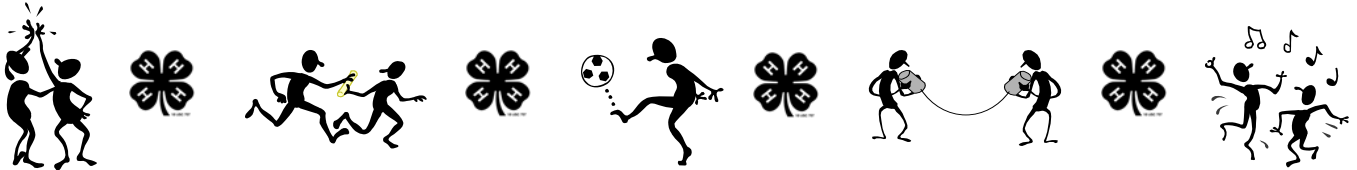




Ohio 4-H Cloverbud Connections



Fall 2004 Issue

For 4-H Cloverbud Volunteers working with grades K - 2

Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: 4-H Cloverbuds and After-School Programs

The interest in after-school programs has gained momentum in recent years. These programs meet working parents' need for a safe place for their children and, they're a prime time to promote positive youth development. Current research shows that youth benefit from consistent participation in quality after-school programs. This is due in large part to the positive relationships with caring adults and the variety of interesting activities that they experience in these settings.

After-school staff members are eager for engaging learning activities to enhance their program. 4-H Cloverbuds and after-school programs are a winning combination because they share similar goals. The theme-based, experiential activities in the Cloverbud curriculum will work well within the structure of most after-school programs. Working with existing after-school programs is a great way to offer 4-H to youth who otherwise might not have the opportunity to participate.

To work effectively with after-school programs, there are several points to keep in mind. Typically, programs operate in shared space (e.g., a school cafeteria) and involve multi-age groups of children (who have different interests and needs). The staff have limited planning time and supply budgets. They are influenced by a climate of increasing demands to meet academic standards and test requirements.

There are several possibilities to organize Cloverbuds within after-school programs. After-school staff may serve as Cloverbud 4-H leaders. They may decide to set aside one day a week for Cloverbud activities, or blend them into their on-going programming. Alternately, staff may work with the local 4-H Educator to identify volunteers who could organize a 4-H Cloverbud club at the program site. 4-H Cloverbuds + 4-H Afterschool = A winning combination!

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Cloverbud Kits Make Lessons Easy for Volunteers

A few years ago while shopping at a garage sale, I came across six plastic dinosaurs and a child's book about dinosaurs. Immediately, the idea for a Cloverbud kit came into my mind. Although the Ohio 4-H Cloverbud curriculum is easy to teach, preparation for some of the lessons may demand a little more time than some volunteers have to give. It occurred to me that each volunteer using the dinosaur curriculum, for example, must cut out the cards for the games, measure and cut the rope for the size activity, and purchase alum which is something they might not normally buy. It also occurred to me that if one person did all the preparation work for the lesson, and made the non-consumable items available for countywide use, everyone's job would be a little easier. That was the beginning of Cloverbud kits in Jefferson County. After the Dinosaur kit was complete, other kits just seemed logical. Altogether, we have eight kits: Digging those Dinosaurs; Science of Sound; Bubble-mania; The Wonder of Water; Habitats are Homes; Mall Mania; Food Fun; and Storytelling. Other kits that I would like to see completed include: Valuing Family; Our Country; and Bugs, Butterflies, Worms, and Spiders.

One of the ten parameters of the Cloverbud program is that children should be involved in activities different from the 8-19 year old 4-H'ers. Cloverbud kits make it easy for this to happen. Kits are simple to assemble: each of the eight kits we have put together contains the materials suggested in the state curriculum as well as other supporting materials. Each kit contains at least one book and many include games and songs that relate to the topic of the kit. I also recommend other books, non-competitive games, poems, puzzles, and snacks that compliment the theme. The kits are stored in bags purchased from a local fabric store and provide a uniform look for all the kits.

If you are interested in making your own kits, the cost is minimal. Garage sales have provided many of the materials in our kits, but volunteers may also be able to donate required items. We keep our kits at the Extension office and volunteers can borrow a kit for up to two weeks. 4-H Cloverbud volunteers may want to pull together and let each club choose a lesson, create a kit and then donate the kit to the Extension office for everyone to borrow. If several clubs do this, a county would have a wide variety of kits to use.

Volunteers seem to love the kits and the Cloverbuds do, too. In fact, one volunteer told me that an older 4-H'er came to her after a meeting and said he wished he could have been at her Cloverbud meeting because it sounded like they were having so much fun.

Janine Yeske

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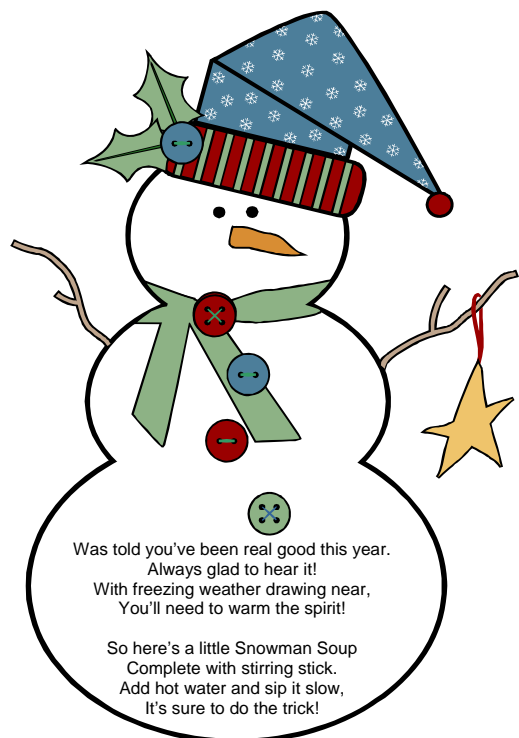
Snowman Soup

This was one of our fun activities that we used at our Cloverbud Winter Activity Day. It makes a fun snack or gift for the Cloverbuds to share with others.

What you need:

- Disposable icing bags (or decorated plastic bags)
- Cocoa
- Marshmallows
- Ribbon or string
- Candy canes
- Snowman Soup poem

Simply fill bag with 1 or 2 servings of cocoa, top with marshmallows, and tie shut. Attach candy cane (or I used a chocolate-dipped spoon) and a snowman gift tag with poem when tying the bow.



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Nurturing a Safety Catalyst

How many times have you been reminded by a young person to put on your seat belt? This is just one example where kids have influenced grown-ups about being safety conscious.

As adults, it is human nature to constantly remind children how to be safe; phrases like ‘look both ways’, ‘watch where you’re going’, and ‘pay attention’ just seem to roll off the tongue. So it shouldn’t be surprising when young people see the opportunity to recite specific safety instructions and correct an unsafe action. Even at very young ages, children know how to dial 9-1-1, can demonstrate how to “Stop, Drop, and Roll” and know terms like “Stranger Danger.”

Channeling safety behavior into a productive outlet can be a beneficial experience for kids in your club. Children can be great safety leaders; and these leaders can be the *safety catalysts* for other club members. A catalyst is a person who makes changes in the way others think or behave about a topic. As a leader, the catalyst does not take away the responsibility others’ have to personal safety. Instead, the leader encourages others to assume more responsibility for their own actions.

There are a variety of topics that can be explored to reinforce safety and health actions. Try some of these activities throughout the year. (Remember, safety has no season.)



Enjoy a club bicycle ride. Before the ride, talk about wearing the right kind of helmet or play Simon Says with hand signals.



Go swimming, boating, or fishing. Have the children talk about the rules they know around water (never swim alone, don’t run, no diving in shallow waters, no swimming in restricted or unknown waters, always wear a life jacket, etc).



Visit the animals - either a farm, community shelter or pet store. Discuss proper handling of large and small animals. A variation to this activity is to discuss wild animal safety; invite an animal control officer or wildlife specialist from Department of Natural Resources to talk about living habits, diseases, and other safety considerations of wildlife.



Assemble a first aid kit for the family automobile. Decorate a plastic butter tub, to hold important safety items like band-aids, sunscreen, antibiotic ointment, bug-bite cream, and aspirin.



Play a game of Safety Bingo. Design a bingo board that has categories along the top row (like kitchen safety, weather safety, bicycle safety, water safety, animal safety, fire safety). Then instead of numbers under the headings, have the kids come up with safety items (helmets, fire extinguishers, life jackets, tornado drill) or safety rules (always use the buddy system, never swim alone, stop/drop/and roll). Children can make their own card. The leader can call out the items in random order until everyone has had a chance to yell BINGO!

Additional safety and health activities can be found in – LIVE SMART: Health and Safety Activities for Youth Clubs. <http://ohioline.osu.edu/b907/index.html>

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Campus Connections

Hello Cloverbud Volunteers!!!

To get you jump started on some activity ideas, check out the ones given below (Swartz, 2004, p. 68-69). The activities are meant to be fun, but as you know, they also promote our 4-H Cloverbud life skills (getting along with others, self-confidence, physical skills, making decisions, and learning skills).

Patterning with Pasta

Spray paint several different pasta shapes (or buy colored pasta). Design a pattern with pasta shapes and glue it onto a poster board. Have the Cloverbud kids continue the pattern. Then give the members enough pasta to create their own design.

Slithery Friends

Read the following poem to the children; Little Worm by: Heidi Roemer

Little worm, Little worm, What do you do when a springtime robin is stalking you?

Little worm, Little worm, Where do you hide when the summer sun makes it hot outside?

Little worm, Little worm, Where do you go when cold Autumn rain turns into snow?

Share stories and factual information about worms. Have the children work in groups with a sheet of paper that has been divided in quadrants representing the four seasons. Ask the children to draw what worms do during each season, then share with the whole group.

Sliding Thermometers

Make thermometers out of white drawing paper with a slit at the bottom in which you can place a slip of colored paper (red). Mark the thermometer in increments of five degrees, use temperatures above and below 0 degrees. Talk about what a thermometer measures. Ask the children about their favorite temperature. Explain special temperatures, such as 32 degrees is when water freezes.

Thanks for all that you do as Cloverbud Leaders and Advisors.

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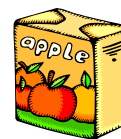
4-H Family Celebration

Here's a simple idea to celebrate a successful 4-H year. Invite the families of your Cloverbud members to a bonfire. Each family can bring food to share and parents can help make sure the children stay safe near the fire. This menu is easy to pack and prepare.

- Hot Dog on Bun
- Carrots and Celery Sticks
- Potato Chips
- S'mores
- Apple Cider

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