

PORTER COUNTY

New Family Guide



Welcome

Welcome to the Porter County 4-H Program and congratulations to your family for choosing to make 4-H a part of your life! We know it can be a little overwhelming at first but we are here to help. 4-H is a youth development program that is a part of the United States Department of Agriculture and administered in Indiana by Purdue Cooperative Extension Service. Locally, the Porter County office of Purdue Cooperative Extension Service administers the Porter County 4-H Program, with input from the Porter County 4-H Council. Included in this family guide is information we hope will be helpful and will provide the tools necessary for your family to have a positive start with your 4-H career. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions regarding this information after you have read it.

Meet your 4-H Educator & Assistants

My name is Jennifer Myers and I am a graduate from Ball State University as well as the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. I participated in 4-H in Steuben County where I showed chickens and did LOTS of Exhibit Building projects. I am excited having you as part of the Porter County 4-H family and look forward to working with you!



My name is Angel Leuck and I have worked as the 4-H assistant for 5 years. I enjoy helping 4-H'ers and their families with all sorts of questions. I take care of many behind-the-scenes things like ordering 4-H manuals and posters, lining up judges for fair projects, and updating the 4-H Blog to name a few. When I'm not at work you can find me babysitting grandchildren or attending one of their events.



My name is April Fifield and I have served as an assistant for the past two years. You may see me at Morgan Township Elementary as I am also an aide there. I have 4 children and 6 grandchildren. All of my children did 10 years in 4-H and now my grandchildren are in 4-H. I am an avid crafter/quilter, superintendent of jewelry, needle craft and NEW this year wearable arts! I LOVE Disney, also!



In this Guide:
Welcome
Meet Your Educator
Office Hours & Location
Porter County Staff
Eligibility & Enrollment
Stay Connected
What Exactly is 4-H
4-H Traditions
4-H Clubs
State Opportunities
Parent Roles
Parent Help
4-H Projects
Local Events & Camp
General Calendar
Terminology



Office Hours & Location

The local 4-H Youth Development Extension Educator manages the county 4-H program on a daily basis. Feel free to use any of the means listed below to contact our staff with any questions that may arise throughout the year.

The Purdue Extension - Porter County Office:

155 Indiana Ave., Suite 301, Valparaiso, IN 46383

Phone: 219-465-3555

There is also an after hours drop box outside of the building, next to the main entrance doors.

Office Hours are:

Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

Closed County Government Holidays

Porter County Extension web site:

www.extension.purdue.edu/porter

Eligibility & Enrollment

Enrollment in Indiana 4-H is open to any youth enrolled in grades 3-12. Grade is defined as the school grade the child is enrolled in January 1 of the 4-H year. A child may enroll in only one 4-H program in Indiana, regardless of their place of residence. In other words, youth are not required to participate in their own county's program and may participate in a different county program provided they have properly enrolled. The only exception to this is if their county of primary 4-H enrollment does not offer a project or statewide activity they want to participate, then the child can enroll in a second county provided they meet Indiana 4-H policy requirements.

Enrollment is an annual process attained by completing the appropriate county 4-H enrollment process. 4-H Online enrollment starts October 1 at <https://v2.4honline.com/>. 4-H members may add or drop projects through 4-H Online until May 15th. There is a \$15 state 4-H program fee as well as a \$5 county fee, payable at the time of enrollment.

It is the policy of the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service that all persons have equal opportunity and access to its educational programs, services, activities, and facilities without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability or status as a veteran. Purdue University is an Affirmative Action institution. This material may be available in alternative formats.

PURDUE EXTENSION PORTER COUNTY 4-H STAFF

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Extension - Porter County



STAY CONNECTED

We have many ways to stay connected with you!

PoCo 4-H Clover Connect: This is our bi-weekly newsletter. Be sure to read it completely as it has a lot of information about upcoming events and activities. This includes the Mini 4-H'ers as well!

Facebook and Instagram: We have a Facebook and Instagram page in case of changes and other announcements.

4HOnline: We will send emails and updates through your [4HOnline](#) account. Please do not delete these emails and make sure you are reading what we are sending out. [4HOnline](#) is designed as an enrollment and data management system for 4-H throughout Indiana. Members must enroll in 4-H and pay a \$20 program fee in order to be in 4-H in Indiana. The [4HOnline](#) website allows youth and parents to sign up for projects, change contact information, and receive access to any information from the Extension Office.

4-H Handbook: The 4-H Handbook is found on the Porter County Extension website. If you do not have access to a computer, you may get a copy at the Porter County Extension Office. The Handbook has all projects and requirements listed for the current year.



What Exactly is 4-H

4-H Mission: The Indiana 4-H Youth Development mission is to provide real-life educational opportunities that develop young people who will have a positive impact on their communities and world.

4-H Vision: Indiana 4-H Youth Development strives to be the premier, community-based program empowering young people to reach their full potential.

4-H provides youth in grades 3-12 educational programs through their participation in project and club related activities. Porter County 4-H offers programming through more than 70 different projects and has thirteen community 4-H clubs. 4-H project workshops provide members with technical training that each member needs to be successful not only in discipline, but also with life-long technical skills. 4-H member club work provides members with life-long leadership and social skills that will be of benefit to every member in career preparation.

4-H Traditions

4-H Emblem: Four-leaf clover with the letter "H" on each leaf. The emblem is federally protected. The H's stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.

Motto: "To make the best better."

Slogan: "Learn by Doing."

Colors: If you have not already guessed our colors are green and white. Green symbolizes nature's most common color and represents life, springtime, and youth. White symbolizes purity.

4-H Pledge: I pledge
My head to clearer thinking,
My heart to greater loyalty,
My hands to larger service,
My health to better living,
For My club, My community, My country and My world.



4-H Clubs

4-H clubs are groups of youth and adults who meet on a regular basis and together practice positive youth development and cooperative learning. Clubs usually meet once a month from fall until August. Each club elects officers from the club membership and those officers conduct the business portion of the club meeting.

4-H'ers may belong to any 4-H club in the county. Residence does not restrict club membership. However, most 4-H'ers belong to the club closest to where they live or attend school. All clubs should strive to create a quality learning environment for youth that give members a chance to be an active part of the club, to enhance life skills, and to promote positive youth development throughout all activities. All clubs also participate in community service projects throughout the year.

4-H'ers may change membership to another club if they wish. It is important to change your club information in [4HOnline](#) and notify the leaders of both clubs (the one you are leaving and the one you are joining).

Selecting a Club: Things to consider when selecting a club are the location, dates of meetings, size of club you are comfortable with, and areas of interest.

Mini 4-H: Mini 4-H is a program designed to encourage positive youth development of children in grades K-2 in a non-competitive environment. The goal of Mini 4-H is to help young children explore friendships outside the family; explore the way in which things work; practice both small and large muscle control; and think about the ways people work together on projects. They are encouraged to join their local club and attend specially planned activities such as Mini Mondays.

STATE OPPORTUNITIES

State 4-H offers a variety of opportunities that usually takes place in June and July. Many of these are educational workshops at Purdue University. The trip information is mailed to all eligible 4-H members in late winter or early spring. Funding for trips varies depending on what the trip is and who sponsors, such as 4-H Council. For trips information [press here](#).

State scholarships are also available for youth starting as early as sophomore year. For more information about scholarships visit this [website](#).



Parent Roles

Purpose: Provide support to your child in 4-H.

How to Help your Child:

- Learn about 4-H: what it stands for, how it operates, how it is funded.
- Advise your child in selecting 4-H projects. Show your interest and enthusiasm for the projects selected. Find out what is suggested for the members to do and learn.
- Encourage your 4-H'er when they succeed and provide even more encouragement when they fail.
- Be an example! Help your 4-H'er to be a good sport and appreciate the successes of others.
- Keep informed about 4-H through information that comes to members of your family. Visit your profile in [4HOnline](#) regularly and read the Porter County Extension 4-H News and other mailings your 4-H'er will receive.
- Be a 4-H booster in your community. Support 4-H by sponsoring awards for the 4-H fair events. Contact the Extension Office if you have interest in sponsoring.
- Make 4-H club work FAMILY work, but let the kids do their work and carry their own jobs to completion.
- Provide transportation to local meetings and county events in which your child and others of the club are interested in attending. On the other hand, provide refreshments for meetings or special functions. Do not wait to be asked; just volunteer this help!
- Attend 4-H meetings and other special events.
- Help your 4-H'er find a way to participate in special events that interest them such as county contests, camps, state trips, displays, or shows.
- Support your local 4-H leaders. Get acquainted with them. Let them know you appreciate their efforts.
- Offer your services to assist the local leaders. You have knowledge and skills that are needed in 4-H.
- If the need arises, help find local leaders for your 4-H club. Several kinds of leaders are needed: organizational, project, and activity leaders. Consider helping in one of these ways yourself. Volunteer applications are available in the Extension Office.
- Remember that the real object of 4-H is to develop your member into a responsible young adult. The way they work on projects, participate in meetings, and conduct themselves at competitive events, etc., will help set work and character standards for the rest of their lives.

PARENT HELP:

Assistance Available:

- 4-H Club Organizational Leader
- 4-H Project Superintendent
- Experienced 4-H Parents
- 4-H Project Manuals
- 4-H Project Records
- Porter County Extension Office

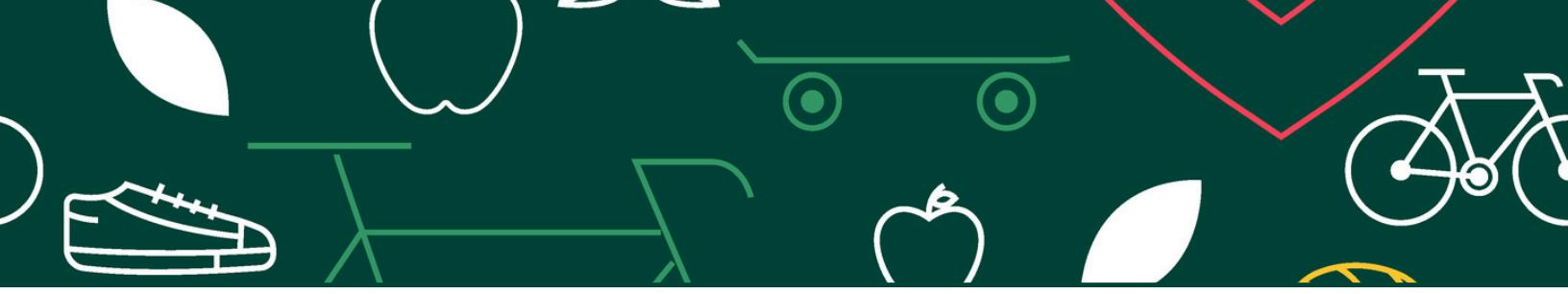
Time Commitment:

One 4-H year includes about 1.5 hours per month for club meetings and time each week for 4-H project work.

Benefits:

Help your child learn and grow, share experiences with your child, improve relationships with your child, make a contribution to youth in your community, and develop a sense of accomplishment





4-H Projects

Members have the opportunity to learn more about a subject matter that they choose to study through completing hands on activities. We refer to these as projects. Projects are selected when you enroll through [4HOnline](#), you can add and drop projects until May 15th. Each project has a set of guidelines that helps them meet the project requirements.

There are adult volunteers (Project Superintendents) and staff who are knowledgeable on that particular subject who will often times provide workshops to allow the youth to learn about that topic in a social environment. Most projects have a beginner, intermediate, and advanced level. This allows youth to build on their knowledge each year and continue to challenge their skills.

There is no limit to the number of projects youth can sign up for. We suggest starting out with one or two your first year to get started. There is a list of regular projects and Mini 4-H projects on our website.

Poster Projects: Many projects must be completed on a 22" x 28" poster displayed horizontally. They must be covered in heavy plastic (not saran wrap) and have space in the lower right hand corner for an exhibit tag. You can purchase the correct size plastic sleeves and poster board at the Extension Office.

Project Selection:

In choosing a project, a member will consult with their parents/guardians and 4-H leader(s).

Record Keeping

4-H Project Record Sheet: All 4-H projects will have a record sheet, which will consist of self reflection questions as well as feedback to the educators or what to improve upon for the following year. Some projects may ask that youth complete activities in the project manual. Manuals give in-depth information for a project. Project manuals and record sheets are available at the Porter County Extension Office.

My Record of 4-H Achievement: White sheets labeled "My Record of 4-H Achievement" should be filled out completely for the current year. These are available from 4-H Club Leaders and the County Extension Office. It is important that these be filled out accurately in order to remember what you have done in 4-H and to apply for trips, awards, and scholarships throughout your 4-H career. Be sure to update your information every year.

Early in the 4-H career, a member needs to consider developing a tentative project plan to guide them to be able to complete the project on time. Some projects should be continued each year, with increases in the size of the project if possible.

Members may also want to try to enroll in additional projects which are related to their other project work. For example, a Wildlife member may want to enroll in Forestry or Soil & Conservation.

Successful project completion results in member satisfaction and expansion of future project work.

The learning experiences one obtains through their project could even lead to career/vocational possibilities.



General Calendar

October

- Enrollment Begins
- National 4-H Week
- 4-H Open House
- 4-H Club Meetings

November

- 4-H Club Meetings
- 4-H Council Meeting
- November 30th - Volunteer Enrollment Target Date

December

- 4-H Club Meetings
- 4-H Scholarships Open

January

- 4-H Club Meetings
- 4-H Council Meeting
- January 15th - Youth Enrollment Target Date
- 4-H Trip Applications Due

February

- Beef ID Day

March

- 4-H Club Meetings
- 4-H Council Meeting
- Indiana 4-H Quality Livestock Quality Care Program

April

- 4-H Club Meetings
- Volunteer Week

May

- 4-H Club Meetings
- 4-H Council Meeting
- Livestock Tag Days
- Animal ID Deadline

June

- 4-H Club Meetings
- 4-H Camp (3rd - 6th Grade)
- 4-H Academy (9th - 12th Grade)
- 4-H Round Up (7th - 9th Grade)
- 4-H Chorus & Band (9th - 12th Grade)

July

- Porter County Fair

August

- Indiana State Fair

September

- Preparation for New 4-H Year
- Promotional Events

Local Events & Camp

Each club will have special activities for their club members throughout the year. In addition, there are county or area wide events in which a 4-H'er may participate.

Project Workshops: A variety of workshops in different project areas are offered each year. Be sure to read your monthly newsletter to know what workshops are offered or check our Google Calendar [here](#).

4-H Camp: This three-day, two-night camp takes place each June and is open to 4-H members in grades 3-6. The 4-H members participate in many outdoor activities as they learn by doing. 4-H'ers in grades 7-12 may apply to be Camp Counselors or Camp Counselors In-Training.

SPARK Programs: Short term programs designed to "SPARK" interest of youth in a specific topic area. These vary in topics and have a minimum of six hours of education throughout a time period. The program ends with a culminating project where youth showcase what they learned. Exhibit at the Fair is not required.

Career Development Events (CDEs): Generally composed of a team but can also be done individually. These occur throughout the state during different times of the year. Many have area events that the team or individual must compete in first. These competitive events allow youth to showcase their knowledge on a specific topic. See what sparks your interest [here](#).



TERMS USED IN PORTER

The lingo may be confusing but this should help

4-H Council: Assists Extension Staff to determine program priorities and policies for local 4-H and Extension programs; the council is made up of local volunteers with a variety of backgrounds and expertise.

4-H Handbook: This book contains all the project guidelines, exhibit requirements, and 4-H policies. It is updated annually and is shared on the Porter County - Purdue Extension website as well as hard copies upon request.

4-HOnline: The database that manages 4-H enrollment of youth and volunteers, animal identification, and trip or event participation.

Accomplishment Scholarship: Available through Indiana 4-H Foundation, this scholarship is available for 4-H members in grades 10-12 of high school and the year immediately following high school graduation.

Add/Drop Deadline: To be eligible to complete an exhibit at the fair, a member must be enrolled in that project category through 4-H Online by May 15th.

Adult Leader: A person who volunteers their time to recruit, plan, organize, counsel, encourage, compliment, redirect, and whatever else it takes to make sure members have a great 4-H experience. These people are not paid, so please be considerate of their time and let them know how much they are appreciated.

Animal Identification: Each livestock project must have their animals identified on 4-HOnline by May 15th. Livestock ID days for tagging will be prior to this date so be sure to pay attention to livestock specie specific deadlines.

County Extension Educators: An Extension Staff member with subject matter expertise; youth development or 4-H educators oversee the 4-H program

Enrollment: A 4-H member enrollment must be completed annually for each 4-H member. This is the process of updating information in 4-HOnline and paying the enrollment fee. Enrollment opens October 1st every year.

Fair Board: The Porter County Fair Board (also known as Ag Society) plans and organizes the entire fair such as carnival and grandstand events. The 4-H program is responsible for and in charge of those things associated with the 4-H part of the fair, but the Fair Board plans and runs the fair.

FairEntry: This is a secondary website to 4-HOnline. This website is used for 4-H'ers to specify exactly what projects/livestock they are bringing to the fair. This data-tracking system also keeps record of ribbon placements and other awards for the 4-H'er come fair time.

Indiana 4-H Foundation: A statewide “4-H booster” association that provides funds for trips, scholarships, materials, and grants for programs all over the state.



TERMS USED IN PORTER

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Indiana 4-H Quality Livestock Care Program: Training that must be completed yearly by 4-H members planning to exhibit a livestock animal at the Porter County Fair (except cats, dogs, horses, and small animals.) Trainings are offered in-person only and cost \$3 per child.

Indiana State Fair: Held in Indianapolis at the State Fairgrounds. Projects eligible for the State Fair must be checked in ahead of time. Animal projects must be entered by June 1st and some are entered by July 1st so make sure to check the [Indiana State Fair website](#) for the details. This is different than 4-HOnline.

Junior Leaders: County wide project for members in grades 7 and above focusing on leadership, citizenship, and fun.

Mini 4-H: A non-competitive 4-H program for youth in grades K-2. Mini 4-H is designed to introduce you and your child to the 4-H program while also providing an excellent way for children to learn by doing and to exhibit projects at the fair. Members also have the opportunity to attend club meetings, workshops, and a day camp for Mini 4-H'ers during the summer.

Open Judging: A style of judging where the 4-H member can talk directly with the judge while their project is being graded. Parents may attend open judging, but are not allowed to speak to the judge.

Porter County Fair: The culmination of the 4-H year! Members display their projects, show livestock, and participate in special events throughout the week.

Premise ID: A number given by the Indiana State Board of Animal Health (BOAH) to identify locations where animals are housed. All livestock members will need to submit their premise ID number when entering their animals in 4-HOnline. More information is available at www.in.gov/boah.

Project Exhibit Tag: A tag generated by FairEntry that is put on the bottom right corner of every 4-H project displayed during the Porter County Fair. This tag includes information such as your name, club, and a description of your project. It does not include personal identification information such as address or phone number.

Project Manual: Most projects have manuals which provide educational material and/or learning activities for members. These are available from the Extension Office.

Project Superintendent: A volunteer who provides leadership to the overall functions of a specific project, including educational experiences. They provide support and guidance to 4-H members and families throughout the year and at fair.

Record of Achievement: A sheet that members should store in a binder to help them keep track of their 4-H involvement. This encourages organization and is a good reference tool for when they complete trip and scholarship applications.

Record Sheets: The record sheet is for a 4-H member to summarize things they have learned through their project. It helps them keep track of what they have learned while encouraging record keeping.

Ten Year Member: A member who has completed 10 consecutive years of regular 4-H, which is the longest amount of time a member can participate.