



4-H Club Management

PLEDGING A HAND:

MENTORING FOR MEMBERS, FAMILIES

Intended Audience:

- New 4-H members, families and youth, and adult leaders

Learning Objectives:

Youth and adult mentors will:

- Create a positive and supportive experience for 4-H youth.
- Establish a positive relationship with mentor partners.
- Understand the critical elements of mentoring partnerships and how they help provide a welcoming environment for 4-H members and families.

Life Skills:

- Communication, teamwork, empathy, problem solving and critical thinking.

Essential Elements:

- A safe and inclusive environment helps youth experience *Belonging*.

Time: Mentoring is intended as an “on-going” part of club function. This lesson takes 45-60 minutes.

Supplies Needed:

- Legos™ (use medium to large sized pieces)
- Poster or flip chart paper, markers

Mentor Handouts

- #1, Concept of Mentoring – Lego™ Man Activity
- #2, Mentor Team Contact Information
- #3, Mentor Team: Planning the First Meeting

BACKGROUND

Do you remember your first 4-H meeting? How did you feel? Who helped you understand what was happening and how you could get involved? How did others make you feel a welcoming member of the group?

Mentoring is an important method of helping new 4-H members and families feel welcome. It offers the opportunity for new members and families to gain insights and confidence into the nature of 4-H, how the 4-H club operates and how to get involved.

Members and families that have belonged to 4-H for some time develop a common understanding of certain phrases or language and how certain activities happen.

Mentoring relationships are intended to bridge that gap between the new 4-H member and family and those that have been involved for some time. With support, 4-H members and families find it easier to get involved in the 4-H club experience and build a sense of belonging, independence, generosity and mastery.



Mentoring can be accomplished as youth-to-youth, family-to-family, or club-to-club. In each mentor relationship, there is a mentor and a mentee. Each mentor team develops a relationship that is built on Connections, Communication, Confidence and Character. The 4 C's are all leadership skills. Each mentor team needs the support of the entire club to be successful. The 4 C's work together building a positive mentor relationship and team.

The 4 C's of Successful Mentoring

- **Connections:** Mentoring is about building positive bonds between two people, two families or two groups such as a 4-H club. Both parties are required to contribute to the relationship and building a team.
- **Communication:** Listening and speaking for understanding are critical skills for mentor teams. Each takes practice and time.
- **Confidence:** The internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy, identity and belief in the future. Having confidence in yourself helps others to be confident in what they know, asking questions and seeking out answers.
- **Character:** Attributes of trust, respect, fairness, caring, responsibility and citizenship that a person has.

Matching a Mentor Team

Mentor teams can be member-to-member, family-to-family or club-to-club. Where there is a need for a new person or group to feel welcome and have a sense of belonging, mentoring can make a difference. Each mentor team includes a mentor and mentee. This match is in place to help new 4-H members and families understand 4-H and help them to more fully participate in all that it has to offer. In 4-H clubs, you may have a Mentor Leader that helps put these matches together. In other clubs, the officers can work with the Organizational Leader Team to put a match together.

- #4, Mentor Team: Quick References
- #5, Evaluation

Do Ahead:

- Make a Lego™ prototype (10-15 minutes).
- Cut poster paper into puzzle.

Sources:

- Developed by Sue Pleskac, Volunteer Leadership Specialist, and Judy Kennedy, Juneau County 4-H Youth Development Agent, UW-Extension.
- *Learn to Mentor Toolkit*: http://apps.mentoring.org/training/TMT/Mentor_training_toolkit.pdf. The toolkit was developed by MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership.
- University of Illinois, *Mentor Leader Handbook* and *Mentor Leader Role Description*: <http://www.4-H.uiuc.edu/staff/roledesc/mentorldr.doc>.

Matches are made between a member or family that have been with the club for some time and connecting them with the new member or family. Start by asking the experienced family or member. They will want to know when the match will happen, their responsibilities and how long they will need to serve in the match. A match should be made within *one* month of when a new member or family shows interest in joining 4-H and should continue for approximately one year.

Mentors and mentees will develop a partnership based on Connections, Communication, Confidence and Character. This lesson will help the team better understand their roles and begin to practice working together.

What is the Role of a Mentor and Mentee?

What is the role of a mentor?

- Be a good listener
- Answer questions the member or family has about 4-H and the 4-H club
- Help the new members define and set goals for the 4-H year
- Foster a caring and supportive relationship
- Provide an atmosphere of respect with the new member and family
- Be flexible and open
- Share wisdom and experience while letting the new member and family make their own decisions

What is the role of the mentee?

- Be a good listener
- Ask questions about 4-H and the 4-H club
- Define and set goals for the 4-H year
- Foster a caring and supportive relationship
- Provide an atmosphere of respect with the mentor member and family
- Be flexible and open
- Share wisdom and experience

How Does the Team Get Started?

Handouts 2, 3 and 4 are tools you can use in beginning and building your mentor/mentee relationship. “Mentor Team Contact Information” are cards that each mentor and mentee complete for the other for a quick reference in connecting with each other. “Mentor Team: Planning the First Meeting” should be used by both the mentor and mentee. It is a guide to assist in preparation for the first meeting and to establish a plan for future meetings. “Mentor Team: Quick Reference” is a tool for the mentor and mentee in finding answers to questions and resources to build conversations around. Add to this reference any materials you feel would be helpful for your partnership.

How Does a Mentor Build a Relationship with a Mentee?

- Call and welcome your mentee to 4-H. Listen to what they like to do and want to get out of the 4-H experience. Ask them what questions they have. Make sure they have your contact information and how to best contact you.
- Seek out your mentee at meetings and 4-H events to explain the details of the program.
- Work with 4-H club leadership to select non-threatening Ice Breakers and games that include new families.
- Call your mentee monthly for four to six months and establish a regular contact schedule thereafter.
- Invite them to project meetings and events that you will be attending.
- Ask mentee if they need transportation or any contact information for 4-H events. (Note: It is not expected that a mentor provide transportation, but will want to give ideas to the mentee to solve the problem.)
- Assess your mentee’s strengths and direct them to individuals that can assist them in developing their skills for the benefit of the 4-H club.
- Introduce your mentee to other members of the 4-H club and others that can offer help.
- Help mentee find project materials that are needed.

- Offer ways to involve new families and members in 4-H.
- Recognize and support their work in 4-H.
- Offer to assist in completing entry forms for countywide or regional events: Enrollment, Speaking/Demonstration, Arts/Drama Festivals, Foods/Clothing Revues, Area Animal Sciences Day, Fair preparation, etc.
- Appreciate their efforts and understand their concerns.
- Other ideas?

WHAT TO DO

How Can the Mentor Team Start to Build a Positive Relationship?

Activity 1: Piece of the Puzzle

This activity focuses on getting to know about individuals, how everyone is important and contributes to all the others in a group. Cut a puzzle out of poster paper ahead of time. There should be one piece for each member of the group. Each person then decorates their piece to represent who they are and what they feel they can contribute to the group. Once everyone has completed their piece, ask them to share what they have on their piece. Have everyone work to assemble the puzzle.

TALK IT OVER

Reflect:

- What did you learn about others in the group?
- How important was it for each person to add their piece to the puzzle?
- What does this activity say about the importance of individuals and their contributions to the group?

Activity 2: Lego™ Man Activity

This fun activity can be the start of developing a sense of teamwork and effective communication within the mentor team. This can be done with two or more people on a team and can be done with multiple Lego™ Men. Use Handout 1 as a guide to this activity.

Activity 3: Blowing Bubbles

1. You'll need bubble wands and bubble solution for this activity. Ask mentors to dip their bubble wands into the bubble solution and blow hard and fast through the wands.
2. Ask the mentors to describe what happened when they blew fast. (If you blow fast, you tend to get a smaller bubble which does not stay aloft for long and sometimes bursts immediately. This would be similar to not spending much time with mentee. We do not want any of our new 4-H members or families to burst and fall quickly.)
3. Ask mentors to now blow slowly, gently and work at trying to make a big bubble that can stay aloft on its own.
4. Ask mentors to describe what happened when they blew slowly and gently. (This represents spending time with your mentees so they can grow and "drift off" on their own.)
5. Ask everyone to join together and fill the air with bubbles that will represent the mentees, who we will support to "make the best better."

Taking the Time for Success

It is critical to the success of the mentor team to take the time to get to know each other and build a positive relationship.

TALK IT OVER

Reflect:

- As either a mentor or mentee partner, what did you contribute to the mentor team?
- What helped you most from your mentor or mentee?
- What additional information do you need to be an effective mentor or mentee?
- What additional information do you need to feel like you belong in the 4-H club or within the 4-H club program?
- What's important for new 4-H members and families to know about our club and about 4-H?

Apply:

- What can the 4-H club do to assure that new 4-H members have a positive experience and stay in the club?
- How can the 4-H club do a better job of integrating new families?
- How would using “The Essential Club Checklist” at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/meetings.cfm> help provide a welcoming environment for new members and families or new 4-H clubs?
- What will you do to contribute to making new 4-H members, families and 4-H clubs feel welcome next time?

ENHANCE/SIMPLIFY**Enhance:**

1. Additional activities can be found at 4-H Community Club Central: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/index.cfm>. The following are recommended as lesson plans well-suited to “Mentoring”:
 - Creating a Welcoming Environment
 - How to Have Fun
 - Recruiting for Your Club: Includes information that new members may wish to know
 - Welcoming New Members and Families: “Cross the Line” is an excellent get-acquainted game
 - Supporting New Members and Their Families
 - Making the Most of Your Projects: Explains project selection, a good opportunity to mentor
2. *Step Up To Leadership Mentor Guide K-2* and *Mentor Guide 6-12*. This curriculum by National 4-H provides a variety of activities and lessons on leadership development. These skills are helpful for both mentors and mentees.
3. *Building Bridges: Reaching People through Communication*. This Wisconsin 4-H Communication Curriculum has two components that provide insight and activities into effective listening. “It’s All in the Family” can be found at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=11390> and “Communication Activities for 4-H Clubs” at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=11394>.

Simplify:

- Develop your own ideas for including new members and families.

ADDITIONAL WEB LINKS

- *Step Up to Leadership Mentor Guides for K-5* and *Step Up to Leadership Mentor Guide for Grades 6-12*. National 4-H Curriculum: <http://www.n4hccs.org/shop/products.asp?action=list&cat=4&subcat=46&l=L1> and <http://www.4hccsprojects2.com/leadership/>. The second site provides additional activities for developing leadership and mentor partnerships.
- Wisconsin 4-H Community Club Central: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/index.cfm>. This site provides a variety of resources and teaching tools for strengthening 4-H clubs. They can be used by mentor teams to learn about all 4-H can be for members and families.
- *Learn to Mentor Toolkit*: http://apps.mentoring.org/training/TMT/Mentor_training_toolkit.pdf. This toolkit was developed by MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership. Components of this toolkit may be helpful to mentor teams.
- *It’s in the Bag*. This helpful resource that focuses on team building for youth and adults was developed by John deMontmollin, UW-Extension Youth and Family Educator, Kenosha County: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/kenosha/4h/IITB.html>.

Finalized by the Strengthening 4-H Community Clubs Work Team, August 2008.



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Concept of Mentoring – Lego™ Man Activity

Explanation: As a mentor, you are striving to build a relationship with another person who may either be very similar to you or may have characteristics and preferences that are very different from your own. As you begin to build your mentoring relationship, you will begin to understand the communication style and learning style of your mentee. The purpose of this next activity is to gain a better understanding of the differences in communication styles and to understand how individuals work together as a team.

Materials:

- Ahead of time, create a “Lego™ Man” as a model for the activity.
- A packet of Lego™’s with the same pieces as you used for the model for each team.
- Lego™ Man placed behind some kind of “screen” so one person from each team can easily move to observe it, but so others in the room cannot see it.

Directions to Teams:

- Place yourselves in groups of four.
- You may select one person who will be the only one on your team allowed to look at Lego™ Man behind the barrier.
- Your team's goal is to replicate Lego™ Man in exact colors, size, numbers and kinds of Lego™ blocks.
- Your building materials are in the resource packet that will be handed out to each team.
- You will have one minute to plan and eight minutes to build.

Directions for Lego™ Man observers from each team:

- You may observe the model Lego™ Man only four times.
- You may not touch Lego™ Man or bring paper or pencil to draw or take notes.
- You may not talk to members of your team while you are observing.
- When you go back to your team, you may not pick up any of the Lego™’s, touch anything that your team builds, or draw anything for them.

Distribute packets containing Lego™’s.

Have all groups that finish early make a list of things they learned that helped them build the Lego™ Man as a group. List any barriers that they experienced in communication during this activity. Summarize key concepts gained from this exercise.

Talk It Over:

- What part of the activity was hardest?
- How did your group work together?
- What happened during this activity?

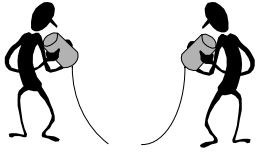
Reflect:

- What did you learn about yourself by doing this activity?
- What problems came up more than once?
- Who seemed to take leadership in the group? What roles did others take?

Generalize and Apply:

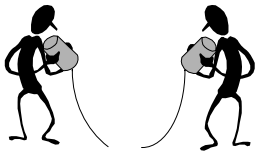
- What did you learn about your own skills in communicating with others?
- Why is it important to communicate new information with the group?
- What did you learn about relating to others?
- How could the skills you practiced help you in other ways?
- In what other areas of your life would you be in a similar situation?
- What did you learn about being a mentor leader from this activity?

Mentor Team Contact Information



As you begin this role as a mentor team, take a few moments to complete this important information. This should be done at your first meeting. Make sure both members of the team have this information.

	Mentor	Mentee
Name		
Family Names		
Nicknames		
Phone/Cell No.		
Email Address		
Address		
Best Time to Call		



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	Mentor	Mentee
Name		
Family Names		
Nicknames		
Phone/Cell No.		
Email Address		
Address		
Best Time to Call		

Mentor Team: Planning the First Meeting



Preparing for the first meeting of the mentor team is important. Whether your mentoring relationship is youth-to-youth, family-to-family, or club-to-club, the foundation for a successful partnership begins with the first meeting.

Step 1: Both the mentor and mentee need to consider what they are expecting out of this partnership. It may be helpful to spend a few minutes answering the following questions:

- 🍀 As you think back, who sticks out in your mind as making a positive difference in your life?
- 🍀 What did they do that made a difference in your life?
- 🍀 What qualities do you think makes a good mentor?
- 🍀 How can you show these qualities as you enter into this new partnership?

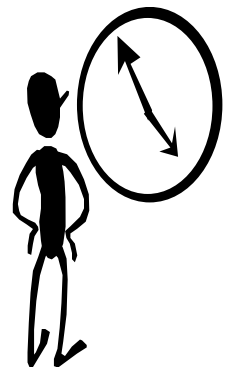
Step 2: Thinking Through the First Meeting

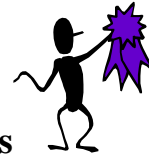
Typically, first meetings allow two people to get to know a little bit about each other, attach a face to a name and gain a bit of comfort. To do so, you need to think about what setting would feel comfortable for both of you, and plan conversation starters to use as a roadmap for your first meeting.

- 🍀 Where might I meet with my mentor/mentee where we both would feel comfortable?
- 🍀 What are some things I could tell my mentor/mentee about myself that would help us get to know each other?
- 🍀 What are some questions I could ask my mentor/ mentee to get to know him/her without prying? Consider open-ended questions such as: How do they like the community? What are their hobbies?
- 🍀 How can I find out what my mentee hopes to get out of the relationship? What questions might I ask?
- 🍀 What past experience has the mentee had with 4-H?
- 🍀 What initial questions does the mentee have about the 4-H club?
- 🍀 Has the mentee gotten some basic information about 4-H and the opportunities it has?
- 🍀 How does each want to arrange regular communication? (E.g., email, telephone calls, Facebook, next meeting.)

Step 3: Make the experience successful. Here are a few ideas for ensuring a positive partnership for both the mentor and mentee. Do:

- 🍀 Commit to making time to meet and connect with each other on a regular basis. Setting a schedule to meet or connect – perhaps just before or after 4-H club meetings – is helpful.
- 🍀 Make sure that you have the resources you need, or you know where to get assistance to respond to questions and concerns.
- 🍀 Understand that the mentor relationship is a partnership of support.
- 🍀 Call on your 4-H club organizational leader team and 4-H Youth Development Staff to let them know how the partnership is going, including questions and concerns that come up.





Mentor Team: Quick References

These are a list of references that can be used as the mentor teams meet. They can provide assistance in answering questions and understanding 4-H. This list can be *customized* by the local 4-H Staff and Volunteers.

- ☘ UW-Extension Office Address: _____
UW-Extension Office Phone Number: _____
UW-Extension Office Website: _____
This site provides local information, calendars of events, newsletters and other forms for the local 4-H program. It also provides additional resources of the local UW-Extension Office.
- ☘ Wisconsin State 4-H Youth Development Website: <http://www.4h.uwex.edu/>
This is the home site for the Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development Program. You will find resources and information for youth, volunteers and educators. You will also find a calendar of events, 4-H project information and publications available for 4-H members and families.
- ☘ 4-H Community Club Central: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/index.cfm>
The home for resources and information for 4-H clubs, focused on strengthening the 4-H club experience for all members.
- ☘ 4-H Club Organizational Leader (include name, telephone and email contact information)
- ☘ 4-H Club President (include name, telephone and email contact information)
- ☘ 4-H Project Leader or Key Leader contacts

Pledging a Hand: Mentoring for Members and Families Evaluation

1. How useful is this information in helping integrate new members and families?
Very Useful Somewhat Useful Not Sure Not Useful

2. Was a mentor offered to you as a new member?
Yes No

If no, would a mentor have helped you become comfortable in the program more quickly?

3. How welcome did you and your family feel at the 4-H club meeting?
Very Welcome Somewhat Welcome Not Welcome

Please explain why:

4. Did your mentor explain details about events or projects in which your club was involved?
Yes No

Were you able, with his/her help, to sort out what you needed to do?
Yes No

5. Would you recommend having a mentor to help your club integrate new member?
Yes No

Please explain why:

6. Any other comments: