



ENHANCING THE CLUB EXPERIENCE.....

PLANNING MONTHLY 4-H CLUB MEETINGS

Planning is the key to successful 4-H club meetings and experiences. When youth are asked why they like to be involved in 4-H, consistently they answer “because it’s fun!” In order for clubs to be successful in getting youth to participate, they must keep the meetings and activities fun for youth, but also educational. Through advanced planning, we can address both of these needs. This document outlines the various parts of the 4-H club meeting and what is addressed in each part. Remember, this is just a suggested list. Clubs will vary in exactly what they need to include in the agenda. The main four parts to a successful 4-H Club meeting are outlined here.

INSPIRATION

Approximately 5-10 minutes. The inspiration sets the stage for the meeting. Younger members first feel the spirit of belonging when they see flags, banners, and other regalia at the meeting place. They like to wear jackets, quote pledges, etc., which give them the feeling of being a part of a big organization. 4-H meeting kids with flags, banner, and a gavel may be ordered from National 4-H.

Call to Order

The call to order is the duty of the President, unless he/she is unable to attend. The President may say, “The meeting of the _____ 4-H Club will now come to order.” At the end of the statement, two taps of the gavel need to be given.

Pledges

The pledges – American Flag, Texas Flag and 4-H Motto and Pledge -- should be assigned to three separate persons in the club. These are excellent leadership activities for younger 4-H members. If a young person is asked to give a pledge, ensure they are familiar with the pledge. Also, the American flag, the Texas flag, and the 4-H flag should be located at the front of the meeting room. It may also be helpful to have a banner (purchased from National 4-H) or a poster with the words of the 4-H motto and pledge so that new members may feel welcomed.

Inspiration

The inspiration sets the stage for the meeting. Younger members first feel the spirit of belonging when they see flags, banners and other regalia at the meeting place. They like to wear jackets and quote pledges which gives them the feeling of being a part of a big organization. The inspiration includes the pledges and may include other activities such as songs, spiritual emphasis material, inspirational poems, or citizenship activities.

Ice Breaker

Ice breakers are used to help members get acquainted and provide some social interaction. There are many ice breaker ideas that do not take a lot of time in the club manager resource materials. Ice breakers are optional or may be used in place of inspiration or as the recreation for the club meeting.



BUSINESS

Approximately 15 to 20 minutes. Club activities and plans are handled so as to make the club an example of “democracy in action.” Members learn parliamentary procedure and the group decision-making process. The business part of the meeting has an established order of business.

Roll Call

Roll Call is the duty of the Secretary. It is important for the secretary to have accurate documentation of who is attending the meeting. Some clubs have special responses for members to give to roll call. Some suggestions include: My favorite project, My New Year’s resolution, My Best Birthday Present, My Favorite Nutritious Snack, or anything else creative. Large clubs may have a sign-in sheet to keep the time for roll call to a minimum.

Introduction of Guests and/or New Members

Introduction of guests and/or new members is the responsibility of the 3rd Vice President and the Membership Committee. They should also greet each new member or guest when they arrive at the meeting. Persons that have never attended 4-H meetings before want to feel welcome. Avoid asking the new member to introduce themselves at the meeting. For many people, public speaking is a fear and asking them to introduce themselves may be uncomfortable. Instead, consider asking the Membership Committee to introduce the new family. Be sure there is time for new and old families to become acquainted during the recreation or refreshments time.

Reading and Approving the Minutes

The Secretary is responsible for reading the minutes from the prior month’s 4-H meeting. The Secretary may even want to type the minutes to provide to each member of the club.

Activity Reports

The activity reports section of the meeting is one of the best places to involve many different members in the meeting. The club manager(s) and president should try to think of every club, county or district activity that any member participated in since the last meeting and have each participant report on what happened at the activity.

Officer Reports

Include treasurer’s report, council delegate report, reports on any correspondence by secretary during officer reports.

Committee Reports

Committee reports can be given by the officer who serves as the chair of the committee or by a member of that committee. If a committee is not currently active, there is no need for them to give a report.

Leader/Club Manager Reports and Announcements

Managers and other leaders should be prepared to give reports and announcements that relate to the club. This is not the time to just read the county newsletter to the group!

Unfinished Business

Unfinished business will include any agenda items left or tabled from the previous meeting. This is introduced by the President.



New Business

New business is topics that may come up at certain times of the year includes: Election of officers, committee appointments, bylaw amendments, club budget approval, observing special events or other items specific to the club. When business items cannot be handled immediately or if further study is needed, they should be referred to a special committee. A small group is much more efficient in planning specific events or studying an issue and coming up with alternatives. Use of committees gives members added opportunities to participate in the club and feel they are an important part of the group. This also ensures the business portion of the meeting does not drag on for an extended period of time.

PROGRAM

Approximately 15 to 20 minutes. The program is an important part of the 4-H Club meeting and should be interesting to all club members. The selection of programs should result from going through the steps in annual program planning and programs should be planned one year in advance. In this phase, “resource” people may be needed.

Program

The program is the heart of the 4-H meeting. Planning program ideas is the duty of the 1st Vice President and the Program Committee. They should involve 4-H members in planning and conducting each program. The program should be interesting to the entire group. Many ideas and methods could be used during the programs, including: demonstrations, slide shows, videos or films, guest speakers, project training or orientation, panel discussions, field trips or any other element the membership views as important.

Community Service

Community Service is a viable part of the 4-H club meeting. 4-H members are encouraged to develop and practice skills to become helpful or useful in their club, community, country and world. 4-H community service projects allow youth and adults to work together and to help others at the same time. Community Service is: making a difference in your community; helping those that may not be able to help themselves; and teaching others how to better themselves.

RECREATION

Approximately 15-20 minutes. This is the FUN part! End the meeting on a high note to encourage members to return for the next meeting!

Recreation/Leadership Initiatives

Each 4-H meeting should include a recreational activity. This is the responsibility of the 2nd Vice President and the Recreation/Leadership Committee. One main reason a member belongs to a 4-H club is to have fun. For a well-rounded program, include starters, mixers, get acquainted games and active games; musical, dramatic, small and large group activities; and quiet paper and pencil activities. All recreation does not have to be at the end of a meeting. Recreation activities for early arrivals at the beginning of a meeting help a group develop a spirit of togetherness.

Refreshments

Refreshments are important to the 4-H meeting - it gives members and families a chance to informally visit and get to know each other. They can discuss the program and upcoming activities. Younger members really enjoy refreshments. It's part of the meeting that is fun for them. Practice serving delicious and healthy refreshments. Assigning different families to bring refreshments encourages parents to be there and help serve.



Adjourn

Adjourning the meeting is the duty of the President. It usually occurs before the community service activity.

Clover Kids Activity

Several clubs have Clover Kids attending. These are members in grades kindergarten through second grade. Clubs may have a "Clover Kid manager," a senior 4-H member or parent that plans 4-H related activities that are conducted during the business portion of the meeting or throughout the whole 4-H club meeting. Clover Kids activities need to be age appropriate. Clover Kids may also be a standalone club.



Annual 4-H Club Planning Worksheet

Before beginning the Annual Planning Process, the following items/information will help you in the planning process. Be sure to gather up these items ahead of time if they are available.

- County calendar of 4-H events and activities (may want to have the District Calendar if available)
- Dates of volunteer leader educational programs
- List of educational resource materials available
- Parent and member surveys of what they would like to do in the coming year
- Listing of projects members selected
- List of project and activity leaders available
- Community service ideas
- Ideas for guest speakers, club tours, recreation resources
- Help or suggestions from county Extension agent
- Last year's club programs
- Club membership list

As clubs plan their annual program, the following list are items that can be planned in advance. Be sure to involve every member of your club in some way during the 4-H year in one of these roles. You may not use all of these things or you may add new ones to the list! The more complete your assignments are done in advance, the better your club meetings will run!

- Lead Pledge of Allegiance
- Lead Texas Pledge
- Lead 4-H Motto & Pledge
- Inspiration
- New Member Recognition
- Club Program
- Recreation
- Refreshments

Use the Club Planning Form on the following page to plan your club program for the year. Complete one form for each month. Other items to include on each club meeting agenda include the following:

- Roll Call
- Reading of the Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Committee Reports
- Unfinished & New Business
- Club Manager's Report



4-H Club Annual Planning Form

Month		Meeting Date	
Meeting Location		Meeting Time	
Agenda Item (Not all agenda items may be needed each month. Use only the ones that are needed.)		Who Is Responsible? (make sure each person assigned is provided this document so they know what their responsibilities are for the month)	
Call To Order			
Pledge of Allegiance			
Texas Pledge			
4-H Motto & Pledge			
Inspiration			
Ice Breaker			
Roll Call			
Introduction of Guests and/or New Members			
Program and Speaker			
Reading and Approving Minutes			
Treasurer's Report			
Activity Reports			
Committee Reports			
Leader/Club Manager Reports			
Unfinished Business			
New Business			
Community Service			
Recreation			
Refreshments			
Clover Kids Activity (during business meeting or a separate club)			