



INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARENTS, GUARDIANS AND MENTORS

Cloverbuds

PURPOSE

The purpose of the University of Minnesota Extension 4-H Cloverbud Program is to support the positive development of children as they explore their world, discover the possibilities, build self-esteem, and practice the basic social skills which will be the basis for a future where they will become competent, caring, contributing citizens.

This factsheet for parents, guardians and mentors of cloverbud age youth, outlines the program options and characteristics as well as the rules that apply in competitive settings.



Cloverbud Members

The University of Minnesota Extension 4-H Cloverbud Program is designed specifically for youth in grades Kindergarten through second grade (K-2). Youth must be enrolled in Kindergarten and at least 5 years of age as of September 1 of the current year to enroll as a Cloverbud.

Cloverbud Programming

Programs may be delivered in several different ways including:

- Day camps
- After-school programs
- Activities hosted by a 4-H community club but not operated as a club
- Club, group, or program specifically for Cloverbuds
- County fair special activities

Cloverbud programs are developmentally age appropriate with the following characteristics:

- Fun, positive, activity centered
- Focused on life skills development through the five components of the experiential learning cycle (experience, share, process, generalize, and apply)
- Non-competitive, incorporating cooperative learning
- Safe for children and designed to manage risk



Cloverbuds and Competition

Cloverbud programs emphasize cooperative rather than competitive experiences. Children are encouraged to develop social skills through cooperative experiences with their peers. They also are allowed the freedom of not having undue emphasis placed on the product of their efforts. This is a time to experiment with new skills and experiences, not to strive for perfection.



Children in K-2 grades and age range have only begun to deal with the concept of being less than the best. Therefore, it is not appropriate for children in K-2 to participate in competitive situations. However, it is very appropriate for a child to participate in noncompetitive 4-H activities and to be recognized for their participation.

Rules for Cloverbud Participation

For the safety of K-2 participants, the following rules apply to cloverbud experiences. Parents/guardians/mentors are responsible for ensuring their “cloverbud” understands and follows the rules. Extension 4-H staff members and designated volunteer(s) are positioned to intervene when rules are not followed and/or if safety becomes a concern for another reason. Definitions used in outlining the rules are noted at the end of the document.

- A. When using equipment that is potentially dangerous, a responsible person¹ will be with the cloverbud at all times² guiding and monitoring their involvement. Examples of potentially dangerous equipment include sewing machines and power tools.
- B. Cloverbuds may only participate in wildlife educational opportunities of the 4-H Shooting Sports/Wildlife program. Cloverbuds may not handle any equipment, including fire arms and archery equipment.
- C. Cloverbuds must wear appropriate safety helmets when riding horses or bicycles.
- D. When cloverbuds and animals (including beef, cats,dairy, dogs, goats, horse, lama, pets, poultry, rabbit, swine and sheep) are together at a 4-H program or participating at the county fair as a 4-H member, the following rules apply:
 - The responsible person¹ must be in control³ of the animal at all times² and never turn the control over to the cloverbud.
 - It is the expectation that the responsible person¹ will be in control³ of the animal at all times of the 4-H experience including but not limited to all of the following situations: to and from the trailer, to and from the wash rack, to and from the barns, in the barns, in the stall, to and from the show arena and in the show arena.
 - It is not acceptable to use more than one lead rope or halter with any animal as this turns at least some control over to the cloverbud.
 - During judging, the cloverbud should walk next to the parent/responsible person¹, available to learn from the project leader and/or to dialog with the evaluator/judge.
 - Cloverbuds may safely interact with their animal through participation in a limited number of non-competitive classes at 4-H sponsored practice sessions/clinics, fun shows and county fairs. The purpose is to provide youth an opportunity to experience being in the



ring with a judge present and to feel the pride that comes with this experience. Appropriate examples of participation are described as follows:

- Cloverbuds may participate with beef, dairy, dog, goats, pets, poultry, rabbits, and swine in a Cloverbud Showmanship Class.
- Cloverbuds may participate with a sheep in two classes: Cloverbud Showmanship or Cloverbud Lamb Lead.
- Cloverbuds may participate with a lama in two classes: Cloverbud Costume or Cloverbud Showmanship.
- Cloverbuds may participate with a horse in three classes: Cloverbud Halter/Showmanship, Cloverbud Western Pleasure or Cloverbud Barrels. If the horse is used in a riding setting, the Cloverbud may sit on the back of the horse with a responsible person¹ in control³ of the horse at all times². Helmets are required for the Cloverbud in any riding setting.



Definitions Used in Outlining the Rules

¹ A ***“responsible person”*** is defined as a screened adult volunteer, youth leader 6th grade and older, parent or other adult who may appropriately assist with the group.

² ***“At all times”*** includes but is not limited to the following: during all portions of project workshops, club events, club meetings, public showcases which includes county fairs, demonstrations, or a community event where youth are representing 4-H with an animal.

³ ***“Control”*** means assuming responsibility for handling and/or leading the animal. It is the responsibility of the parent/responsible adult to control the animal at all times.

Questions or Comments

Contact your local Extension Office

AUTHORS:

Developed by Trisha Sheehan, Anita Harris, Jodi Hintzen.

Reviewed by the Policy Task Force (Tamie Bremseth, Sharon Davis, Patrick Jirik, Brad Rugg) and reviewed and adopted by the 4-H Program Design Team, 2013.

Revised February, 2015

Copyright © 2013, Regents of the University of Minnesota.

REFERENCES:

4-H Cloverbud Leader’s Guide. Copyright (c) 2013, Regents of the University of Minnesota.