. Coaching for placement of props **prior** to the presentation start time is permitted, but are forbidden once the action/words begin and throughout the remainder of the presentation. Participants should **NOT** use any type of prop that is messy or hard to clean up (i.e., straw, baby powder, oils).
8. Will each judge select a winner? Teams of judges (at least two judges per division) should work independently throughout the speeches, making notes for later reference. Later, the team of judges for each division will collaborate to select the appropriate number of winners and alternates. Judges will be instructed to be consistent in their scoring with all participants. The team of judges for each division shall agree on the winners (outright or through compromise).

9. Are judges to write comments on the score sheets? Judges will be instructed to make reference notes about each presentation's positive qualities and suggested areas for improvement (constructive criticism). Each judge shall keep their own comments. During selections, judges will share comments collaboratively. Judges shall work together to make a "combined" score sheet for each presentation on a new score sheet. Winners must have the highest scores – no ties accepted. On the combined score sheet, praise and encouragement will be encouraged in large doses, plus listing areas of suggested improvement. By far, the positive comments should outweigh the constructive comments. The goal in the 4-H program is to help the contestants grow as confident and polished public speakers. Note: please write comments as quickly and thoroughly as possible. We want to keep the contest moving steadily.

10. Are gestures allowed by the speakers? In the individual talks, gestures should be used carefully and minimally. If the audience begins to pay more attention to the gestures than the contents of the talk, then the gestures are too much. There may be times in the team/skit division when gestures and/or physical movement may add to the interest and creativity of the presentation. Again, don't let the gestures lead the presentation in any division. Frequent movement (i.e., hand movement, walking, pacing) in individual presentations is discouraged.

11. Will the contestants be introduced? Should they repeat their name when they begin their presentations? Contestants will be introduced by number and title of talk by the Room Coordinators. Repeating this information is redundant and might deter from keeping the audience's attention; therefore, participants **should not** re-introduce themselves. Judges do not mark off for this repeated information on score sheets at preliminary contests, but do mark that this repetition should be eliminated from future presentations, including the Ohio State Fair competition.

12. How will the contestants be put in order? Contestants shall present their talks in a random order as designated at the time programs are published. Presentations will be given in the order printed in the program at the preliminary and state contests unless the Room Coordinator announces the order otherwise and prior to the start of that particular division. The Room Coordinators shall notify the judges of the order of presentation order prior to the start of the division.

13. Use of illegal substances - While not all laws of the State of Ohio are printed in Ohio 4-H's health and safety speaking contest rules, these laws do apply. Use and/or possession of illegal substances in a 4-H presentation are forbidden. Inappropriate items include, but are not limited to, alcohol/alcohol containers, tobacco/tobacco products, illicit drugs/paraphernalia and illegal weapons (i.e., guns, bows, arrows and ammunition).

14. Are questions allowed after health and safety talks? NO! There is no time allotted for questions from the judges and/or the audience after any division of health and safety speaking.

15. Speaking to Judges: Contestants and their guests MAY NOT speak to any judge until after the announcement of winners. Then, conversations with judges should be in a learning mode and not critical, threatening, or negative in any manner. With inappropriate comments, the contestant and their guests will be asked to vacate from the contest site. Disruptive and/or inappropriate behavior by a participant and/or their guests may be grounds for dismissal from preliminary and state contests for the remainder of the current year.