



Chaperoning with Character

Missouri 4-H Youth Development Programs has always encouraged 4-H'ers to show good character in all they do—to be respectful, to be responsible, to follow the rules. 4-H volunteer leaders have played a key role in teaching and encouraging these character traits. Based on the CHARACTER COUNTS!SM Coalition's Six Pillars of Character – trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship – Missouri's 4-H participants are encouraged to “Show-Me Character,” while involved in 4-H programs.

A person of good character is a good person – someone to look up to and admire. He or she is a person who knows right from wrong and always tries to do the right thing. He or she sets a good example for everyone and makes the world a better place.

As a 4-H volunteer leader and chaperone, you can show character in these ways:

Trustworthiness

- **Fulfill** your obligations and the expectations of your volunteer roles
- **Be loyal** to the spirit of Missouri 4-H
- **Be honest** with both suggestions for improvement and praise for 4-H members and their families
- **Be reliable**, do what you say you will do

Respect

- **Show** courtesy and good manners, which includes being prompt and calling if you are going to be absent
- **Be tolerant** of differing viewpoints
- **Listen** to others, but ask appropriate questions
- **Be willing** to disagree, but offer positive alternatives

Responsibility

- **Learn** about Missouri 4-H Youth Development Programs and your roles as a 4-H leader
- **Think** long term about the 4-H program and its members
- **Read and review** mailings from local and state office so you can stay informed and pass information along
- **Complete** requests and paperwork in a timely fashion

Fairness

- **Insure** all 4-H'ers understand rules about attendance and guidelines
- **Follow/uphold** the guidelines for all
- **Make sure** all programs are fair and do not discriminate or show prejudice
- **Provide** equal opportunity

Caring

- **Share** ideas and time with 4-H members
- **Write** thank-you notes and express gratitude for community support and involvement
- **Establish** consistent ways to recognize accomplishments of members and other leaders
- **Be ready to change** “the way we do things” if it does not meet club or county needs or is inconsiderate of others or specific citizen groups

Citizenship

- **Encourage** and **participate** in service to community activities
- **Speak up** about 4-H programs to others and policy makers
- **Stay in touch** with 4-H'ers and other 4-H volunteer leaders