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# 4-H’ers Develop Leadership Skills at Lancaster County Fair

4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills. Life skills include responsibility, decision making/problem solving, communicating and community service.

The 4-H curriculum, “Step Up to Leadership: Mentor Guide” defines leadership as “...the ability to influence and support others in a positive manner for a common goal.” Life skills can be used in a leadership capacity when someone influences and supports others.

The University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension 4-H Youth Development program offers youth numerous opportunities to learn and apply leadership skills throughout the year and at fair time.

4-H Teen Council President Grace Farley says, “4-H has given me many opportunities to learn about leadership. I have received the chance to lead meetings, arrange speakers, run community events and much more through my involvement in Teen Council. These experiences allow me to learn in a hands-on way. I will be able to use these skills for the rest of my life.”

## 4-H at Lancaster County Fair

County and state fairs mark the culmination of the 4-H activity year. Many 4-H members exhibit their projects and compete in contests. 4-H has a large presence at the Lancaster County Fair with contests, animal shows and other activities starting before the fair and running all five days of the fair.

### Teen Council

Lancaster County 4-H Teen Council is a leadership organization for youth in grades 7–12. More than 40 youth are involved in 4-H Teen Council this year. Meetings are held monthly, but the teens gear up into overdrive for the Lancaster County Fair.

At the fair, 4-H Teen Council is in charge of a **Cookie Eating Contest** (Friday, Aug. 8 at 4 p.m. in the Fair Tent), **Ice Cream Social** (Friday, Aug. 8 at 5:30 p.m. in the Fair Tent) and **4-H Information Table** (in the Lincoln Room). The teens plan, organize and carry out these activities themselves. They form — and serve on — committees which are responsible for each activity. The teens follow through with all the details, from picking up the ice cream to inventorying supplies to securing donations.

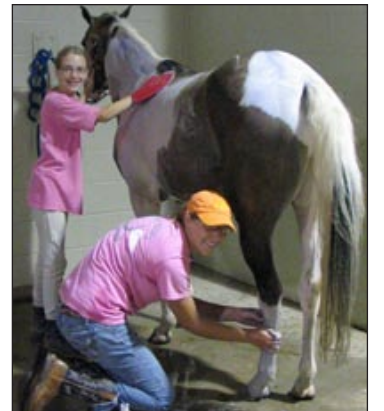
4-H Teen Council member Christina Mayer says, “As a 4-H’er, it has become abundantly clear to me that working in groups is helpful, if not vital, in many situations. Teen Council runs much smoother and is much more enjoyable if the officers and other members can work together to make plans. I’m learning to be a team player, and I like to think that 4-H has played a leading role in that development.”

### 4-H Council

Lancaster County 4-H Council is responsible for determining long- and short-term goals and policy for Lancaster County 4-H. Comprised of adults and youth, the 4-H Council is a partnership between adults and youth who make decisions and work together.



Each year, 4-H Teen Council organizes an Ice Cream Social as a fundraiser for their program.



Older 4-H’ers often help younger 4-H’ers at fair time.



4-H Teen Council members staff the 4-H Information Table at the Lancaster County Fair.



Teens act as tour guides for child care groups during Fair Fun Day.



Animal exhibitors are encouraged to share knowledge about their animals.

4-H Council also raises funds to support 4-H programs, activities and scholarships. The majority of 4-H Council’s fundraising comes from staffing a **4-H snack booth** at the Lancaster County Fair (the 4-H Corner Stop is located near the main entrance). Many 4-H clubs staff a shift at the snack booth. At least one 4-H Council member (youth or adult) is at the booth at all times.

Last year, Valentino’s sponsored a **Spaghetti Feed** fundraiser for 4-H Council. 4-H Council youth member Brad Morgan contacted and made the arrangements with Valentino’s.

### Other Opportunities

**Club Officers & Junior Leaders** — 4-H clubs usually have club officers and some have junior leaders. In these leadership roles, youth often help other youth. Many older 4-H’ers without “official” leadership roles also help younger youth at the Lancaster County Fair. Another form of leadership is setting a good example and being a role model.

**Volunteering with Set-Up** — Every year, youth and adult volunteers

are needed to help with Lancaster County Fair set-up. 4-H staff member Tracy Kulm says, “Some teens step up and take leadership for certain aspects of static exhibit set-up, such as cleaning and decorating displays, or arranging exhibits. They are very capable and their help is so appreciated.”

**Herdsmanship** — Clubs cooperate to keep their animals and stall areas clean and attractive. All animal exhibitors are encouraged to share knowledge about their animals to the general public. 4-H staff member Deanna Karmazin says, “Each year, I’m impressed how professional and knowledgeable the 4-H’ers are when they explain their animal projects to the public.”

**Fair Fun Day Teen Tour Guides** — Teen volunteers lead tours for child care groups during Fair Fun Day. Several teens give talks and/or demonstrations at designated stops on the tours.

4-H members Jeff Cassel and Katie Zabel say they like helping younger 4-H’ers because they like making kids laugh and smile, and giving kids the best week of their lives.

2008  
**LANCASTER COUNTY FAIR**  
**AUGUST 6–10**  
**LANCASTER EVENT CENTER**  
 84th & Havelock, Lincoln  
[www.lancastereventcenter.com](http://www.lancastereventcenter.com)  
 (402) 441-6545

**Free!**  
 FREE gate admission!  
 FREE parking!

4-H results and photos  
 will be posted online at  
<http://lancaster.unl.edu>



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