

KENT COUNTY 4-H

INTRODUCTION PACKET



FOR NEW FAMILIES AND NEW VOLUNTEERS

CONTACT US

TYLER LIDGARD
4-H PROGRAM COORDINATOR
LIDGARDT@MSU.EDU
616-632-7870

SAMANTHA GRIFFIN
4-H PROGRAM COORDINATOR
GRIFF807@MSU.EDU
616-632-7888

KENT COUNTY MSU EXTENSION
775 BALL AVE NE
GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503
PHONE: 616-632-7865
CANR.MSU.EDU/KENT



WELCOME TO KENT COUNTY 4-H

Dear 4-H Family,

Welcome to 4-H, the youth development program of MSU Extension! 4-H provides youth with positive learning experiences that help build character, while developing knowledge and skills that prepare them for the future. We hope that your experience with MSUE-Kent County 4-H provides your family with a positive experience that you will look back on and remember for years to come. Participation in 4-H should be educational as well as fun for the whole family. We know that 4-H is a large program and can be difficult to navigate, especially for new families, and we hope that this guide will give you the information you need to find your way around. Our office sends out monthly newsletters via email, and it is an excellent source of information. As you become increasingly more and more involved with 4-H, you will continue to have new opportunities – even beyond Kent County –because 4-H events occur at the county, state, national, and even international levels! All the fun starts at the club level. We encourage you to become highly active with your 4-H club. If you have any questions throughout your 4-H journey, you can always reach out to the Extension office by calling 616-632-7888, or reach me via email at griff807@msu.edu. You can also contact Tyler Lidgard who is another 4-H program coordinator in Kent County, at 616-632-7870 or at lidgardt@msu.edu.

Sincerely,

Samantha Griffin and Tyler Lidgard
4-H Program Coordinators



4-H GROWS HERE

**MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Extension

SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES:

4-H KENT COUNTY FACEBOOK:
www.facebook.com/4HKentCoMi

4-H KENT COUNTY INSTAGRAM:
[@4hkentcountymichigan](https://www.instagram.com/@4hkentcountymichigan)

KENT COUNTY'S EMAIL:
MSUE.Kent@county.msu.edu

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

WHAT IS 4-H?

4-H is a youth education program for youth ages 5 through 19. It is the youth development program of our nation's Extension system. Volunteer leaders of all ages work with youth to provide fun educational experiences. Michigan State University Extension staff are responsible for the management of 4-H, as well as providing support and resources for its members and volunteers. Youth who participate in 4-H develop the skills needed to be capable, productive citizens and Leaders as they learn about new project areas. The Smith-Lever Act formalized Cooperative Extension Service (CES) in 1914 to expand the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) partnership with land-grant universities to apply research and provide education to communities. Cooperative States Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is the USDA agency responsible for 4-H and Extension. 4-H programming is delivered locally and operated at the state and national levels through a partnership between county governments, the Cooperative Extension Service at the state's land grant university (in Michigan, through Michigan State University Extension), and the USDA. 4-H is one of the programs offered by the county Extension office. Other programs include Master Gardeners, Food and Nutrition, and Agricultural Programs.

For more information on CES, please visit:
www.reeusda.gov/1700/statepartners/usa.htm

For more information on CSREES, please visit:
www.csrees.usda.gov



HOW CAN I JOIN?

Any youth aged 5-19 can participate in 4-H, through traditional community clubs, short term special interest (SPIN) clubs, school programs, or related 4-H club models. A 4-H member's age is determined by whatever age they will be during the 4-H year. The 4-H year begins on September 1, but 4-H age is determined by the age that the child will be on January 1 of that following year. If you refer to our club directory, you can find a list of 4-H clubs accepting new members and their email addresses. Please contact club leaders to see if their club may be a good fit. You can also start your own club if you do not locate a club of interest. Please note that Cloverbuds, or 4-H'ers between the ages of 5-7, are not be eligible to participate in high-risk projects such as shooting sports nor can they participate in competitions. Once you have selected a club and contacted a leader, please enroll into mi.4honline.com in Kent county.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I CANNOT FIND A CLUB THAT SUITS MY INTERESTS?

We encourage families that may not have a 4-H club near their home or one that represents their interests, to consider starting their own club. You can also enroll into our Kent County 4-H general experience club on mi.4honline.com which allows you to receive our emails and updates on new clubs.

WHAT IS 4-H'S RELATIONSHIP WITH KENT COUNTY YOUTH FAIR?

You do not need to be a member of 4-H to compete at Kent County Youth Fair. Kent County Youth Fair is a separate entity. Youth enrolled into 4-H often compete in non 4-H fairs as well as 4-H competitions, but if you are enrolled into 4-H you enjoy the benefits and structure of a 4-H club.



HOW DO I BECOME A VOLUNTEER OR START A 4-H CLUB WITHIN MY COMMUNITY?

To start a 4-H club, you need 2 adult volunteers, and a minimum of 5-10 youth from two families in your community. You may also want to identify your meeting place. You can begin the volunteer process at msu.samaritan.com. Once you have been approved and you have identified a 2nd leader, you can file for Request to Establish a Michigan 4-H club, then you can file for your club EIN. Lastly, you will file your club paperwork in collaboration with your county's program coordinator. This will include your Club Constitution, Civil Rights Compliance, and a Request for Charter. Finally, your club is added to our website, 4honline.com, where youth can sign up. This is also when we receive your official charter. Clubs should be meeting at least 6 times a year.

Please note: Volunteers who are inactive for more than a year will be required to go through the volunteer selection process (VSP) again prior to being considered an active volunteer.

IS THERE ANY COST ASSOCIATED WITH MEMBERSHIP?

4-H has no membership fees or participation fees. Unless you are attending a 4-H event in which you are paying for that specific program, such as 4-H Exploration Days or Capitol Experience. 4-H Clubs may choose to have fees associated with their club, but it is not required by 4-H.



POLICIES OF 4-H:

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES:

Each club, volunteer, member and parent is required to follow the financial guidelines for Michigan 4-H clubs. The volunteer book can be found at:

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/uploads/resources/pdfs/4H1687_4-H_Volunteers_Financial_Manual_WEB2.pdf

The youth/adult treasurer book can be found at:

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/financial_manual_for_4_h_treasurers

Please contact the Extension office with any questions.

FUNDRAISERS:

All 4-H fundraisers must have a completed fundraising authorization form submitted to the Extension office at least two weeks prior to the start of the fundraiser. A follow-up report form must be completed and submitted no more than 10 days following the event. Only authorized 4-H groups may use the 4-H name and emblem in fundraising and all funds raised using the 4-H name and emblem are considered 4-H funds. This means that fundraisers for personal use may not use the 4-H name or club name. An attempt should be made to make the fundraiser an educational activity for youth. Deciding on the best activity to raise the funds, making a good impression, money handling, and record keeping are good skills to acquire during a fundraiser. Above all, be sure youth are safe when implementing a fundraiser.



STATE 4-H WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

4-H EXPLORATION DAYS

4-H Exploration Days – The most popular 4-H event! Occurs in June at MSU and is for youth ages 12-19, leaders, and parents. Spend three days on MSU’s campus, experiencing life like a college student and attending fun hands-on workshops and events with over 2,500 youth from across the state. Registration begins in March; you will want to register as soon as possible when registration books are available as sessions fill up very quickly.

Reach out to Samantha Griffin or Tyler Lidgard for scholarship opportunities.

GREAT LAKES AND NATURAL RESOURCES CAMP

Occurs in August at Camp Chickagami in Presque Isle for youth ages 13-15. Experience all that our great lakes have to offer as you go charter fishing, snorkeling, sailing, hiking through forests, exploring dunes, and more. There is an application that is due in May.

4-H CREATIVE ARTS CELEBRATION

Occurs in the fall. Open to youth ages 12 and older and volunteers, this event features a variety of workshops focused on the visual arts, crafts, sewing, and textile projects. For more information on State workshops and events, please visit <http://4-H.msue.msu.edu/events>.



STATE 4-H WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

4-H ANIMAL & VETERINARY SCIENCE CAMP

Occurs at the end of June at MSU and is for youth interested in exploring animal and veterinary science projects and activities. It's open to youth ages 13-16 and involves a competitive application process to attend (applications are due in April).

4-H CAPITOL EXPERIENCE

Occurs in March at the State Capitol and the surrounding area and is a four-day conference to prepare youth for active citizenship focusing on civic engagement and public policy.

CITIZENSHIP WASHINGTON FOCUS

This is a trip taken by Michigan 4-H youth every other year involving a week of learning and fun in our nation's capital. The short course is designed to help participants learn the basic functions of national government.



4-H TRAVEL OPPORTUNITIES:

4-H International Exchange – There are several international 4-H programs available including the LABO program, where youth travel to Japan for one month and Japanese youth come to Michigan for one month. Call the 4-H office or visit the following link for more information on the different exchange programs and countries that participate. Check out the website for more information:

http://4h.msue.msu.edu/programs/global_cultural_education/international_exchange_programs.



OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE WITH US:

Kent County Horse Leaders:

Meets every first Thursday of the Month, at 7 PM, Hosted by Candice Russell. New leaders can message cmr6988@gmail.com for more information.

Kent County 4-H Council:

Intended as an upcoming opportunity for youth-adult partnership, 4-H youth and volunteers are both encouraged to email 4-H of Kent county to join. Email lidgardt@msu.edu for more information.

KENT COUNTY 4-H SCHOLARSHIPS:

Bob Knisely Scholarship:

A small stipend of \$300 to be put towards education at a post-secondary institution for a student studying dairy science, or a related field in animal science. The student must be a freshman who has been, or is a member of Kent County 4-H.

Labelle Scholarship:

The LaBelle Scholarship Fund was established in honor of Jean LaBelle, who developed and led the Kent County 4-H Horse Judging Program for many years. These funds were given in support of the Kent 4-H Horse Judging program (only.) LaBelle funds may be used by a Kent County 4-H Horse Judging Team that qualifies at the annual State 4-H Horse Judging Contest (held in April) to compete at a national judging event. The amount of \$300 may be awarded to a team to be used toward their travel and lodging expenses for the national competition. If more than one Kent 4-H horse judging team qualifies to travel, each team can be awarded \$300.

Scholarships for statewide events or local events may be given each year through individual applications. If you would like to attend a 4-H event, but are limited by financial hardship, please contact our 4-H Program Coordinators, Tyler Lidgard, lidgardt@msu.edu and Samantha Griffin, griff807@msu.edu, with any questions you may have.

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