

# Making the Best 4-H Clubs Better

## Intended Audience

- New and returning 4-H club members and families

## Lesson Objectives

Club members and parents will:

- Gain a general overview of the 4-H program
- Learn where to find necessary information about the 4-H program
- Find out about county specific dates and information
- Get to know other members

**Time:** 20 minutes

## Equipment and supplies

- Pencils
- Resources:
  - “4-H Family Bingo Cards” and call list for “4-H Family Bingo”
  - Ohio 4-H Family Guides
  - Local 4-H Calendar, etc.
- Handouts:
  - “Welcome to 4-H! A guide for new 4-H club members.”
- Small bingo prizes

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## Do ahead

- Review lesson
- Gather equipment and supplies
- Copy handout, one per member

## New Family Orientation

### BACKGROUND

As a new family comes into the 4-H program, volunteers and community clubs are on the front line to create a welcoming environment and make sure that youth are aware of 4-H policies and procedures. The 4-H lingo, as well as the many rules and regulations, often can be overwhelming for a new family.

Many of our 4-H volunteers and families have been around the program for so long that these things become second nature. They don't consider the fact that a new 4-H family may have no idea what they are talking about when they use words like skillathon, QA, PAS or Cloverbud. As new youth join your club, do you truly take the time to welcome them and make an effort to include them? Volunteers and members need to take special consideration to help make these families feel welcome so they can develop the same interest and belief in the program that so many long-time 4-H families have established.

The 4-H program offers more than 180 projects that vary in subject area and level of expertise. Because of this variety, it is easy for new members and their families to feel overwhelmed. Enrolling in a 4-H project is required for 4-H participation because it enables 4-H'ers to set and meet goals.

Eligibility for 4-H membership begins when a child is enrolled in kindergarten and is age 5 as of January 1 of the current year (Cloverbuds). Membership to the 4-H club program begins when a child is enrolled in 3rd grade and is at least age 8 as of January 1 of the current year. Ohio 4-H membership ends December 31 of the year in which an individual attains the age of 19.



## Sources

- “Off to a Good Start With Your 4-H Volunteer Experience,” Jackie Krieger- Fink, Nikki Eyre, Sara Kleon, Vicki Schwartz, Teresa Stone, Minnie Taylor, Brenda Young and Carolyn
- Wilson, OSU Extension “Welcome to 4-H! A guide for new 4-H club members.” Teresa
- Johnson, OSU Extension Paulding County “A Parent’s Guide... Making the Best Better for Your Child,” Patty House, OSU

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## WHAT TO DO

### Activity: 4-H Family Bingo

- Pass out “4-H Family Bingo Cards” and pencils.
- Instruct participants to answer as many questions on their bingo cards as they can by introducing themselves to others and finding someone in the room who knows the answer to each of the questions.
  - They should write the answer on their card and/or have the person they find sign their first name on that bingo spot.
  - Participants can use individuals in the room or other resources that you have available (Family Guides, newsletters, dates pages, fair book, etc. to find the answers)
- Give participants approximately 10 minutes to complete this task.
- Next, begin calling out the bingo call list. If the members have answered that question on their card they can circle that spot (you can have prizes to give as people get *Bingo*).
- As each item is called, have someone share the answer to that question and provide an explanation as necessary so that everyone gets accurate information. Be sure to explain where to find the information as well, so they can access it in the future.

## TALK IT OVER

### Reflect:

- What is one new thing that you learned about your county or state 4-H program today?
- What is one thing that you were surprised to learn through this activity?

### Apply:

- Share one personal expectation for the coming 4-H year.
- Have returning members find a new member to mentor through their first year in 4-H. Talk about how they will do this. (See *Members + Mentors = Retention* lesson for ways to implement this idea.)

## ADDITIONAL LINKS

- [www.ohio4h.org](http://www.ohio4h.org)
- County website: [www.countyname.osu.edu](http://www.countyname.osu.edu)