

(The following information was prepared for 4-H clubs on Army garrisons by Mary Jo Williams, State 4-H Youth Development Specialist, for U.S. Army Child and Youth Services. The information is suitable for all types of 4-H clubs.)



Child and Youth Services encourage 4-H'ers to show good character in all they do – to be respectful, to be responsible, to follow the rules. Character education is a top priority in all 4-H programming. Based on the CHARACTER COUNTS!sm Coalition Six Pillars of Character – trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship –4-H'ers and their families are encouraged to show their character, not only while involved in 4-H programs, but as an essential part of daily life.

This packet is prepared for use at 4-H club meetings to remind members and their families what it means to be a person of good character. The eight programs are short and can be lead by an older 4-H member, adult or a youth/adult team. As you look at these activities, think about how they fit with the experiential learning model of Do – Reflect – Apply. Remember that, particularly in the “experience” phase, your greatest challenge may be to sit on your hands and let them truly experience. The activities listed are fun, easy to do and don't require many supplies. Look for ways that specific project groups can help. For example Photography and Technology take photos, movies of activities and put them on the club website.

Make this year your club's Year of Character.



CHARACTER COUNTS! and the Six Pillars of Character are service marks used by the CHARACTER COUNTS! Coalition, a project of the Josephson Institute

1. Experience

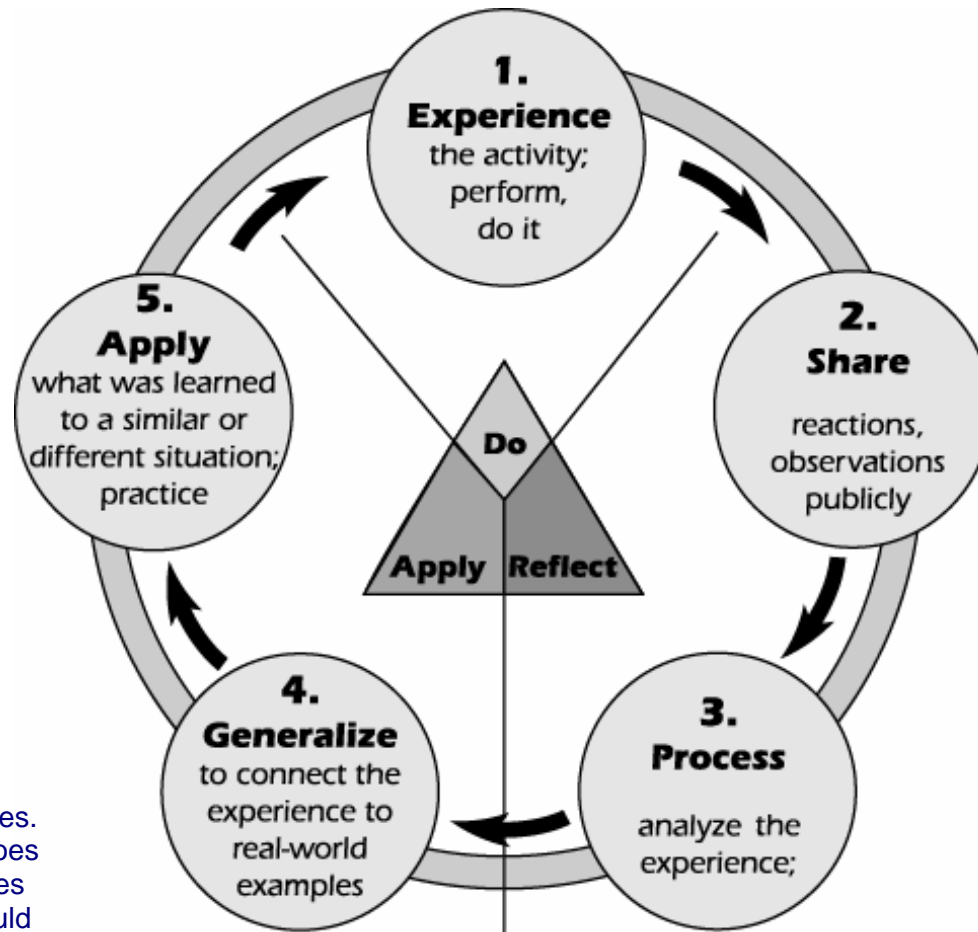
Youth do before being told or shown how. Experiential learning focuses on the learner not the group leader. Youth test and discover their own solutions while practicing one or more life skills. The group leader's challenge is to observe and encourage, instead of showing or telling how.

5. Apply

Youth share how they could use the new life and project skills and knowledge gained from the experience. Ideally this state leads directly to building on the experience by youth doing another activity and intentionally using what they learned. Thus the cycle begins again.

4. Generalize

Youth relate the project and life skill practiced to their own everyday experiences. Key questions include: "So what? What does this mean to you? What similar experiences have you had?" Again the discussion should focus on both the subject matter and the life skills.

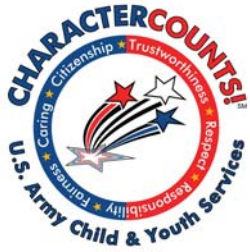


2. Share

Youth describe the result of the experience and their reactions. Helper asks questions such as, "What did you do? What happened? How did it feel?" and encourage everyone to reflect on individual experiences

3. Process

Youth discuss what was most important about what they did. Learners expand on common themes and ideas discussed in the Share stage. They discuss both project subject matter and life skills practiced.



Character Club Activity Suggestions



Being a person of character is not always an easy accomplishment! Understanding the Six Pillars of Character and putting them into action is often difficult to do. It's easier sometimes to just go along with the rest of the group than it is to stand up for your beliefs and what you know to be the right thing. Being a trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, caring person who is a good citizen can be trying. It is important that everyone learns how to become a person of character for a lifetime.

The Six Pillars of Character

Trustworthiness

- Be honest
- Don't deceive, cheat or steal
- Be reliable; do what you say you'll do
- Have the courage to do the right thing
- Build a good reputation
- Be loyal; stand by your family, friends and country

Respect

- Treat others with respect
- Follow the Golden Rule
- Be tolerant of differences
- Use good manners; not bad language
- Be considerate of the feelings of others
- Don't threaten, hit or hurt anyone
- Deal peacefully with anger, insults and disagreements

Responsibility

- Do what you are suppose to do
- Keep on trying
- Use self-control
- Be self-disciplined
- Think before you act; consider the consequences
- Be accountable for your choices

Fairness

- Play by the rules
- Take turns and share
- Be open-minded; listen to others
- Don't take advantage of others
- Don't blame others carelessly

Caring

- Be kind
- Be compassionate; show you care
- Express gratitude
- Forgive others
- Help people in need

Citizenship

- Do your share to make your school and community better
- Cooperate
- Stay informed
- Be a good neighbor
- Obey the laws and rules
- Respect authority
- Protect the environment

The Six Pillars of Character are an important part of 4-H Life Skills:

- Head – thinking about how our decisions affect others and our reputation.
- Heart – being a person others admire and respect.
- Hands – doing the right things.
- Health – supporting good character development.

Roll Call Suggestions:

- Share an example of a time when you were a person of character.
- Name someone in your community you admire and why.
- Share an example of a time when someone you know had to make a difficult decision.

4-H Connections:

The pillars of character tie into almost all 4-H activities, events and projects. Behavior at club meetings is definitely a connection that 4-H members can make to the pillars of character. A person who is trustworthy, respectful, responsible, fair, and caring models the ideals of a good citizen. Putting the pillars into action is demonstrated by their behavior during 4-H club meetings, events, and activities, as well as at school and in the community.

DO:

Show-Me Character Bingo: Supplies-at least 30 slips of paper with the letters B, I, N, G, O on one side and a pillar name on the other and BINGO cards with the six pillars of character randomly printed on each section.

Play similar to regular BINGO. Have one participant be the caller. As the caller calls out the letter and pillar, players will mark the correct pillar on their cards. The first person to call BINGO wins.

B	I	N	G	O
Trust	Caring	Fairness	Respect	Citizenship
Fairness	Responsibility	Caring	Citizenship	Trust
Caring	Citizenship	Trust	Responsibility	Respect
Responsibility	Fairness	Respect	Trust	Caring
Respect	Trust	Citizenship	Fairness	Responsibility

REFLECT:

- Can everyone name the Six Pillars?
- Is it important that we remember the order or is it more important to remember what the pillars are and what they mean?

Apply:

This activity helps members learn and remember the Six Pillars. The more familiar they become with the words, the more likely it is that they will remember them when trying to make decisions of character.

DO:

Character Wagon Wheel: Participants form two circles (one inside the other) with people on the inside circle facing out and those on the outside circle facing in. Choose the outer or inner circle to respond first and ask one of the character questions listed below. Give a short time to have the people facing each other discuss the question. Have one of the circles rotate to the right however many positions you choose and ask another question.

Character Questions:

Citizenship: What have you done in the past year that was patriotic?

Caring: What special day have you celebrated with your family or in your household within the past year?

Trustworthiness: Last night you received a call from a friend who asked to borrow money or something of great value to you. What is your response?

Responsibility: What is the best excuse you have ever used for not completing homework or a 4-H project on time?

Fairness: What does fairness mean to you?

Respect: What is one way you show respect to other 4-H members?

REFLECT:

1. Was it easy to give answers to these questions?
2. Had you thought about some of these questions relating to character?

APPLY:

It is important to remember that decisions of character are made every day. Some decisions seem more important at the time but we never know when one of our decisions will become a big deal. Can you think of decisions you have made in the past that demonstrate this?

The 4-H Pledge and Character

I Pledge...

My head to clearer thinking

- Be open minded
- Do what is right even if no one else is doing it
 - Pursue excellence in everything
 - Take responsibility for my own actions

My heart to greater loyalty

- Be a person of high integrity
- Tell the truth at all times and in all places
 - Keep my word
- Be the kind of friend I would like to have

My hands to larger service

- Volunteer in the community
- Protect my neighbor, the environment and our natural resources
 - Promote good citizenship

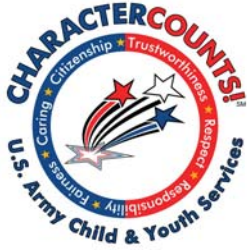
My health to better living

- Show concern for others
- Be kind, considerate and compassionate
 - Treat people fairly
- Respect myself and those in authority

For my club, my community, my country and my world.

- I will use my abilities to "Make the Best Better" for everyone

Prepared by Carol A Gehrs,
February 1997



Trustworthiness



Trustworthiness is about honesty, telling the truth, doing what you say you will do, and being loyal. Trustworthy has integrity and the moral courage to do the right thing and to stand up for their beliefs even when they face a difficult decision. Trustworthiness is something we all work on together in our club, family, school and community.

When you are trustworthy you:

- Are honest
- Don't cheat or steal
- Do what you say you'll do
- Do the right thing
- Work on building a good reputation
- Are loyal – you stand by your family, friends and country
- Don't gossip

Trustworthiness is an important part of 4-H Life Skills:

- Head – living your life according to your beliefs; being honest
- Heart – being loyal to friends, family and community
- Hands – carrying out what you said you would do
- Health – resisting peer pressure to lie, steal or use illegal substances

Roll Call Suggestions:

- Tell a time when you were honest and no one was watching.
- Share an example of someone showing loyalty to a friend.
- Name one person whom you trust and tell why.
- Share what would make you not trust a person.

4-H Connection:

Trustworthiness is very important to 4-H'ers. Completing a 4-H project and participating in a 4-H show can be a great opportunity for members to demonstrate honesty. Through projects and activities members can learn to be reliable and build a good reputation. The 4-H meeting can be used to share club rules and plans. Trustworthiness can be put into action at any 4-H event.

DO:

Six Feelings: Supplies: Seven large signs with one name of each of the Seven Dwarfs on each sign (Happy, Sneezzy, Bashful, Dopey, Grumpy, Sleepy and Doc.) Post these signs on the wall.

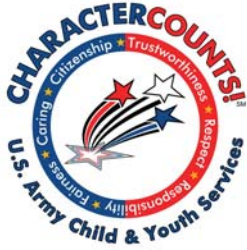
Ask the participants to look at all the signs on the wall. Have club members and guests stand by the sign that best describes how they feel at the moment. Explain that it is okay to be honest about what and how we are feeling. Give each group about 10 minutes to create a 30 second commercial to show their emotion. Have each group act out their commercial.

REFLECT:

1. Do you think how you feel or act affects whether a person feels they can trust you or not? Why or why not?
2. Do you think how you feel or act one day is a good test of your character? Why or why not?

APPLY:

Have you ever heard the expression, "You only have one time to make a good first impression"? Remember some people may only have one time to determine whether they think you are a person of character. Make sure you always behave so they make the right decision. So, if you only meet this person once, why does it matter what they think? (They may know your parents and your actions reflect on your family.)



Respect



We all want a chance to be ourselves, make decisions, be accepted, be treated in a polite, decent way and have a little privacy. We would like people to treat us with respect. If we are people of character we will show respect towards others.

Respect is showing others that they are valued for their character and who they are, not for what they look like or what they have. Being a respectful 4-H member means that we are courteous and polite and show consideration to others. Respectful people tolerate other people's beliefs and accept individual differences without prejudice or discrimination. It also means that we treat others the way we want them to treat us. We don't intimidate or force people to do things.

Respect do's:

- Be courteous and polite.
- Accept others without prejudice.

Respect don'ts:

- Don't insult, abuse, hurt, put down, mistreat or harass others.
- Don't make unwanted comments about a person.
- Don't take advantage of people.
- Don't use people to get what you want.

Respect is an important part of 4-H Life Skills:

- Head – thinking before we act, “will this hurt or upset someone else?”
- Heart – treating others the way we want to be treated.
- Hands – practicing good manners.
- Health – respecting your body and taking care of yourself.

Roll Call Suggestions:

- Tell what it means to be “considerate.”
- “I show respect for people when I...”
- “My parents know I respect them when...”
- Tell how you can show respect in your 4-H club.

4-H Connection:

Remember to respect all people when you attend camps or other 4-H functions. Be especially respectful when you meet new people.

DO:

“Respect”acles: Supplies: Pipe cleaners and scissors

We are going to make “respect”acles. These “respect”acles can be worn and used to talk about getting along with others. Wearing “respect”acles means that we watch and listen for other people’s feelings. When worn we respect others as well as the rules of good behavior – like standing in lines, keeping a quiet voice when asked, picking up our rooms, helping at home or school and respecting others that are alike and different from us.

Directions:

1. Twist ends of the pipe cleaner together for form a circle.
2. After it is securely fastened, twist the circle to make a figure 8 – make sure both circles of the figure 8 are about the same size.
3. Give the figure 8 an extra twist to make the bridge of the glasses and to secure the circle.
4. Attach pipe cleaners – one on each side – to form the earpieces.
5. The “respect”acles can be decorated using other pipe cleaners.

REFLECT:

1. In what ways do you show respect to others?
2. Is it always easy to show respect to others?
3. How does it feel when others do not show you respect?
4. Do you think they feel the same way when you don’t show respect?

APPLY:

Everyone deserves to be treated with respect. The glasses are a fun reminder. Can you remember a time when you were treated disrespectfully and how it made you feel?

DO:

Being Polite Shows Respect – Practice Makes Perfect

Addressing adults in the proper way, greeting someone with a handshake or making proper introductions shows respect for others.

Addressing Adults:

Young people should show respect to adults by addressing them using their proper title – Mr. Mrs. Ms. Sir, Dr. etc. An adult may give permission to be addressed by their first name but a young person should not presume it is OK until permission is granted.

Handshakes:

When meeting a person, especially for the first time or in formal settings, a handshake is usually expected. Have the club members practice shaking hand. Remind them to:

- Look the person in the eye
- Smile
- Extend a hand and give a firm shake of the other person’s hand. A handshake should not be limp and “fishlike” nor should it be so firm that it inflicts pain.

Making Introductions:

Introductions help strangers meet others and learn names. It also shows exceptional manners. Have the club members introduce each other and add a handshake.

1. Introduce adults first and females before males unless the male is of higher rank.
2. Tell something about each person so they have a starting point for conversation.

Make the following introductions.

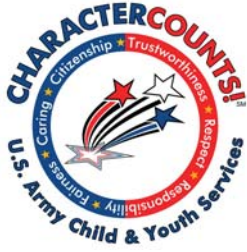
- Your mother to a new friend.
“Mom, this is Tim. He and his family have just moved here from Ft. _____.
Tim, this is my mom, Mrs. Clover.”
- Your club leader to the newspaper reporter
“Mrs. Green, I would like you to meet my 4-H club leader, Mrs. Clover.
Mrs. Clover, Mr Green is from the local paper and is here to do a story on our
photography project.”
- The Garrison Commander to your 4-H Club members.
(title) Smith I would like to introduce you to the Forever Green Clover 4-H club. Sir, we
are pleased to have you here today. If you have time I would like to introduce you to each
club member.
“(title) Smith this is:
Heather Smart (hello, sir)
Billy Brown, (sir)
etc.

REFLECT:

1. Does it seem awkward to make introductions or shake someone’s hand?
2. Is this something you will do every day?
3. Why is it so important to have these skills in your “bag of tricks”?

APPLY:

Can you think of a time when you needed to introduce someone and felt you really messed it up?
Practice simple introductions and you will be “on your game” the next time an important introduction
needs to be made.



Responsibility



“You can count on me!” How many of us have said that? Do we always mean it? Do we always carry through with what we say we will do? People of character are responsible.

Becoming responsible is part of growing up and becoming a person of character. Being a person of character means that we act the way we really are. Our true character is the way we act even when no one is looking. We do good things because it is who we truly are not because we might get credit or praise for doing them. To have good character, we must do more than just say we are responsible. We must take action. Responsible people take care of themselves as well as others and can always be depended on to do the right thing, even when the right thing is the hard thing to do.

You are responsible when you:

- Think before you act or talk.
- Are accountable for your actions.
- Are reliable.
- Set a good example for others.
- Fix your mistakes and clean up your own messes.
- Do your best.

Responsibility is an important part of 4-H Life Skills:

- Head – thinking about ways to show that we are responsible.
- Heart – showing that we care for others by acting in responsible ways.
- Hands – doing what we say we will do and following through on those promises.
- Health – caring about ourselves and others by making responsible choices.

Roll Call Suggestions:

- Describe a time when you saw someone do the responsible thing. What was he/she doing?
- Name one way you could show you are responsible in your family.
- Name one way you could be responsible at school or at 4-H.

4-H Connections:

4-H members can model responsible behavior by:

- Arriving on time for 4-H meetings.
- Following the behavior guidelines established for club meetings.
- Having talks or demonstrations prepared and practiced when it is their turn to be on the club program.
- Taking turns at providing refreshments, recreation, providing transportation, or calling other members of the group.
- Reading the county and club newsletter and observing deadlines for events and activities.

DO:

I'll Save You! Supplies: Several pieces of poster board or carpet squares cut into different sizes (Each poster board should have room for at least two people to stand on,); masking tape and radio or boom box.

We are going to play a game called "I'll Save You." Several different rescue boats have been placed around the room. We are going to play music, similar to musical chairs. When the music stops, you must immediately get onto a rescue boat – the more crowded the better. Pull as many people onto the rescue boat with you as possible. The object is to get everyone pulled out of the water and onto a boat in 3 seconds. Please play safely.

Should you fail to save everyone trying to get onto your rescue boat in 3 seconds, your entire group will drown, and you will have to wait for a new game to begin in order to play. Also, if you ignore saving someone who is near you, your whole group will drown, and you will have to wait for a new game to begin in order to play.

Does everyone understand the rules? Do you accept that you are going to help get each other out of the water and onto a rescue boat as quickly as possible?

Repeat the directions of the game as many times as necessary. Begin a new game at a point you feel is appropriate. Play the game for 15 minutes. It is even better if you can think of creative twists to add to the game.

REFLECT:

1. Were you able to save everyone whom you attempted to save?
2. What happened when you couldn't get everyone onto your rescue boat?
3. How did that affect the whole group on that boat?

APPLY:

Have there been times when a friend needed help and you didn't know how to help? This happens to all of us. Listening, showing you care about them and helping them find the help they need shows true responsibility---and caring.



Fairness



It's pretty easy for kids and grown-ups to say "That's not fair" when they don't get what they want. Often, we see decisions that put us at a disadvantage as "unfair." However, if we begin to think about what fairness really means, we're on the road to better character.

You are fair when you:

- Play by the rules.
- Consider everyone the same.
- Use the same rules for everyone.
- Listen to others and try to understand what they are saying.
- Consider all the facts, even opposing views, when making a decision.

Fairness is an important part of 4-H Life Skills:

- Head – thinking about what really is fair.
- Heart – not taking more than what is our fair share from others, or the environment.
- Hands – using fairness when we work with others.
- Health – treating everyone the same, even when we're dealing with our own challenges.

Roll Call Suggestions:

- Tell about a time when you felt you were treated fairly. How did you feel?
- Tell about a time when you felt you were treated unfairly. Why do think it was unfair?
- Describe a situation when you found it hard to be fair. Explain why it was hard.
- Share a time in 4-H when you saw someone being fair.

4-H Connections:

- How does the fairness pillar affect planning behavior guidelines for the club?
- How does exhibiting 4-H projects have an effect upon members' perception of fairness?
- Do new members of your club feel they are treated fairly by others in the club?
- Are all members of the club treated in a fair and just manner?

DO:

One Cut, You Choose: Supplies: Newsprint or butcher paper, markers or crayons or cake or cookies

Have you ever said, "That's not fair" when things don't go your way? It is not unusual for all of us to decide that something is not fair when we don't get what we want. This activity helps us to understand fairness when we share.

Draw a large circle on the butcher paper that represents a cake or large cookie. (Using a real cake or cookie would demonstrate the point of this activity even better.) As a group, work together to figure out a way to divide it fairly among everyone. Ask the group to think of some general rules for dividing the food fairly and discuss these rules.

REFLECT:

1. Does it seem more fair when everyone works together to make the rules? Why?
2. Should a larger kid get a larger piece?
3. Would you give an equal share to someone smaller?

DO:

Fairness Statement? Supplies: fair statement questions

Imagine that your group is a kind of jury. Your job is to decide the fairness of each statement. If you can't agree, you can try to convince one another to change or give in. But, you must reach a consensus – that is, there can only be one group decision for each statement.

Read the following questions. Be sure you let the participants discuss the questions and come to consensus.

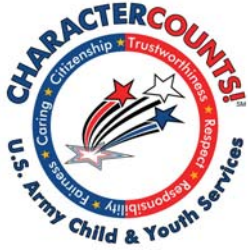
1. An allowance should be based on doing chores around the house.
2. Firefighters should be men because men are stronger than women.
3. Sometimes promises have to be broken.
4. When sharing, everyone should always get an equal amount.
5. If my friend is allowed to do something, then I should be allowed to do that too.

REFLECT:

1. Was it difficult to come to a consensus on these statements?
2. Did a statement that seemed fair to you seem unfair to someone else?
3. Is it always important to understand what is and isn't fair?

APPLY:

It's easy to say "that's not fair" when you don't get something you want. In the future, try to think about what is right and fair for others. Encourage others to apply the standards of fairness when making decisions---even if it is just sharing a cookie.



Caring



Caring doesn't just happen automatically. In order to learn to care, we must practice caring. The learn-by-doing approach enables youth to see what a difference their acts of kindness make in the lives of others. Why are people helpful and kind to others? Some people help others because it makes them feel good. Some show they care because they feel it is expected, while others feel badly when they know others are hurting.

Caring is more than just a feeling it is demonstrated by concern for others. Caring people help, give, and are kind to people and animals. They are concerned not only with humanity, but also with the environment, pets, and plants.

You care when you are:

- Kind.
- Compassionate and show you care.
- Open-minded and listen to others.
- Forgive others.

Caring is an important part of 4-H Life Skills:

- Head – thinking about ways to show others we care.
- Heart – communicating caring respect to others.
- Hands – providing acts of kindness and service to others.
- Health – showing we care about ourselves and others by making healthy choices.

Roll Call Suggestions:

- Describe a time when someone was helpful to you.
- Name one way you could show someone you care about them.
- Name one way you could show someone you care at school.

4-H Connections:

Saying thank you is a simple yet important way to show adults and other 4-H'ers that you appreciate what they have done. Many adults say the most special recognition they can receive is a written thank you note from a 4-H member.

Make plans in your club to make new members feel welcome. You may want to adopt the Buddy System where you pair an existing club member to a new member. It is a good way to answer questions of new members and to make sure they understand what is going on. The existing club member feels good about what she is doing and develops responsibility and compassion for other youth.

DO:

Thank you notes: Supplies: paper and pens or pencils.

Saying thank you to others for the kindness they show you is so important. It may not always be necessary to send formal, written thank-you notes for many occasions, but it is a very thoughtful gesture to thank someone who has spent money on you, sent a gift or taken time to do something special. For which of the following situations would you send a thank you note to someone?

1. A birthday gift from Aunt Marion
2. Someone lends you a pencil at school
3. A friend lends you a dollar
4. A friend's family invites you to spend a week at their lake cottage
5. A friend's older brother takes you to the movies
6. Your grandmother gives you \$50 for Christmas
7. You go to a cookout at your neighbor's house
8. You spend the night at your best friend's house
9. Your sister gives you an old sweater that is too small for her
10. A friend's dad takes you to a baseball game, buys you dinner at a very expensive restaurant, and then takes you to meet the players and get their autographs and pictures
11. Your 4-H leader gives you a ride to the 4-H meeting
12. You receive a trophy at the County Fair for your woodworking project
13. You receive a scholarship to assist with the registration fees to attend a county or state camp
14. Your neighbor gives you aluminum cans for your 4-H club's clean-up
15. You receive a pen set from your 4-H Council to recognize you for your years as a member of 4-H
16. Your project leader spent extra time with you on your project

Answers: 1,4,6,10,12,13,15,16

Explain that a thank you note should include:

- Reason you are writing the thank you note
- Mention the occasion for the recognition or gift
- Mention the gift specifically unless it is money
- Say why the gift is important to you

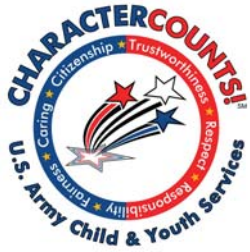
Take a few minutes and have each club member write a thank you note to someone who has done something special for them.

REFLECT:

1. Have you ever received a thank you note from someone?
2. How did it make you feel or how do you think it would make you feel?
3. Did this activity help you think about times when you did or should have written a note to someone?

APPLY:

Showing appreciation by saying thank you is so important. Yes, in this day of technology sending a thank you e-mail would be easier and sometimes it is appropriate. But, there's just nothing like receiving mail. Take time today to write someone a thank you note. Don't forget how important this is in the future.



Citizenship



Being a good citizen means going beyond our own interests and demonstrating a concern for the needs of the public. Good citizens recognize their obligations to make their homes, schools, neighborhoods, communities and country the best they can be.

You show good citizenship when you:

- Do your share to make your club, school and community a better place.
- Cooperate with others.
- Stay informed and vote.
- Be a good neighbor.
- Obey the laws and rules.
- Respect authority such as parents, leaders and teachers.
- Protect the environment by conserving resources, reducing pollution, cleaning up litter.
- Honoring and respecting the principles of democracy.

Citizenship is an important part of 4-H Life Skills:

- Head – learn about our government, learn about rules and laws in your home, school and community, learn to work with people.
- Heart – being a good citizen helps us to be dependable persons whom others can count on.
- Hands – good citizenship means “doing” for others.
- Health – do your part to make your community a healthy place to live, adopt a community service project that beautifies your surroundings and helps protect your environment.

Roll Call Suggestions:

- Name someone who is/was a good citizen. Explain what you think made them a good citizen.
- Share a rule from school or a law in your community that you feel is important and tell why you feel that way.

4-H Connections:

Being a good citizen means that a 4-H member volunteers and participates, is active on committees in the club, listens closely to the club business items, asks questions, voices opinions and votes when decisions are to be made. He also actively participates in the development and implementation of behavior guidelines within the club and does his share when the club conducts a community service project.

DO:

Citizenship Commercials: Supplies: craft supplies, scrap paper, construction paper, markers and/or crayons.

It's important to tell everyone about citizenship (you may want to focus on what your club or your project group does to show good citizenship) – what it means and what individuals can do. Working in groups of 3 or 4, you have 5 minutes to develop and design a 30 second commercial on citizenship. Use any of the supplies available to make your commercial more exciting.

REFLECT:

1. Did the commercial help you think about what you have done in the past to be a good citizen?
2. The smallest thing you do for others or for your community shows citizenship. What have you done in the last month to be a good citizen?

APPLY:

Throughout life you will be asked and have the chance to do something to support your community. Stop and think before you say no. Giving back is a responsibility.

DO:

Save an Egg: Supplies: drop cloth or large piece of plastic. For every team of four members you will need: one raw egg, 25 straws, and 6 feet of masking tape.

A community can be many things – your hometown is a community, your neighborhood is a community, in fact, your 4-H club is a type of community too. Communities are delicate, some people get lots of attention while others may feel totally left out. Things that a community provides to people may only be directed to a few people instead of everyone. But we know that everyone in a community needs to be taken care of.

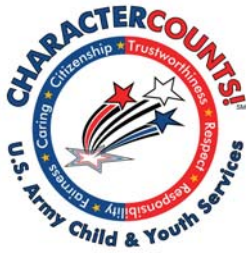
In this activity, every group of four people is a community. The egg represents members of the community. Each group will have 7 minutes using the supplies you are given to create a device that will keep their egg safe when it is dropped by an adult or older teen while standing on a chair. (Please take extra caution when the individual is on the chair. Make sure there are those who are serving as spotters.) After 7 minutes, with everyone watching and listening, have one group at a time present their egg and safety device to the official “egg dropper.” The object is to see how many devices were constructed that really keep the egg from breaking.

REFLECT:

1. What challenges did you face in keeping your eggs safe?
2. What challenges do communities face in keeping all of their citizens safe?
3. How can we as a club make sure that all our members feel like they are valued citizens and a part of the total community?

APPLY:

This activity shows that sometimes no matter how hard you try, you can't protect or support everyone. But it doesn't mean you don't try. Is there someone you know who needs an extra bit of support? What can you do to help?



Decision Making



As a club we have spent the past year talking about character and what it takes to be a person of good character. It may have seemed pretty easy to be a person of character as we talked about each pillar of character separately. The challenge come when we have to make decisions and some or all of the pillars of character are involved. Ethics is not about doing what you have the power to do, what you have the legal right to do, or what you want to do. It's about the need to act in accordance with a code of values. Ethics requires that we see the difference between right and wrong and we decide to do what is right, good and proper. Sometimes that takes lots of courage. Doing the right thing can cost us friends, money or fun.

Important decisions take time and thought. Before you do or say anything, think how your decision will affect the people who will be touched by it. These people are called the "stakeholders" because they have a stake in the outcome of the decision. For example, your woodworking project leader has called a meeting for Saturday afternoon. After the meeting was scheduled, your friend asked you to go to a movie on Saturday afternoon. Who are the stakeholders if you decide not to go to the project meeting? (Project leader, other members in the project, your parents if they have to work extra time helping you catch up. Here's a plan to use that can help sort out everything that should be considered.

- Do the least amount of harm possible.
- Don't sacrifice your integrity, reputation, and honor for expediency.
- The six pillars of character are ground rules – not just factors to consider.
- Be courageous.
- The long run outranks the short run.

When you still can't decide, go with the choice that will produce the most good for the most people.

Ethical Decision Making is an important part of 4-H Life Skills:

- Head – taking time to think about how the "stakeholders" will be affected by a decision
- Heart – using courage to act ethically
- Hands – carrying out ethical decisions with action
- Health – remembering your health and safety and the health and safety of others when you are making decisions

Roll Call Suggestions:

- Ethical decisions should be based on the Six Pillars of Character. Give a word or phrase that describes one of the pillars. The next person tries to identify that pillar.
- The toughest decision I ever had to make was...
- I never know how to decide what to do when...
- I don't want to lose friends, but I disagree with them about...

4-H Connections:

4-H'ers make decisions everyday. Some are about 4-H projects and activities. Whenever your club or a committee, or an individual 4-H'er is making a decision, remember to help them consider the consequences to all stakeholders.

- Choosing projects – Encourage members to be responsible when choosing projects. It is important to complete those you have enrolled in.
- Voting on club business – Discuss the stakeholders who are affected as part of the discussion before motions are voted on.

DO:

Character Shield: Supplies: Paper (newsprint works well but regular paper is fine), markers or crayons.

In early days soldiers used shields to protect them from harm. The character shield serves the same purpose.

Members should draw a character shield showing their three favorite Pillars of Character. Words can be used but it is more fun to have members draw pictures depicting the pillars.

Have each member share her shield with the group and explain why those three character traits were selected. (It's ok to pass.)

Family Coat of Arms (alternative to Character Shield) Supplies: paper, markers or crayons.

A Coat of Arms is something that represents something special. For example many families have a coat of arms depicting what their family stands for.

On the paper draw a large shield. Then divide the shield into six roughly equal parts. Write one of the Six Pillars of Character in each of the sections. (Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship). In each section, draw a picture of what you can do to practice that Pillar.

Have each member share their Coat of Arms with the group. (It's ok to pass.)

REFLECT:

1. What did you consider when selecting your three favorite pillars?
2. Did you select them just because they seemed the easiest to support?
3. In reality can we just select our favorite pillars and forget the rest?

APPLY:

How would you feel if you needed help with a big decision and those around you didn't like the Responsibility or Caring pillars? Work hard to keep the pillars in balance and then you will be seen as the person who makes good decisions – decisions that do the greatest good for the greatest number of people.