

Leadership Roles

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4-H leadership team

The 4-H program requires a team effort. This team includes volunteer leaders, University of Missouri Extension staff, parents and young people working together in a common cause — the growth and development of young people. Sponsors and supporters also have a place on the team. All are needed to carry out an effective 4-H program.

As lifestyles and family schedules have changed, the structure and work of the 4-H clubs has also changed.

In smaller clubs, the team may include the club leader, one or more assistants, the necessary project leaders and young people. Responsibilities are shared in a more informational manner. A larger club might share the tasks among a team of leaders including the organizational leader, the activity coordinator and the project coordinator. Remember, these roles should be adapted to fit the particular situation in your club. There is no single right way. As a group, develop an organizational structure that works best for your club. Here are some possibilities.

Organizational leader

He or she might be responsible for such things as enrolling 4-H members, electing and training of officers, helping members plan, carrying out and evaluating their 4-H programs, keeping members informed of awards and recognition



programs, and coordinating the general operation of the club.

Activity coordinator

This leader coordinates club participation in 4-H events and helps plan club activities such as recreation, health, community service, camping and others.

Project coordinator

This person recruits the necessary project leaders, acts as consultant for these leaders, and relates project activities to the club program. In some cases, the project coordinator might also be responsible for enrolling members.

Project leader

The project leader's main responsibility is to teach skills and subject matter in a given project area. Project leaders may help members set goals, learn to keep good project records, prepare demonstrations and exhibits, and encourage members to

participate in project-related events and activities. Refer to LG784, *4-H Project Leader*, for more detailed information.

Parents

Parents need to feel they are making a meaningful contribution to their children's club. They can save a leader much time and work if their specific skills are known and used.

Club officers

Club officers need training and direction. Refer to MU Extension publication Y783, *So You Are a Club Officer* as a guide.

Teen leaders

Teen leaders are older members who carry out adult roles as leaders in project groups, special interest groups or the club. They serve under the supervision of a 4-H recognized adult.

Resource leaders

Resource leaders are people in the community who have special skills, talents and abilities that are needed to help 4-H members carry out certain aspects of their program. Many such people are willing to share their training and experience with young people on a limited time basis — perhaps an evening or two. Resource leaders are usually recruited by the club leader or invited by a 4-H officer or other youth representative to meet with their group. Resource

leaders may be found among business and professional men and women, public officials, technicians, civic leaders, homemakers and farmers. They may need a brief orientation to 4-H and its purpose, along with specific details on the job they are expected to do.

Specific responsibilities

The specific responsibilities of the organizational leader, the project coordinator and the activities coordinator are listed below. Remember, adapt these roles to your particular situation.

4-H organizational leader

This leader gives overall direction to the 4-H club members and officers in conducting the 4-H club program.

- a. Act as the contact person between 4-H club members and local MU Extension staff. Submit the completed 4-H enrollment forms to the local MU Extension center. This may be done by the project coordinator. With the aid of the club project coordinator, collect the project completion forms and submit year-end reports for club members' and leaders' recognition.
- b. Recognize members' accomplishments on a local level through praise, awards and leadership opportunities.
- c. Hold a conference with club officers before each meeting to organize the 4-H agenda. Counsel individually with 4-H club officers about their duties. Provide necessary information to the secretary and reporter for completing club records.
- d. Coordinate the program planning effort of the club project coordinator and the club activities coordinator so the club program fits together for the year.

4-H project coordinator

This leader coordinates the 4-H project program in the local 4-H club.

- a. Secure project leaders to teach the subject matter in the selected 4-H projects.
- b. Compile a 4-H project roll for each 4-H project leader, including the name of the member, address and phone number.
- c. Order project literature for leaders and members from the local MU Extension center.
- d. Follow up with 4-H project leaders to see that they begin their project meetings early in the year. Encourage project leaders to attend training meetings held for them throughout the year.
- e. Arrange for 4-H project completion reports to be submitted to the 4-H club leader in August or September so the members and leaders may be properly recognized.
- f. Be alert to special project activities that might be publicized in the local media.
- g. Encourage members to present demonstrations and illustrated talks in local project meetings. Arrange for each project group to give a program at the 4-H club meeting some time during the year.

Club activities and special events coordinator

This leader coordinates special activities and events of the 4-H club.

- a. Serve as the coordinator for the selected 4-H club activities: health, recreation and optional activities.
- b. Work with the program planning committee as an adult adviser. Encourage broad participation by all 4-H members on club committees and arrange for an adult adviser to work with each of the committees.
- c. Follow-up on committee assignments to make sure they are

allowing sufficient time to plan 4-H events.

- d. Encourage member participation in county-wide events and activities.
- e. Lead the club in taking responsibility for county-wide 4-H council sponsored activities, such as Achievement Day, National 4-H Week activities and others.

Role descriptions are one way to clearly state tasks. The process of dividing tasks among different individuals will make recruiting and training volunteers easier. Role descriptions can

- help to fit the volunteer to the role,
- clarify relationships,
- specify responsibilities,
- identify training needs, and
- identify important role elements.

The sample format (on the following page) for a role description should be adapted to your particular situation.

NOTE: All adult leaders must successfully complete the Missouri 4-H application and screening process and the required orientation before working with 4-H'ers.

Sections of this material were adapted from the series *Leads for Leaders, Unit 4*, Utah State University.

4-H volunteer staff position

- Job title:** Club leader (smaller club with 20 members)
- Description:** Recruit project leaders; help train and recognize leaders; help club officers and committees plan club program; help club members participate in other 4-H events and activities; participate in county 4-H council.
- Time involved:**
- Club meetings, planning for club meetings and activities
 - County 4-H council meetings
 - Support project leaders
- Necessary skills:**
- Have knowledge of and interest in young people
 - Be capable of necessary leadership functions
 - Know how to encourage leadership from members and leaders
 - Know community resources and availability
 - Understand the 4-H organization
 - Be willing to devote time to the club
- Duties:** Help officers and program planning committee to plan and conduct program for the year; assist in identifying, selecting and recruiting project leaders; recruit and enroll members; plan participation in fairs, achievement days, judging events, etc.; create awareness of 4-H program; see that all necessary reports and forms are submitted on time.
- Resources:** MU Extension youth staff

Contact your local MU Extension center for additional role descriptions.