

Wyoming 4-H

UW | EXTENSION



Cloverbuds Fact Sheet

Introduction

The 4-H Cloverbuds Program in the University of Wyoming's 4-H program is a non-formal education program designed for children ages 5-7. Participation, safety, personal development, learning and fun are the highest priorities for Cloverbuds programs. Cloverbuds is designed to introduce young people to cooperative learning and the many things they can do in 4-H. These programs are adult led, activity-focused, and are built on cooperative learning rather than competition.

Goals for Wyoming 4-H Cloverbuds programs

- Meet new friends, learn and practice social skills by working and playing in small groups.
- Gain self-confidence and learn about themselves in a non-competitive learning environment.
- Explore the variety of different things members can learn in the 4-H program.
- Experience the joy and fun of learning.
- Master physical skills through hands-on or experiential learning (learning by doing).

Principles for 4-H Cloverbuds programs

- Fun
- Activity focused
- Noncompetitive
- Group-centered learning
- Developmentally appropriate
- Leader directed
- Positive
- Success oriented

Age Requirements

UW Extension extends a limited, unique version of the 4-H experience to youth ages 5 to 7 as 4-H Cloverbud members. This age category is further defined as youth who have reached their 5th birthday by January 1st of the current year and not yet reached their 8th birthday by January 1st. Youth that have reached their 8th birthday are eligible to enroll as member of the 4-H program.

Enrollment/Organization

- Any chartered 4-H club may organize activities for 4-H Cloverbuds within the club.

4-H Club Sponsored Groups – Cloverbud groups can be held in combination with 4-H club meetings; the Cloverbuds can meet at the same time and location (or nearby location) as the 4-H club. Cloverbud members can participate in age-appropriate activities separate from the 4-H club meetings. Cloverbuds, however, may be included in age-appropriate 4-H club activities and ‘fun’ events.

- A school, day care center, community center, neighborhood, or group may enroll Cloverbud members and organize activities with the aid of certified 4-H volunteers.

Community/Neighborhood Groups – Cloverbud groups can be sponsored by a community or neighborhood group. Meetings can be held at a time (evenings, weekends, etc.) and location (home, community center, church, etc.) convenient for the volunteers and members. These groups can be led by certified 4-H volunteers and/or Extension staff.

- Cloverbud members will enroll in 4-H through the county 4-H program and enroll in a Cloverbud group (described above), and enter the Cloverbuds project.

Participation and Recognition

The intent and objective of the Cloverbuds program is not to duplicate the 4-H member experience that is designed for older youth. While the Cloverbud program is a component of the overall 4-H Youth Development program the program is fundamentally different than that of general membership in 4-H. Cloverbuds programs are short-term activity-focused built on cooperative learning. They are not project-focused built on long-term planned courses of study capped by competitive events. Additional differences include:

- Cloverbuds engage in variety of group centered activities which focus on developing a specific skill or concept to complete the activity. Emphasis is on providing subject matter-related learning experiences which are age appropriate and based on current youth development research.
- Cloverbud program should be designed to specifically focus on 5- 7 year olds and their age – related needs.
- Activities and learning experiences use 4-H Cloverbud curricula (includes K-3 curricula) in which the youth can, understand, manage, and master the associated subject matter knowledge.
- Cloverbud members should not engage in ongoing projects of any kind nor should they participate as competitive exhibitors because within the 4-H program, exhibits are intended to showcase the culmination of a long-term project.
- Cloverbuds may exhibit, showcase, or feature their work in a noncompetitive way and be recognized with “display or participation” ribbons.

- Cloverbud members are not eligible to participate in 4-H program contests, events, or activities designed for members 8 to 18. (I.e. Showcase Showdown, 4-H competitive events at county and state fair, 4-H camp, etc.)
- Cloverbuds are organized by screened 4-H volunteers and may utilize teen leadership; therefore Cloverbuds will not elect youth officers. Age appropriate leadership opportunities are encouraged.
- The processes to financially support Cloverbuds will be handled through the County Extension office.

Best practices for Cloverbud meetings and activities

1. Planning

- a. Utilize any and all available resources found at your county Extension Office and other locations
- b. Select a wide variety of activities.
- c. Plan each meeting around one theme or concept
- d. Cloverbud meetings should be separate from 4-H meetings.
- e. Reference the targeted life-skills model to ensure that youth are engaged in many different life skills over the course of the year.

2. Meeting Time

- a. Welcome each member and make an effort to get to know each individual's name
- b. Start with the 4-H and American pledges
- c. Throughout the meeting include a wide variety of activities including games hands-on activities, learning scenarios, and others.