



Volunteer Learning Modules: Introduction to Michigan 4-H

Overview

This module provides volunteers with an overview of Michigan 4-H and the different roles a volunteer can play.

Section 1: Welcome to 4-H

Volunteers are the core of Michigan 4-H, providing healthy adult role models to youth. These caring adults give their time and expertise to grow the future and empower young people with important skills. These volunteers serve throughout Michigan in many ways to help enhance the lives of thousands of youth. With real-world experience, Michigan 4-H volunteers also offer young people another crucially important element: a healthy adult role model who helps to grow their confidence and ignite their dreams for the future.

4-H Clover Name & Emblem: The official 4-H emblem is a four-leaf clover with a letter H on each leaf. The 4-H clover is protected under federal law and its use is regulated by the 4-H Youth Development Program under the authority of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Anyone wishing to use the 4-H clover must obtain permission to do so.

Resources:

- **National and Michigan 4-H History:**
https://www.canr.msu.edu/4h/about_michigan_4_h/4-h-history
- **4-H Name and Emblem:**
https://www.canr.msu.edu/uploads/234/40629/Using_the_4-H_Name_and_Emblem_1.pdf

Section 2: 4-H Guiding Principles

There are seven guiding principles for positive youth development that Michigan 4-H has adopted. When 4-H volunteers follow these guiding principles in planning and carrying out programs it helps ensure that the programs are safe and effective, that everyone (including 4-H paid and volunteer staff and parents) understands the educational underpinnings of 4-H programming, and that youth are active learners.

Resources:

- **Michigan 4-H Youth Development: Guiding Principles for Positive Youth Development:**
<https://www.canr.msu.edu/uploads/236/67146/4-HGuidingPrinciples.pdf>
This PDF handout lists the seven guiding principles and offers three or four elements of effective practice for each.
- **Introduction to the Social Change Model for Leadership Development:**
https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/introduction_to_the_social_change_model_for_leadership_development
This article introduces a series that connects the seven C's of leadership for social change to the seven guiding principles of Michigan 4-H Youth Development.

To contact an expert in your area, visit extension.msu.edu/experts or call 888-MSUE4MI (888-678-3464)

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Section 3: The 4-H Pledge

Each of the four H's on the leaves of the 4-H clover stands for a word that starts with the letter H. Those words are the building blocks of the 4-H pledge, which is traditionally recited at the start of every 4-H club, group meeting or event to remind everyone of our focus.

To find out more about the 4-H pledge, visit these web pages:

- **4-H Pledge Posters:**
https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/4_h_pledge_posters

Section 4: Delivery Methods

There are a variety of different delivery methods that are used in Michigan 4-H; however, it is always important to have a conversation with local 4-H staff member to understand how the different delivery methods fit into your local county 4-H Program.

Delivery methods include:

- **4-H Clubs and Groups:** Groups meet monthly or more and are led by 4-H volunteer leaders. These are the most familiar long-term experience available through 4-H.
- **4-H SPIN Clubs:** 4-H SPIN clubs typically include five or more youth who are interested in learning about a specific project or topic. They meet six to eight times in less than 8 weeks for about an hour at a time.
- **4-H Camping Programs:** 4-H camps are typically held in outdoor settings and may be day or overnight camps.
- **4-H School Enrichment:** These classroom activities are usually delivered by MSU Extension program staff, 4-H volunteers, teachers, or some combination of these within a classroom
- **After-school:** After-school programs typically incorporate 4-H educational materials and provide care for youth while parents are working.
- **Mentoring Programs:** In these programs, Extension 4-H staff formally match caring adult or teen volunteers with young people to offer the youth support, friendship, reinforcement, and positive role models.
- **4-H Tech Wizards:** This program offers small-group mentoring experiences with a focus on science, technology, engineering, art, and math (STEAM) skills.

Section 5: 4-H Volunteer Roles

There are a variety of different ways one can volunteer with Michigan 4-H. It is always important to have a conversation with local 4-H staff member to understand how the different volunteer roles fit into your local county 4-H Program.

4-H volunteer roles include:

- **Organizational/Administrative Leader:** Responsible for the club's overall management.
- **Project leader:** Work with small groups of youth in a specific project area.
- **SPIN Club Volunteer:** These volunteers provide leadership to 4-H clubs that meet approximately 6-8 times within a two-month timeframe.

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- **Chaperone:** A volunteer who is at least 21 years of age who is responsible for a group of youth at a 4-H experience, it could be a field trip, day camp, overnight camp experience, 4-H Exploration Days, or 4-H workshops to name a few.
- **4-H Mentor:** A volunteer through one of the Michigan 4-H planned mentoring programs for youth aged 5 to 19 that spotlights one-on-one, peer and small-group mentoring models.

Section 6: 4-H Funds

The Michigan 4-H money management and financial reporting policies and procedures are designed to protect the reputation of the 4-H members, volunteers, staff, and organization as a whole. 4-H is a public organization, and a high level of accountability is required. These required procedures for money management and reporting must be followed and necessary forms submitted to MSU Extension staff to maintain group records and ensure transparency with the public and protect the 4-H volunteer.

These resources are designed to support volunteers in handling 4-H funds:

- **Financial Manual for 4-H Volunteers: Leading the Way to Financial Accountability**
https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/financial_manual_for_4_h_volunteers This guide gives adult 4-H volunteers the information they need to handle financial matters in any 4-H club or group. It is particularly helpful to volunteers who are teaching youth treasurers and other 4-H'ers how to handle the financial business of the 4-H club or group.
- **Financial Manual for 4-H Treasurers: Managing Money Wisely**
https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/financial_manual_for_4_h_treasurers This book for youth and adult treasurers details the roles and responsibilities of Michigan 4-H group treasurers and provides the information treasurers need to keep their treasuries and records in compliance with federal, state, and university financial regulations.
- **4-H Financial Toolkit: The 4-H Financial Management Toolkit**
https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/4_h_financial_management_toolkit This online supplement to the two Michigan 4-H financial manuals listed earlier has links to fillable PDFs of financial reporting forms, tip sheets, and short single-topic financial management videos.
- **Financial Management: Protect your reputation as a 4-H volunteer**
https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/financial_management_protect_your_reputation_as_a_4_h_volunteer This MSU Extension News article explains that the objectives of the Michigan 4-H financial management procedures are to: 1) Protect the reputations of 4-H volunteers against allegations of misuse of 4-H funds, 2) Model and teach money management skills to 4-H'ers, 3) Remind 4-H members and volunteers that funds raised in the name of 4-H are public funds, and 4) Avoid lawsuits and negative media coverage that could tarnish the name and reputation of Michigan 4-H Youth Development.