

*belonging, mastery, independence, generosity*



## Wyoming 4-H Philosophy

# Clubs



In the Wyoming 4-H Program, a club is defined as having at least 5 youth enrolled from separate families with an adult volunteer guiding the club. Clubs are designed to foster youth development principles of Belonging, Independence, Generosity, and Mastery. When functioning appropriately, the club structure is the most effective delivery method for accomplishing youth development.

### **Purpose of 4-H Clubs**

The purpose of any 4-H club is to foster youth development principles of Belonging, Independence, Generosity and Mastery. These principles are achieved by the following:

- Belonging
  - Provide an inclusive environment that includes social interaction between youth with diverse backgrounds
  - Contribute to a team effort
  - Develop a positive relationship with a caring adult
- Independence
  - Self-directed decision making process that relates to real-life experiences
  - Foster leadership opportunities
- Generosity
  - Community service activities
  - Share experiences with younger youth members
- Mastery
  - Project leaders help youth develop specific knowledge and skills
  - Skills to run effective meetings
  - Gain understanding of finances through access to funds raised by the club

*The depth that positive youth development principles are obtained by members is directly influenced by how the club functions.*

## **Types of Clubs**

### *Community clubs*

Usually include a large number of members of various ages who work on a variety of projects. They may all work together on citizenship and service projects but generally enroll in various individual project areas supported by the Wyoming State 4-H Youth Development Program. Such a club usually has an organizational leader and several project and activity leaders. Project groups or subgroups of the community club may meet more frequently to complete project activities.

### *Project clubs*

Learning groups of members dedicated to one primary project, but members are also encouraged to participate in various county and community events. Often, these are continuous learning groups that also have a team of volunteer leaders and an elected group of youth officers that meet more frequently to do more in-depth project activities.

### *Special interest clubs*

A short-term special interest program (i.e. skateboarding club, welding club) in which youth learn about a specific subject for a designated period of time. A minimum of six hours of instruction is recommended to accomplish youth development principles and concepts.

## **Function of a Club**

Clubs are lead by youth members in partnership with adult volunteers. This is accomplished by the election of youth officers and the establishment of goals as determined by the entire membership. Meetings are held to carry out club goals.

### *Organization*

- Determine type of club – community, project, special-interest
- Elect youth officers
- Determine club goals
- Hold regular club meetings
- Establish parameters for membership – specific project focus? Club requirements?

### *Operation*

- Youth preside over regular club meetings in partnership with adult volunteers
  - Use a mentoring system to socialize newcomers
  - Set aside time to train youth for the roles they will assume in adulthood
  - Youth manage the financial resources of the club
- All members are involved in making decisions for the club and celebrating its accomplishments
  - Everyone's voice is important and should be heard
  - Affirm and support one another
  - Empower by delegating responsibility
  - The whole is greater than the sum
- Achieve balance between chaos and rigidity
  - Conduct business while allowing time for social interaction (fun and games)
  - Organized with intentional activities
- Value and practice service to others

# Groups vs. Clubs

## Groups

### *Definition & Purpose*

A group is defined as a gathering of youth that meet to learn specific subject matter knowledge and skills. Groups differ from clubs in that the purpose is set forth and directed by adults rather than youth. The focus of a group is subject-matter related rather than youth-development oriented.

### *Types of Groups*

- Enrolled Groups
  - Groups made up of members enrolled in the 4-H program
- Non-Enrolled Groups
  - Groups made up of youth not enrolled in the 4-H program
  - ES-237 reporting defines “groups” as youth not enrolled in 4-H who receive education from an Extension Educator.

## Group Function

Groups function in a different manner than clubs.

### *Organization*

- Adults determine the direction of the educational programming
- Programming is determined by subject matter needs
- Accountable to the County 4-H Educator

### *Operation*

- Fulfill educational goals
- Hold meetings

*Groups do not provide the optimal setting for all youth development principles and concepts to be maximized for the benefit of the youth.*

## Club Chartering

Clubs must be officially chartered through the University of Wyoming Cooperative Extension Service (UW CES). The 4-H educator is responsible for guiding and directing the process. Chartering is the process by which a group is recognized as an official 4-H club by the UW CES. Upon meeting established requirements, a charter is presented to the new 4-H club.

The established requirements for **obtaining** a charter are (application available):

1. A membership of at least five 4-H members from at least two separate families
2. Screened volunteer leader to supervise the organizational needs and programs of the club.
3. An appropriately structured club utilizing a leadership team of youth officers
4. The club and volunteers from the club must be prepared to support the 4-H program above the local club level, i.e. participation in county council meetings or county development committees.
5. A calendar of planned educational activities (i.e. meetings, workshops, community service, etc.) for a minimum of six months.
6. Adopt and utilize bylaws contained in the 4-H secretary's handbook.
7. Comply with and sign the UW Affirmative Action form.
8. Approval of application by the county extension 4-H educator.

NOTE: If the club anticipates raising funds, generating income, or having bank accounts, an Employer Identification Number /Tax Identification Number (EIN/TIN) is a requirement of the IRS. (Obtain SS4 Form from Wyoming State 4-H Office)

See also: Financial Recommendations

Each year clubs should be evaluated and approved for renewal to continue operating as an official 4-H club for the new year. The following information should be collected and used to complete this evaluation and renewal:

1. From the Wyoming 4-H Club Treasurer's Handbook:
  - a. Chart of accounts (page 39)
  - b. Annual inventory report (page 40)
  - c. Annual financial report (page 41)
  - d. Audit form (page 43)
2. Minutes from club meetings
3. Updated Club Charter Application
4. Signed UW Affirmative Action form

To better support the county educator, a renewal form needs to be submitted to the State 4-H Office for each club each year.