

# NEW KIDS IN THE CLOVER



Dear 4-H member,  
By this time, you've chosen your projects and started working on them for the summer 4-H shows. You've set your goals, and other people are helping you work on them. You may have been in a special 4-H activity, such as a judging contest. You may have given a speech or demonstration in front of your 4-H club or at club days. After you've tried something new, it feels good to hear, "Good job!" That's called recognition. It's something 4-H offers to all its members! Read the following letter to better understand the opportunities for recognition.

Sincerely,

Kansas 4-H

## **Recognition for Participation**

It should make you feel good to take part in 4-H activities. Your club reporter may have put your name in the paper when you joined the club or after you gave a speech. Maybe all new members were asked to stand at County 4-H Achievement Night. Perhaps you received a certificate or ribbon for going to a workshop or entering a contest. These are all ways of recognizing participation.

## **Recognition for Progress toward Goals**

Each 4-H member is different. They live in different towns. They have different skills. They have different people to help them. Planning your 4-H project work helps 4-H leaders recognize you for what you have learned. Do you remember writing your project goals for the year? The 4-H program recognizes you for meeting these goals.

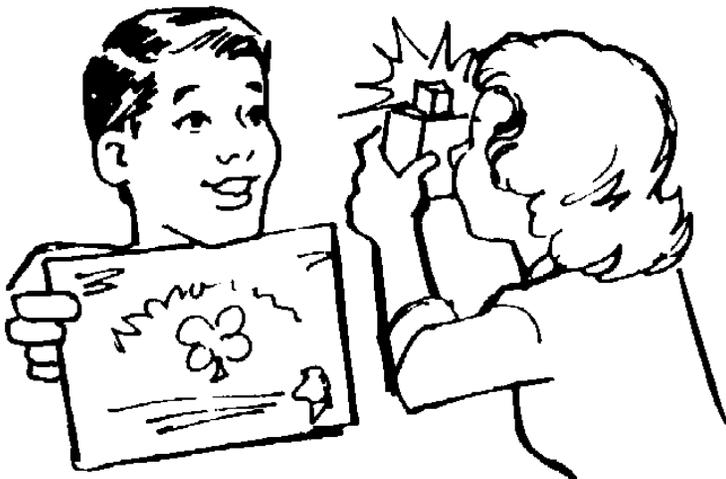
You should be working on a KAP (Kansas Award Portfolio) for each of your projects. These forms allow you to write down what you want to learn. You can also keep track of tours, speeches, demonstrations, special activities, and other information. At times, your 4-H leader may ask to see your plan. If you have met your goals, you will probably be recognized at a club meeting or at achievement night. Your club may also give you a certificate that shows you reached your goals for the year.

## **Recognition for Achievement of Standards of Excellence**

The 4-H program also rewards members who reach special standards. A standard is a way of measuring how well you've done. It tells you how far you must go to reach the top. The standard is the top.

At some 4-H events, a judge looks at the final product in your project. The judge decides if you have met certain standards. Examples are straight seams in a clothing project or a woodworking project that is smoothly sanded. Your award is based on how well you met the standards for your project. A blue award means the product meets the standard. A red award means the product needs some improvement. A white award means the product needs much improvement.

The 4-H program also recognizes members for meeting standards of excellence for their age group. These awards are usually given at the end of the year after members have completed their projects. Members who meet the standards for their age group can receive pins and other items.



## **Kansas 4-H Member Achievement Pins**

Member Achievement Plans are designed to recognize a 4-H member for increasing and expanding their 4-H involvement with each year. To receive a membership pin, a 4-H'er must attend over one half of the regularly scheduled club meetings during the year. Each plan requires a bit more participation from the 4-H'er as they get older. Other requirements include a project exhibit, attending a county event, participating in club days, serving as a camp counselor, etc. The pins are as follows:

Membership Pin	Member Achievement Plan 1
Bronze Pin	Member Achievement Plan 2
Clover Pin	Member Achievement Plan 3
Emerald Pin	Member Achievement Plan 4
Silver Pin	Member Achievement Plan 5
Silver Guard Pin	Member Achievement Plan 6
Leadership Pin	Member Achievement Plan 7
Gold Pin	Member Achievement Plan 8
Gold Guard Pin	Member Achievement Plan 9
Key Award	



## **Recognition for Peer Competition**

Do you like to compete with others? You can compete in 4-H in many ways. Most 4-H animal shows are forms of competition. So are the public speaking and other contests. Another way that members compete is the 4-H awards program.

4-H pins, plaques, and jackets are some of the prizes members win by competing in the awards program. Some of these items are donated by local businesses. Others may be given to the 4-H program by state or national donors. If you want to try for these awards, fill out an award application. Some counties offer special awards for younger or first-year members. Other awards may be hard for a first-year member to win, but don't get discouraged! You may be competing against much older members. Some members apply for several years before winning. Keep trying! Olympic skiers have to practice, and you do, too!

Award applications are usually due in September. Ask your club leader about the due date. Winners on the county/unit level who are old enough can advance to the state level. At the state level, you can win trips and other awards. Ask your 4-H leader or an older member to help you fill out the applications.

Whenever people compete, there are winners and losers. Usually, there is only one winner. Remember to be a good sport. Win or lose, you've learned a lot from being part of 4-H.

*\*Originally written by University of Illinois 4-H Youth Development, College of Agriculture, Consumer and Environmental Science, University of Illinois Extension. Revised & adapted with permission December 2011.*

**Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service**

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