



## Camp Volunteers

### WHY IT MATTERS

Volunteers are at the heart of our 4-H programs. We appreciate all they do for 4-H and for our youth. Involving volunteers in your 4-H Cloverbud Camp is no different!

Volunteers can help with all aspects of a 4-H Cloverbud Camp including planning, advertising, running activities, and much more.

It's important to think about how you can include meaningful volunteer experiences related to a 4-H Cloverbud Camp.

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### Adult Volunteers

- » Any adult aged 19 and over, who will have ongoing or unsupervised access to children aged 19 and under during the course of their participation in MSU Extension programs are subject to the MSU Extension Volunteer Selection Process.
- » MSU utilizes the Volunteer Selection Process to screen potential volunteers.

### Youth Volunteers

Youth volunteers should exhibit leadership qualities and be able to demonstrate responsibility in performing assigned jobs and activities.

- » MSU utilizes the Volunteer Selection Process to screen potential volunteers
- » Youth can fill out a counselor application to help determine if they are a good fit for working with 4-H Cloverbud Camps

### Recruitment

It's important that you find the right fit for your 4-H Cloverbud Camp and volunteers. Try to recruit volunteers that enjoy and have experience working with 5-7 year olds.

- » Ask volunteers about their experience with 5-7 year olds
- » Consider asking about previous 4-H experiences
- » Consider including scenarios with potential situations they might encounter when working with cloverbuds



## GOOD TO KNOW

Volunteers are a great asset to any 4-H Cloverbud Camp. Here are some things to think about ahead of time:

- ⇒ Michigan State University Volunteer Selection Process: be sure to leave plenty of time to complete the Volunteer Selection Process (VSP) ahead of when you will need your volunteers.
- ⇒ Youth volunteers: will you use youth volunteers? How are youth volunteers different than adults? There are sample youth camp counselor applications up on SharePoint to help with youth volunteers.
- ⇒ Find the right fit: it's okay to ask volunteers what age groups they are comfortable with, some people may like to work with older youth and some may like the cloverbud ages.
- ⇒ Appreciation is critical: how will you recognize your volunteers? It's important that they feel appreciated for their work and time.

## Volunteer Training

It's crucial that volunteers have some training before participating in a 4-H Cloverbud Camp. This will help make sure that youth and volunteers have an enjoyable experience and that the camp is successful. Consider training on these topics:

- » Ages and stages (what to expect from 5-7 year olds)
- » Risk management policies and procedures (how to interact with 5-7 year olds, restroom procedures, fire and tornado drills, etc.)
- » Behavior expectations (how do you expect them to act with the youth, what type of dress is acceptable, can they use cell phones during the camp, is posting pictures on their personal social media pages acceptable, etc.)
- » Logistics of the day (schedule, activities, sign-in and sign-out procedures, lunch, etc.)

## Communication

Clear communication is crucial when working with volunteers. They are there to support, help and make the youth's experience enjoyable but they can't do that if they don't know what's happening. Try these tips:

- » Send a written welcome letter outlining the schedule, expectations, and other important information.
- » Follow up with email, phone calls, or texts to remind volunteers of special needs or changes in the schedule.
- » Be sure that your volunteers know how to get in contact with you.

## Appreciation

Everyone likes to be recognized for their volunteer work in some form or another. It's important that volunteer recognition is part of the planning process.

- » Hand-written thank you notes with specific words of thanks
- » Certificates or small gifts of appreciation
- » Recognition in local newsletter, etc.

