

Roles People Play



Volunteer 4-H Club Leaders

A variety of volunteer roles are available within 4-H. Some volunteers are club leaders; others function at the area or county level. At the end of this section are tables that compare the roles of eight kinds of volunteer leaders (an administrative leader in a community club, a project club leader, a project leader in a community club, an explorer club leader, an activity leader, a resource leader, a junior leader and a teen leader). Not every club has volunteers serving in these roles. A club's needs will determine the roles volunteers play.

Parents

Parents play a key role in the effectiveness of a 4-H club. They need to know that 4-H is an educational program in which **they** have a part. At times, parents may believe it is a babysitting program; they may be unsure of their role in the program; or feel they must stay out of club activities.

In order to help them become active and supportive of their child's involvement in 4-H, the administrative community club leader or project leader can help them understand what is expected, and help them feel more comfortable as 4-H parents. To do this, the leader may want to visit them to explain:

- The 4-H philosophy and mission.
- The club's yearly program.
- His or her role as administrative community club leader or project leader.
- The projects offered.
- What is expected from them and ask them how they would like to be involved.

Parents may be able to provide a variety of services such as making telephone calls, supplying refreshments and arranging guest speakers or transportation. The "Parent Interest Finder" in Appendix A contains a few things the leader might like parents or other significant adults to do to help the club.

Volunteer 4-H Club Middle Managers

The overall responsibility of the volunteer 4-H club middle manager is to help start and maintain 4-H clubs. He or she provides support to the volunteer 4-H club leaders by making phone calls, sending emails or visiting to share activity and administrative ideas and deadlines. Middle managers provide clubs with leadership or facilitator activities that club leaders and members can participate in. They listen to the concerns of the volunteer 4-H club leaders and report those concerns to the 4-H county staff.

County Staff

A major responsibility of the 4-H staff member is to create – and sustain – active 4-H clubs. The role of the 4-H staff member is a purposeful one that needs to be clearly defined within the county. It should include an annual process of developing realistic statistical goals and specific methods and activities for keeping ongoing clubs up to date and expanding the number of 4-H clubs, club members and volunteers. New clubs add a growth element to the county program. Without new clubs, there is a natural narrowing of interest which can lead to a collective decline in participation. Specifically, county staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring and documenting that 4-H clubs are truly "open to all," that club financial statements are made annually, that club educational programs are positive and designed with youth leadership, and that club members' personal health and safety are assured. Each 4-H club needs to be enrolled annually.
- Developing realistic statistical goals annually for the maintenance and expansion of the number of 4-H clubs, 4-H club members and 4-H club volunteers. Staff must design strategies and methods for needs assessment, club formation and

SECTION V: Roles People Play

recruitment. Volunteers may provide leadership for implementing these plans.

- Developing a training and support system to meet the needs of all 4-H club volunteers in their work with 4-H club youth (this applies to county- and campus-based staff). Staff are encouraged to train volunteers in middle management roles to fulfill these tasks. The combination of the staff and volunteer support system should ensure a **minimum** of one personal contact a year with each 4-H club volunteer. (For club administrative leaders, more frequent contact is needed to ensure effective communication.) It is critical for staff to maintain personal contact with volunteers and to visit clubs periodically. Maintaining existing 4-H clubs as effective educational groups is always a high priority.
- Providing a minimum of two hours of orientation and training for all new club volunteers at appropriate times within their first year. Volunteers may be involved in designing, implementing and evaluating all training, and in maintaining follow-up contact with new volunteers. All new volunteers who will be working with youth, in an unsupervised or on an ongoing basis, must be processed through the “MSUE Child Well-Being Volunteer Selection Process.”
- Developing strategies to move short-term program participants into ongoing 4-H club opportunities whenever appropriate.
- Developing maintenance systems to support new and ongoing clubs. Club maintenance should include a system of regular communication with all 4-H volunteers. This communication should include updates on county and statewide activities and upcoming deadlines and due dates. Your club maintenance system should also include some regular training for club volunteers. This is a good way to make sure volunteers are aware of the newest resources available to support their work and expectations of clubs and volunteers, and to make sure clubs keep focused on positive youth development.

Note: A good club maintenance system or plan should exist **before** you do any major efforts at new club expansion. If you can't support existing clubs, don't start lots of new ones. Developing a volunteer 4-H club middle management system might be the first step in expanding the number of 4-H clubs in the county. To learn more about what a volunteer 4-H club middle manager does, visit the 4-H Web site at http://web1.msue.msu.edu/4h/clubs/club_middle_mgrs.html.

Chart 1: Roles of an Administrative Leader in a Community Club

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY	HELP MEMBERS	HELP CLUB OFFICERS	HELP JUNIOR AND TEEN LEADERS	WORK WITH PARENTS	WORK WITH OTHER LEADERS	BE INVOLVED WITH THE COMMUNITY	BE INVOLVED IN THE COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM	DEVELOP LEADERSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible to the county 4-H Extension educator, program associate or assistant Responsible for the leadership of the community club and organization of the individual project groups Periodically, evaluates club goals and progress. (Some community clubs divide administrative responsibilities between two or more leaders.) Promotes positive youth development in club Reviews 4-H guiding principles with 4-H club leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolls all members by county deadline Informs them of necessary meeting arrangements (time, place, what to bring) Receives notice of all county or state programs and activities and 4-H opportunities from 4-H staff, and is responsible for getting that information to club members Maintains communications between the 4-H staff person, project leaders and club members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meets with officers to set the agenda. Works with officers to complete and submit required financial and other club paperwork to MSUE county 4-H staff person Ensures that officers plan a balance (business, education, recreation) for each meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruits teen and junior leaders as needed Helps them understand their roles Explains the purpose of the teen leadership project to members, parents and other leaders Provides meaningful opportunities for junior and teen leaders to help with 4-H activities Encourages teen leaders to become involved with county activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informs parents of club plans and seeks parental involvement Helps them understand the purpose of 4-H, the opportunities available and how to get involved with the 4-H club Involves parents in decisions about choosing projects and activities, completing a project, where to purchase supplies, and estimating reasonable amounts of time and money Encourages parents to help their children do things that relate to 4-H projects and activities Encourages parents to attend 4-H meetings and discuss 4-H activities with their children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolls all leaders by county deadline Recruits project, resource and activity leaders as needed. Meets with the club's project leaders to coordinate plans and keep them informed of opportunities. Schedules periodic meetings with leaders Keeps project leaders informed of training opportunities related to their project Maintains communications between the 4-H staff person, project leaders and club members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintains club relationships with community individuals Informs the community about 4-H and what the local club is doing Asks for the community's help when needed Helps the club take part in community activities Recognizes and expresses appreciation to people who help make the club a success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responds to correspondence from the 4-H office and informs the club about it Receives notice of all county or state programs and activities and 4-H opportunities from 4-H staff, and is responsible for getting that information to club members Maintains communications between the 4-H staff person, project leaders and club members Keeps 4-H council representatives abreast of club activities Notifies staff of enrollment changes throughout the year Provides leader and member identification cards, project completion certificates, and year pins if desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develops techniques to involve all members, parents, leaders and community representatives in planning the program's progress

Chart 2: Roles of a 4-H Project Club Leader

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY	HELP MEMBERS	HELP CLUB OFFICERS	HELP JUNIOR AND TEEN LEADERS	WORK WITH PARENTS	WORK WITH OTHER LEADERS	BE INVOLVED WITH THE COMMUNITY	BE INVOLVED IN THE COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM	DEVELOP LEADERSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the overall adult organizational leadership for a 4-H project club • Promotes positive youth development in club activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes their enrollment forms • Helps them select projects • Helps them understand and practice parliamentary procedure and good group skills • Assists with the election of officers • Helps them plan, carry out and evaluate the yearly program • Makes sure each member has a role in the club and that he or she feels an important part of the club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps them understand their specific responsibilities and gives guidance (do not dictate) about ways to carry them out • Works with them on agenda items before each meeting • Assists them to find ways to include all members so they feel needed and involved • Works with officers to complete and submit required financial and other club paperwork to MSUE county 4-H staff person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruits teen and junior leaders as needed • Helps them understand their roles • Explains the purpose of the teen leadership project to members, parents and other leaders • Provides meaningful opportunities for junior and teen leaders to help with 4-H activities • Encourages teen leaders to become involved with county activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informs parents of club plans and seeks parental involvement • Helps them understand the purpose of 4-H, the opportunities available and how to get involved with the 4-H club • Involves parents in decisions about choosing projects and activities, completing a project, where to purchase supplies, and estimating reasonable amounts of time and money • Encourages parents to help their children do things that relate to 4-H projects and activities • Encourages parents to attend 4-H meetings and discuss 4-H activities with their children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruits people to serve as project and activity leaders • Meets with project and activity leaders periodically • Helps them understand the project or activity leader's role and teen leadership roles • Provides them with names and addresses of project and activity members in their groups • Helps them locate sources of information for subject matter and leadership techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informs the community about 4-H and what the local club is doing • Asks for the community's help when needed • Helps the club take part in community activities • Recognizes – and expresses appreciation to – people who help make the club a success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds to correspondence from the 4-H office and informs the club about it • Receives notice of all county or state programs and 4-H opportunities from 4-H staff, and is responsible for getting that information to club members • Keeps their clubs informed of county programs and policy decisions • Has regular contact with the Extension staff or key leaders • Encourages the project and activity leaders to attend appropriate leader education programs • Encourages the club to take part in county programs, events and activities • Encourages the club to have a representative at leader council meetings • Notifies staff of enrollment changes throughout the year • Provides leader and member identification cards, project completion certificates, and year pins if desired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves teens in club leadership roles • May help with enrollment • Explains 4-H to prospective members • Assists younger members with record books • Assists younger members to contact community resources • Gets parents involved in short-term roles • May help supervise a club meeting • May provide transportation • May serve as resource leaders • May offer their homes for meetings or special activities • Recruits other adults to handle specific club responsibilities • May coordinate enrollments • May organize club tours • May supervise club community service projects • May train officers • May plan the yearly club program

Chart 3: Roles of a 4-H Project Leader in a Community Club

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY	HELP MEMBERS	HELP CLUB OFFICERS	HELP JUNIOR AND TEEN LEADERS	WORK WITH PARENTS	WORK WITH OTHER LEADERS	BE INVOLVED WITH THE COMMUNITY	BE INVOLVED IN THE COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM	DEVELOP LEADERSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps members who are enrolled in specific projects • Promotes positive youth development in club activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits with members about the project – what it involves, what members can do, and how leaders will work with them • Helps members identify project goals and make plans to reach them • Helps them understand project requirements • Teaches project skills, using a variety of teaching methods such as discussions, workshops, exhibits, judging, educational tours, demonstrations, and record keeping • Encourages members to participate in 4-H project events and to exhibit their projects • Holds project meetings to help members learn and to complete their 4-H projects • Visits members' homes 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides challenges for experienced teens to share knowledge beyond the club level • Helps teens develop plans to teach a topic to other members • Allows teens to take responsibility for first-year project members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with them during project selection and decision making • Informs them of project expectations, plans, work and opportunities • Discusses the member's progress with them several times a year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets periodically with the club administrative leader • Coordinates meetings and activities with other project leaders 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates in leader education conducted by Extension staff • Receives project leader material from county Extension staff • Participates in project-related county events and activities 	

Chart 4: Roles of a 4-H Explorer Club Leader

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY	HELP MEMBERS	HELP CLUB OFFICERS	HELP JUNIOR AND TEEN LEADERS	WORK WITH PARENTS	WORK WITH OTHER LEADERS	BE INVOLVED WITH THE COMMUNITY	BE INVOLVED IN THE COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM	DEVELOP LEADERSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the overall adult organizational leadership for a 4-H explorer club • Responsible to the 4-H staff person or 4-H club leader • Promotes positive youth development in club activities • Teaches club activities that demonstrate many 4-H projects • Provides recognition opportunity at end of club • Completes and submits required financial and club paperwork to county MSUE 4-H staff person 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completes their enrollment forms • Participates in other 4-H activities • May help members join an on-going 4-H Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May or may not have club officers • If there are club officers, helps them understand the specific responsibilities and gives guidance (not dictate) about ways to carry them out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May help teens develop plans to teach a topic to other members • Encourages teens to have more responsibility for helping younger members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informs them of club activities and projects, plans, work and opportunity • Encourages their involvement in club activities and recognition • May ask them to provide resources to the club activities or to teach activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets periodically with other club leaders • Helps identify, locate and obtain community resources, including volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps the community informed about Explorer Club activities • Asks for help when needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates in educational sessions for leaders • Receives activity suggestions from Extension staff and 4-H club leaders • May participate in countywide activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinates club enrollments • Recruits other adult leaders as needed. • Explains 4-H to club members • Gets parents involved • May offer home for meetings • May organize club tours • Works with club members to determine projects and activities

Chart 5: Roles of an Activity Leader

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY	HELP MEMBERS	HELP CLUB OFFICERS	HELP JUNIOR AND TEEN LEADERS	WORK WITH PARENTS	WORK WITH OTHER LEADERS	BE INVOLVED WITH THE COMMUNITY	BE INVOLVED IN THE COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM	DEVELOP LEADERSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with the whole club or a committee to plan and carry out a selected activity or event (for example, public presentations, achievement programs or fund-raising). May work with a group of members in an area of special interest (for example, drama, public speaking or recreation). They make it possible to add depth and breadth to the club program, which the 4-H leader could not do alone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involves them in planning and conducting the activity • Encourages them to work together • Arranges the activity so each member has a part • Recognizes each member for work done 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guides and directs junior and teen leaders in planning and executing activities • Gives each a part in leadership of an activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asks them to serve on committees • Encourages them to chaperone activities • Asks them to provide transportation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets periodically with the club leaders • Keeps the club administrative leader informed of plans • Coordinates meetings and activities with other project and activity leaders • Helps identify, locate and obtain community resources, including volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps the community informed about special activities (for example, community service projects) • Encourages the club to take part in community activities • Asks for help when needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates in educational sessions provided for activity leaders • Receives activity guidelines from Extension staff • Participates in countywide activities 	

Chart 6: Roles of a Resource Leader

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY	HELP MEMBERS	HELP CLUB OFFICERS	HELP JUNIOR AND TEEN LEADERS	WORK WITH PARENTS	WORK WITH OTHER LEADERS	BE INVOLVED WITH THE COMMUNITY	BE INVOLVED IN THE COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM	DEVELOP LEADERSHIP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides leadership for a single learning experience or a short-term program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaches a specific lesson as requested by a 4-H club Presents a demonstration or exhibit to illustrate information Serves as guest speakers at club meetings 				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides background information Conducts workshops with a single focus Provides ideas for member learning experiences 			

Chart 7: Roles of a Junior Leader

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY	HELP MEMBERS	WORK WITH PARENTS	WORK WITH OTHER LEADERS	BE INVOLVED IN THE COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A junior leader is an intermediate member who is ready to assume some responsibility. He or she may enroll in the junior leadership project if your county offers one. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helps younger members with project work and records Helps with countywide events and activities Helps them with exhibits, judging training or demonstrations and presentations Helps them enroll in projects and understand what is expected of them Works with them to conduct a 4-H activity Teaches lessons for younger members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visits with new 4-H parents about the club and its activities and about 4-H Helps them understand what is expected of members in various projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receives 4-H leadership project materials Plans together with adult leaders what will be done Plans with adult leaders how to carry out assignments Keeps adult leaders informed about progress Assists adult leaders Evaluate his or her experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates in educational sessions provided for junior and teen leaders Plans and participates in junior and teen leader projects on a countywide level

Chart 8: Roles of a Teen Leader

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY	HELP MEMBERS	HELP CLUB OFFICERS	WORK WITH PARENTS	WORK WITH OTHER LEADERS	BE INVOLVED IN THE COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A teen leader is a senior member who can assume additional leadership roles in the 4-H program. The teen leader is probably an experienced 4-H member, but doesn't have to be. A teen can lead a project group, but will need to work closely with the adult leader. A teen leader enrolls in the teen leadership project. • For more information on 4-H teen leaders, visit the Michigan 4-H Web site at http://web1.msu.edu/4h/ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps younger members with project work and records • Helps with countywide events and activities • Helps them with exhibits, judging training or demonstrations and presentations • Helps them enroll in projects and understand what is expected of them • Works with them to conduct a 4-H activity • Teaches lessons for younger members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps them plan, conduct and evaluate club meetings • Works with individual officers to help them understand their roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits with new 4-H parents about the club and its activities and about 4-H • Helps them understand what is expected of members in various projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receives 4-H leadership project materials • Plans together with adult leaders what will be done • Plans with adult leaders how to carry out assignments • Keeps adult leaders informed about progress • Assists adult leaders • Evaluates his or her experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates in educational sessions provided for junior and teen leaders • Plans and participates in junior and teen leader projects on a countywide level