



# RECRUITING FOR YOUR CLUB

## Intended Audience:

- 4-H Club members, leaders and parents

## Learning Objectives:

4-H Club members, leaders and parents will:

- Identify reasons for new members to join the 4-H club
- Consider strategies to help recruit new members
- Explore how to communicate 4-H opportunities to others
- Understand the value of personal invitations to prospective new members and families

## Target Essential Elements:

A welcoming environment increases members' sense of *belonging* in their 4-H club. Potential members feel welcome in clubs that they are invited to join.

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

## Supplies Needed:

### What Do We Like about 4-H? Activity

- Ball
- Chalkboard and chalk or large piece of paper and marker

### Inviting Someone to Join 4-H Activity

- Handout

## BACKGROUND

Youth want to belong to groups that are interesting, fun and friendly. Youth like to be with new and old friends. They like to make things and do new activities. Before joining 4-H, young people want to know what and why they should join. What are the benefits? Let's start by finding out what you like about 4-H.

## WHAT TO DO

### Activity: What Do We Like about 4-H?

(As the ball is being tossed around in this activity, have someone record reasons the members like 4-H on a chalkboard or large sheet of paper with a marker.) Everyone stand in a circle. We're going to toss a ball around. When you catch it, share what you like about 4-H before tossing it to someone else. Do not repeat any of the reasons for liking 4-H. Your reasons can be serious or silly.



### *What Our Friends Who Are Not in 4-H Need to Know About 4-H*

Look at the list of things you've said about what you like about 4-H. Are there other things that should be added to the list? Here are some possibilities:

- Open to boys *and* girls.
- Includes grades kindergarten through one year past high school (grade 13).
- 4-H is a UW-Extension program that is part of University of Wisconsin system.
- Youth are able to take projects that fit their interests.
- Youth can make the decisions in their clubs.

Sometimes, youth and their families don't know about 4-H. They need your help to learn about the opportunities in the club and county. Sometimes, they may have wrong ideas about 4-H. For example, some people think you have to live on a farm or in the country to belong to 4-H. Others might think you need to be in a certain grade to join.

There are a number of brochures to help us tell the 4-H story to potential members and their families. Check with your local UW-Extension office for copies of brochures.

### Activity: Inviting Someone to Join 4-H

(Ask three members who read with energy to each read a different approach from the handout "Ways of Inviting Youth to Join 4-H.") In each approach, what was good about how the new person was invited? How could the invitation to join be improved?

### *Personal Recruitment*

Research has shown that the best way to get new members, families and volunteers to join is to ask them. Just talking to your neighbors, relatives and friends will recruit new 4-H members. We all like personal invitations! Your 4-H invitations might include: telling them something about 4-H, why you like it, why you think they might like it, and how to get involved.

### Handouts

- Ways of Inviting Youth to Join 4-H
- Club or county 4-H information/promotion materials
- Wisconsin 4-H promotional resources: 4-H Interest Cards, Frequently Asked Questions About 4-H brochure, and Welcome to Wisconsin 4-H brochure
- Evaluation

### **Do Ahead:**

- Cut the “Ways of Inviting Youth to Join 4-H” handout into three parts for each of the readers.
- Have supplies and handouts ready.
- Recruit someone to record the reflection discussion to use as an evaluation (optional).

### **Sources:**

- Created by Linda Kustka, Professor Emeritus, Department of Youth Development, UW-Extension.

### *A Sample 4-H Event*

Offer to take potential 4-H members and their families to a sample 4-H meeting or event. At this meeting or event:

- Have everyone introduce themselves.
- Do a get-acquainted activity.
- Invite the visitors to be part of the 4-H meeting or activity. Be sure the meeting or activity is well planned and interesting.
- Have members and leaders share their favorite projects and activities in the club by talking about what they’ve done and made in the past.
- Talk about how the club operates. Pass out brochures with 4-H information.
- Encourage visitors to ask questions throughout the event or meeting.
- Tell them you would welcome them to join the club, but don’t pressure them. You only want members and families who *really* want to join. It’s not good if they join only to make us happy. It’s okay for them to think about it until the enrollment deadline.

### *More Recruitment Ideas*

Others ways to recruit new members and families include:

- Use brochures and posters in neighborhood businesses and libraries.
- Have “bring a friend” programs for current members.
- Mail brochures to prospective families.
- Put recruitment articles in the local newspaper.
- Ask if recruitment announcements might be made in school.
- Talk to 4-H Youth Development staff at the county UW-Extension office for ideas and resources.

### *Closing*

Clubs benefit when new people join. It’s great to have others join in the 4-H fun and learning. Everyone should help recruit new members and families. When they join, we need to help them get better acquainted with 4-H and our club.

Your reactions to this session help us evaluate its effectiveness. Please take the time now to complete this short evaluation.

### **TALK IT OVER**

#### **Reflect:**

- What interested you to join 4-H?
- What are the best things to say to youth or families who might want to join 4-H?

#### **Apply:**

- What should our club members do to recruit new members?

### **ENHANCE/SIMPLIFY**

#### **Enhance:**

- Additional activities can be added that promote 4-H. Members might make posters to recruit new members, write announcements to be read in school, and/or develop a brochure that promotes the 4-H club. Be sure that these public relations methods include who, what, when and where information.
- See the “Welcoming New Members and Families” lesson in this training series for ideas on how to help new participants feel comfortable in the club. This lesson is at [www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/meetings.cfm](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/meetings.cfm).
- The club might consider forming a Promotion or Marketing Committee that would lead recruitment and plan sample 4-H activities for prospective members.

#### **Simplify:**

- Eliminate the discussion on planning a sample 4-H event. Instead, bring up this idea to a Promotion or Marketing Committee or as a new business item at a meeting.

## EVALUATION

It is important to use an evaluation that is consistent with your teaching objectives. The short evaluation in the handouts can be modified to meet your needs. An alternative to a written evaluation is to record the Reflection discussion under “Talk It Over.” Recruit someone ahead of time to take notes while you are leading the discussion. Remember to share the evaluation results with 4-H Youth Development Extension staff in your county.

## ADDITIONAL WEB LINKS

- The Wisconsin State 4-H web site has:
  - 4-H Interest Cards to collect names of potential members and leaders at [www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=56](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=56).
  - Frequently Asked Questions About 4-H, a two-page brochure at [www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=32](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=32).
  - Welcome to Wisconsin 4-H family brochure available in Spanish and English at [www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=33](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/pubdetails.cfm?publicationid=33).
- The Illinois state 4-H web site has a game sheet that could be used as a restaurant placemat or information piece in grocery bags at [www.4-h.uiuc.edu/staff/promotion.html#game](http://www.4-h.uiuc.edu/staff/promotion.html#game). This would need some revision to fit your club.

***Finalized by the Strengthening 4-H Club Leadership Work Team:  
September 2005.***

## Ways of Inviting Youth to Join 4-H

Ask three members to each read one of the following statements in three different ways:

- Read in a monotone
- Read as if you were bored and exhausted
- Read with enthusiasm and excitement

After each reading, ask what was good about how the new person was invited. How could the invitation to join be improved?

### **Approach #1**

Hi. Tomorrow night is our 4-H meeting. Would you like to come with me?

### **Approach #2**

Our 4-H Club is a lot of fun. We need new members. We need people to help with our community service at the Humane Society. Want to join?

### **Approach #3**

Our 4-H Club does many fun things like making food, art activities and camping. We meet the first Thursday of each month at the First National Bank in Cloverville. Would you like to join? I can bring you some information.

## Recruiting for Your Club

### Evaluation

1. How useful will this information be to recruit new members? (Circle one response.)

Very Useful    Somewhat Useful    Not Sure    Not Useful

2. Do you feel better prepared to ask people to join 4-H?

Yes                      No

3. What will you do as a result of this program?