4HOnline Reminder

Re-enrollment season is just around the corner. Club Leaders will be distributing materials and information at their meetings throughout September. A few reminders:

- Re-enroll early so you can be approved in a timely fashion.
- Utilize the 4HOnline Project Leader User Guide and 4HOnline Project Passwords to access reports and lists of which members are enrolled in your project and their contact information.
  * These reports/lists will only show ‘active’ members, those members that have enrolled and been approved in 4HOnline. If a member hasn’t completed a step in the enrollment process they are considered ‘pending’ and will not appear.
  * Ginny can provide a report showing both active and pending members upon request.

Reflecting with Record Books

The Experiential Learning cycle, upon which 4-H bases its educational opportunities, includes reflection on the doing, and then application based on reflection. This complete cycle is necessary for learning to take place, and for transfer of learning to occur. Reflection is what creates value in the learning. This is why record books are a critical part of the 4-H experience as it’s an intentional reflection on what the youth experienced in their 4-H year.

This process is enhanced when youth receive feedback on their work which is why record books are reviewed at a club level and if applicable the county level as well. The record book review process is an opportunity for adults to share feedback with youth. When adults review so many in mass, they might find themselves ‘stuck’ on what to say.

Included is a Writing Record Book Comments tip sheet that is used at the county level and can be used when reviewing at a club level. Project leaders are often many of the reviewers of record books. Thank you for helping to support this important process to further the youth’s learning and growth.
Recognizing Youth’s Accomplishments

Congratulations! Way to go! Nice job! The end of the program year is often a time when we celebrate and recognize youth’s accomplishments. This is of course important to do throughout the year as well, but why and how?

These are some basic principals about 4-H recognition:
- Recognition is a **basic human need**.
- Recognition must **build positive self esteem**.
- A balance between **intrinsic** (and intangible) and **extrinsic** (and tangible) recognition is essential.
- Recognition should be a **part of all 4-H learning experiences**.
- Appropriate recognition **takes many forms**.
- **Adult support** is essential.
- **All 4-H’ers need to be recognized** at some time.
- Recognition is more meaningful when it occurs **soon after it is earned** and **in front of significant others**.
- **Appropriate recognition** for individual 4-H’ers **varies** with their stage of development, past experiences, family lifestyle, community and cultural heritage.
- Opportunities for **self-assessment and reflection** are needed to allow youth to learn and grow.
- 4-H’ers should be permitted to exercise **individual choices** in learning and participation.
- A **balance** among all elements of the model is essential for 4-H program at all levels.

We continually evaluate and reflect on programs because we have a goal of keeping 4-H educational experiences relevant for today’s youth. One area, that is easy to forget, is awards we give to recognize participation of young people.

We often rely on traditional awards because it is easier; we have a supply on hand; donors expect to give the same award; or our schedules are busy. We need to remind ourselves that interest and preferences of young people change from generation to generation and from one developmental stage to another. In addition, today we are working with a broader audience of young people who have diverse needs.

We need to remember several key principles when we select awards at the county level or at the club or project level. The principles are:

1. Select awards that are appropriate for the age level and valued by the young people. For example, 9- to 11-year-olds like to collect things, so ribbons are valued. Teens appreciate things they can use, such as t-shirts, hats, gift certifications, etc.
2. Select awards related to the learning experience.
3. Remember, awards do not need to be expensive or cost anything at all.
4. Use the 4-H name and emblem whenever possible and appropriately by following **national 4-H policies**. Follow the **state policies** regarding the use of the co-branded 4-H and UW-Extension logo. The use of the 4-H group’s name or county is always appropriate.
5. Select awards that are distinctive and show good design principles.
6. Avoid using the same award repeatedly for the same program or different programs.

Although many youth like and appreciate a tangible item when being recognized, remember that isn’t necessary every time. Instead you could go on a field trip or have a celebration that includes a special ceremony. Check out this resource from Kansas State University with **4-H ceremony ideas**. Whatever you do, make it meaningful and sincere.

Adapted from Recognition in Youth Programs: Helping Young People Grow, Cooperative Extension System and National 4-H Council, 1996.

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Thank you for all you do for Washington County 4-H Youth Development

University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA.
Writing Record Book Comments

These are some tips for writing record book comments that will help 4-H members learn and grow:

- If you have comments about the record book, please write these on the scoring rubric only. Do not write on the youth’s record book sheets.

- If there is something you would suggest they change about their record book or project work in the future, frame it in a constructive tone. Suggest what they should do, rather than what they shouldn’t do.

  Example: The member skipped a section of the project sheet, so the record book page is not completed. Instead of writing, “Don’t skip sections of your record book,” write, “Next year, be sure to complete all sections of the project record sheet.”

- Can’t think of anything to write? Try using one of these sentence starters to write an appropriate comment. Each record book scoring rubric should have at least one comment included in the “Comments” section.

  - You did an excellent job of…
  - I was impressed by…
  - Next year, you should try…
  - You showed initiative in…
  - Please clarify…
  - What if you tried…
  - One strength of your project record is…
  - Your strongest section is…
  - I like the way you…
  - Your record book would be stronger if…
  - One thing that wasn’t clear to me was…
  - I noticed that…