

Dear Prospective 4-H Member and Family:

Thank you for your interest in the Monterey County 4-H Youth Development Program! 4-H is a non-formal education youth program, conducted by the University of California Cooperative Extension as authorized by federal and state statute. The purpose of 4-H is to help young people discover and develop their potential. 4-H encourages young people to set their own goals and make their own plans and decisions.

This helps youth mature and build their self-confidence. By being part of a group, 4-H'ers learn to understand other people and to cooperate with them. These are two basic skills for a happy, useful life.

Who can join 4-H? Any youth ages 5 or in Kindergarten by January 1 of the program year through the end of year of which they turn 19 years of age may join 4-H... The Primary Member Program for ages 5-9 is a fun, cooperative and non-competitive not all clubs offer the primary program. To be eligible to exhibit at the fairs new member must enroll in 4-H by January 1st.

What does it cost to join 4-H? There is a minimal enrollment of \$16.00 for youth and \$8.00 for adult volunteers. This annual statewide fee is used to cover the cost of insurance for participants, as well as the cost of printing forms and free publications, operating costs for statewide committees, program cost of statewide advisors, and program salary support. In addition, members are responsible for the additional costs associated with some projects and activities.

Do members have to wear a uniform? There is no 4-H uniform requirement. While caps, scarves and uniform items are available, they are never a requirement for membership. Some livestock shows and local fairs do require 4-H'ers to wear uniforms when exhibiting animals. Be sure to check with the local officials for the requirements.

What are the projects? 4-H isn't just for members with animals. The official list of projects includes things like automotive, bicycles, woodworking, food, clothing, food preservation, camping and outdoor adventure, leather craft, photography, vegetable gardens, computers, leadership, marine science, and many more. Learn by doing in an atmosphere where learning is fun is a basic philosophy of 4-H. The project is where the learning by doing takes place. Within the project, members find things to learn, things to do, things to make, and things to explore. Project work is then summarized by a form of recordkeeping. Projects are only limited by what the members are interested in and the availability of adult volunteers.

How do I find the right club to join? Monterey County has 15 4-H clubs located throughout the county. I encourage you to contact several clubs and ask a few questions to find the best club for you and your family.

Some questions you may want to ask:

- When, where and how often does the club meet?
- What happens at your community club meetings?
- What types of projects, activities, events and programs does your club participate in?
- What do your club members gain from their 4-H experience?

Use the enclosed list to contact the Community Club Leaders. You are welcome to join anywhere in the county, however most families find it more convenient to join a club close to home. If you are interested in starting a new 4-H Club in your community, please contact me, so I can explain how to become a 4-H Volunteer and start a club.

I am looking forward to you joining the Monterey County 4-H Program. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call or e-mail.

Sincerely,
Wendy Grennan
4-H Program Representative
Monterey County UCCE