



# Planting the Seed for the Future of 4-H



## Resource Packet on Texas 4-H Member Participation Fee

February 2011

These are indeed challenging times for all of us. I am really not sure there is any better way of saying it. However, I would also submit that it is during these most difficult times we must all look at what we do, prioritize what is important, and analyze the meaning of our work and the leadership each and every one of us provides to the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program.

As the eternal optimist, I believe the partial cost recovery initiative, and specifically the “4-H participation fee,” will provide us a “once in a lifetime opportunity” to market the best youth development program in the world as we explain to our clientele why this fee is necessary. It is up to us to market the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program and to make it known far and wide that there is no better return on investment than an annual \$20 4-H and Youth Development Program participation fee (or \$25 on November 1st or after). This equates to \$1.67 per month at \$20 or \$2.08 per month at \$25.

*...the “4-H participation fee,” will provide us a “once in a lifetime opportunity” to market the best youth development program in the world...*

As you think about your message, I am reminded of the Vuja Dé Principle. Have you heard of it? I am certain you have heard of the term “Déjà vu.” Déjà vu is the experience of thinking that a new situation has occurred before. In contrast, Vuja Dé is best defined as a question. How do you look at your organization and your field as if you are seeing it for the first time? So, the question is, how would you answer it..... because your answer today has never been more important.

Here is my response:

*The Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program is the best youth organization in the world at developing life skills of youth so that they are positive contributors to society as adults. These youth are our future leaders because of the energy of Texas AgriLife Extension Service employees and volunteers that passionately teach and mentor youth to help develop their life skills.*

In summary, under these most difficult and uncertain times, this is our opportunity to refresh and reanalyze who we are, enabling us to see what is next. I personally believe the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program is the best of the best. We will need to positively communicate that message to any and all listeners. As I always say, the structure may change and the way we reach people may change too, but the end user does not change. The youth of Texas are depending on us to do what we have always done --- **TO MAKE THE BEST BETTER!**

Sincerely,  
Chris T. Boleman  
Texas 4-H and Youth Program Director

### Office of the Program Director

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# WHY A 4-H PARTICIPATION FEE?

The Texas AgriLife Extension Service is implementing a partial cost recovery initiative to offset the loss in appropriated funds, which supports agency salaries, operations, and programming. Without this initiative, the agency will be forced to make greater cuts to positions, programs, and services. Principles guiding the partial cost recovery initiative are:

- Partial cost recovery is essential to maintaining and reinforcing Extension’s program delivery network.
- A strong program delivery network is essential to the success of Extension.
- Extension’s strength and success benefits AgriLife Extension employees, our partners, the people of Texas, and our nation.
- Program priorities are driven by our strategic plan.
- Programs will be identified for cost recovery during the program planning process.

With the implementation of the \$10 or 10% program fee through the partial cost recovery initiative, the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program had to carefully evaluate all the options to determine what was most financially efficient for the youth we serve. In an effort to minimize reoccurring partial cost recovery fees to youth and families for each county-based educational program/activity/event and/or district and statewide competitive event, the decision was made to implement the annual 4-H participation fee.

Without question, there are varying levels of participation in the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program. The table below provides some insight of how we concluded that Texas 4-H and Youth Development should implement an annual “participation fee” of \$20 or \$25 instead of the \$10 or 10% per program outlined in partial cost recovery.

Number of Programs / Events a 4-H member may participate in annually	Types of Programs and Events Subject to the Agency’s Cost Recovery Plan (if a Participation Fee was not Implemented)	Additional fees per Youth if Partial Cost Recovery (\$10 or 10%) was implemented vs participant fee.*	Texas 4-H Participation Fee
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County 4-H Food Show/Food Challenge</li> <li>• District 4-H Food Challenge</li> <li>• County one day 4-H</li> <li>• County 4-H Foods and Nutrition Educational Presentation</li> <li>• District Roundup -Educational Presentation</li> <li>• Texas 4-H Roundup</li> <li>• County 4-H Recognition Banquet</li> </ul>	<b>\$70</b>	<b>\$20</b> per 4-H member per year participant fee that covers all these events / activities
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County 4-H Beef Cattle Showmanship Clinic</li> <li>• County 4-H Beef Cattle Daily Care Clinic</li> <li>• District Livestock Judging Contest</li> <li>• County 4-H Recordbook Training</li> <li>• County 4-H Recordbook Contest</li> </ul>	<b>\$50</b>	
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County Food Show</li> <li>• District Food Show</li> <li>• Texas 4-H Roundup Food Show</li> </ul>	<b>\$30</b>	

**OR**

\*Fee reflects Cost Recovery Fee only and not any regular registration fees/costs associated with events. Competitive events will still have costs associated with them, however they will not have an additional \$10 or 10% partial cost recovery fee.



As a result of these types of scenarios, the decision was made to implement the annual Texas 4-H participation fee beginning September 1, 2011. If the youth is enrolled between September 1 and October 31 of the 4-H year, the fee is \$20. If enrollment is November 1st to August 31st, this fee is \$25.

This participation fee (for youth only) means that there would be no \$10 or 10% program fee assessed for the following:

- **4-H Competitive Events and Activities:** 4-H competitive events and activities (district Roundups, judging contests, food shows, fashion shows, etc.) are not subject to the additional \$10 (or 10%) agency cost recovery fee. *However, there will still be a charge to manage these events following the same protocol and procedures currently used for event management. Therefore, counties, district, and state program planners will need to cover the same costs as they have in the past.*
- **County Project Trainings for Youth and Adults** (including scholarship trainings, recordbook trainings, etc.): These types of county or multi-county 4-H trainings for youth and adults will not be assessed the agency-level cost recovery fee.
- **Curriculum Enrichment** (including special interest): Curriculum enrichment programs (including Science of Agriculture Days / Ag Science Fairs and Pizza Ranch Days) are not subject to the agency-level fee.



*For me, 4-H has been the single most influential activity that I participated in as a youth or collegiate member. Not only did it prepare me for life experiences that are vital to adults such as interviews, applications, and strong relationships with superiors and peers, but the activities I took part in like stock show, tech team, public speaking, and food show played a vital role in my scholarship applications that in turn fully paid my education at Texas A&M.*

*Former 4-H Member &  
Current Texas A&M  
University Student*



# COMMUNICATING THE 4-H PARTICIPATION FEE

## Overview

For over 100 years, Texas 4-H and Youth Development has offered youth a breadth of program options that reflect both traditional areas of interest (livestock, foods & nutrition, and clothing) and emerging areas of interest (science, engineering & technology, communications and entrepreneurship). Declining levels of funding for Extension programs have made it increasingly difficult to continue offering the highest level of quality programs Texas' youth expect, deserve, and need from 4-H. In order to maintain the quality, depth, and relevance of 4-H programming in Texas, charging a minimal, annual youth participation fee emerged as the best solution.

## Value Statements

It is critical that we clearly articulate the value of the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program. Here are some statement testimonials from our own Texas Agrilife Extension Service employees regarding the value of the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program.

*Growing up you aren't just in 4-H, you are 4-H. 4-H presented me with a wide variety of experiences in which I was able to learn countless life skills that I will use throughout my life. I am the person that I am today because of 4-H.*

*Former Texas 4-H Member  
& Texas Tech Student*

- 4-H provides a unique opportunity for youth to be involved in leadership at all ages. The leadership skills youth gain are skills they can apply throughout their life in their family, career, and future volunteer opportunities.
- Regardless of the 4-H event, activity, or educational program, the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program aims to develop life skills of youth so they are positive contributors to society as adults.
- The Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program provides the largest return on investment when developing youth to be tomorrow's community leaders!
- To establish Texas 4-H as the premier youth development program in the nation, we are committed to providing the very best educational experiences for the young people of Texas. We pride ourselves in providing quality, relevant educational learning opportunities, holding ourselves accountable to our clientele and stakeholders, and contributing to our communities across the state. We recognize that our success depends on the talent, skills and knowledge of our staff, youth leaders, and volunteers. We understand the importance of our mission, and strive to instill positive life skills that will enable our youth to become productive adults.
- A small investment in the education, skills, and development of future adults through 4-H will have lasting impacts on youth and an even greater return on investment to the community.
- The people who make a difference in your life are not the ones with the most credentials, the most money or the most awards. They are the ones that care. And in 4-H we call these people County Extension Agents.
- One of our main goals as Extension educators working in the field of 4-H & Youth Development is to be role models and help youth reach their full potential and thrive in their local communities as they mature into productive, contributing members of society.
- 4-H is like a 'diamond' it lasts forever" - Texas 4-H is building leaders of the future, and providing kids with life changing opportunities.
- 4-H provides real life experiences and real time opportunities for youth as they develop habits encompassing leadership, citizenship, and other life skills as they become productive adults.
- We allow youth to do whatever without always telling them what to say and do and I appreciate that about our program.



# IS THE 4-H PROGRAM WORTH THE INVESTMENT?

## Study Shows: 4-H Helps Young People Excel Beyond Their Peers

The structured learning, encouragement and adult mentoring that young people receive through their participation in 4-H plays a vital role in helping them achieve future life successes. For nearly a decade, preeminent youth development scholar, Dr. Richard Lerner, and the team at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University have been working with faculty at land-grant universities to conduct “The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development.” This in-depth, longitudinal study has discovered that, when compared to other youth, young people involved in 4-H have higher educational achievement and higher motivation for future education. In addition, youth in 4-H are more civically active and make more civic contributions to their communities than youth in other out-of-school programs.



## 4-H Youth Make More Healthy Choices

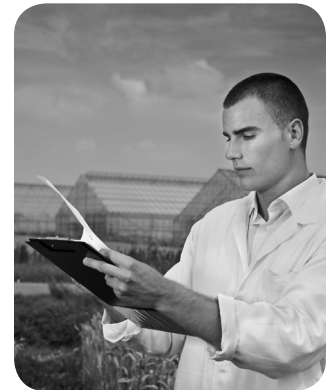
According to the latest study in this series, 4-H'ers – regardless of their background, socio-economic status, race, or gender – thrive through the health/safety education and experiences they receive through 4-H programming. In fact, young people in 4-H are:

- 56% more likely to spend more hours exercising or being physically active,
- Shown to have had significantly lower drug, alcohol and cigarette use than their peers.

## 4-H'ers Excel in School and the Sciences

The advantages of 4-H participation also include higher educational achievement and higher motivation for future education. Young people in 4-H:

- Report better grades, higher levels of academic competence, and an elevated level of engagement at school,
- Are nearly two times more likely to plan to go to college,
- Are more likely to pursue future courses or a career in science, engineering, or computer technology.
- The study also finds that girls in 4-H are more than twice as likely to participate in science, engineering, or computer technology programs than their peers.

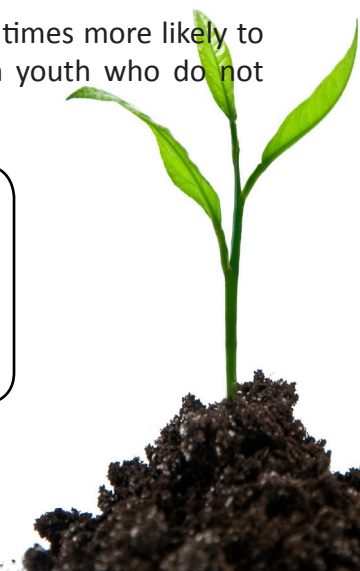


## Young people in 4-H Are Committed to Improving Their Communities

A notable trend of the study indicates that 4-H youth are three times more likely to actively contribute to their communities when compared with youth who do not participate in 4-H.

*I cannot express enough how much 4-H positively influenced my life both as a youth member and far into the future, and despite the twenty dollar charge I strongly believe that 4-H is the most beneficial program that any child, regardless of their background, the community they are raised in, or their interests, can be involved in.*

*Former 4-H Member & Current  
Texas A&M University Student*



# RAISING 4-H FUNDS TO COVER PARTICIPATION FEES

Local fundraising is one strategy that counties can implement to raise funds for 4-H participation fees. This one pager provides an overview of principles and ideas that are the foundation to raising these funds.

**Fundraising with a Purpose.** The first step in developing a fundraising strategy is to identify the purpose, and then share that with your membership. Often the membership can be a part of determining the purpose. If your members know why they are raising funds, then they will be more enthusiastic to participate, and will also be able to interpret the value to potential supporters. In identifying the purpose, what needs or goals do you have that require funds? What do you want back from your effort? How will this fundraising effort impact your 4-H program?

The next step is to make a plan and set a budget. Some things to consider are: time of year, rate of return, manpower, duration of effort (a few days vs. a few months), income and expense, and the impression left upon your community. 4-H does have specific guidelines and restrictions to follow when it comes to fundraising, so be sure to read and follow the web based documents below during the planning phase.

- FUNDRAISING: PRIVATE SUPPORT FOR THE 4-H PROGRAM  
[http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/library/fs\\_fundraising\\_7-28-06.pdf](http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/library/fs_fundraising_7-28-06.pdf)
- RAFFLES, LOTTERIES, GAMING AND 4-H  
<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/library/fs-raffles%2001-23-07.pdf>

**Fundraising for the Total Program.** After a purpose has been established for fundraising in your county, it is important to take a look at the efforts these funds should support. It is important that all funds raised have a purpose for which they were raised. The following areas should be considered when county 4-H programs begin creating a fundraising plan.

**Programs/Activities.** 4-Hers participate every year in educational programs, competitive events, and other 4-H related events at the county, district, state, and national levels. These programs and activities provide many educational and networking opportunities for 4-Hers across the state. Many counties already support these programs and activities through fundraising events throughout the year.

*4-H has helped me grow as a person both mentally and emotionally. It taught me that with responsibility and hard work, anything is possible. It taught me how to both lead AND follow. It taught me respect and humility. But most importantly, it taught me to be a servant and a friend.*

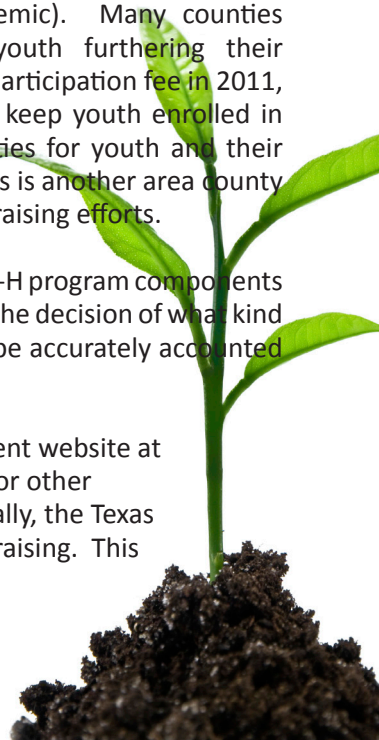
*Former 4-H Member &  
Current Texas A&M  
University Student*

**Curriculum and Resources.** In order to stay relevant, county programs must continue to update curriculum and resources needed for their 4-H Programs. Curriculum and resources needed may include: educational materials for programs, equipment for demonstrations, office supplies, or anything else used to enhance the 4-H Program.

**Scholarships** (Participation and Academic). Many counties currently provide scholarships for youth furthering their education. With the introduction of a participation fee in 2011, some families may need assistance to keep youth enrolled in the 4-H Program. Creating opportunities for youth and their families to apply for various scholarships is another area county programs should focus on in their fundraising efforts.

**Fundraising in Action.** Once the purpose of potential fundraising efforts is identified and the local 4-H program components are targeted, a fundraising plan should be put into action. Careful consideration should be given in the decision of what kind of fundraiser(s) to conduct. Regardless of the fundraising activity chosen, monies raised should be accurately accounted for, and should be used for "specific educational purposes."

A compilation of fundraising ideas in action will be located on the Texas 4-H and Youth Development website at <http://texas4-h.tamu.edu/fee>. Each county should carefully consider what combination of these or other fundraising efforts will fulfill the program and financial goals of their local 4-H program. Additionally, the Texas 4-H and Youth program would like counties to respond to the Facebook discussion board on fundraising. This discussion will serve as a springboard to generate and share ideas across the state.



# **PARTICIPANT FEE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

## **How will the participation fees be used?**

The majority of funds will go directly to the Cost Recovery Initiative to be dispersed back to the agency. The remaining fees will be used to help ensure the agency is best positioned to lead and support the 4-H and Youth Development Program. This includes supporting the District and State 4-H Program delivery system, provide program resource support (including project and curriculum development and professional / volunteer development), the Texas 4-H Conference Center, and the Texas 4-H Foundation (for management of fees).

## **Will low income youth be asked to pay the participation fee?**

Yes, they will be subject to the fee. However, the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program is developing two strategies to help with these costs for youth who cannot pay. Working with the Texas 4-H Foundation, one strategy is a "donation button" on 4-H CONNECT so that individuals can contribute to a scholarship fund. In addition, as previously noted in this document, we have provided several strategies that counties can implement to raise funds at the county level.

## **Will 4-H youth in the Cooperative Extension Program through Prairie View A&M be assessed the same fee?**

Yes.

## **Will Clover Kids be subject to the participation fee?**

No, they will not. Clover Kids do not have the same opportunities regular members do so they will not be charged a participation fee.

## **Are county 4-H fundraisers subject to the \$10 or 10%?**

No, these funds are being raised in the name of 4-H at the county level and they should stay there to support local programming.

## **Why was it decided to have an early fee (\$20) compared to the \$25 participation fee after October 31st?**

The hope would be that it provides youth and families the opportunity to pay less if they pay before November 1st. From the agency perspective, it is critical that we try to get as many youth signed-up before November 1st because it saves families money and will provide administration with a perspective early in the fiscal year related to funds that can be invested to save positions as a part of partial cost recovery.

## **Will there be a discount for families with multiple 4-H members?**

No, there is no waiver or discounted rate for large families.

## **Do other state 4-H Programs collect an annual participation fee?**

Yes, a national study of state 4-H Program Leaders conducted two years ago revealed that 21 of 43 states that responded either have a state participation fee or were in the process of establishing one. Texas was one of the states at that point that said no. Several other states since this study was conducted have implemented a participation fee or some strategy to raise funds for their respective agencies.

## **How does the Texas 4-H participation fee of \$20 or \$25 compare to other state 4-H program fees?**

The range of collection fees from the states that have implemented an annual participation fee is \$3-50 annually. Some states also charge by the number of projects in which youth participate.



**How does the Texas 4-H participation fee of \$20 or \$25 compare to other youth organizations?**

This fee is very comparable and even lower when compared to other youth organization participation fees. The range of fees for organizations researched ranged from \$12 to well over \$100. A sample of organizations researched include: FFA, youth sporting leagues, Boy Scouts, and Girl Scouts.

**What if the County Extension Agent is working with youth during school hours, but the program being developed is not curriculum enrichment?**

If the County Extension Agent is working with the school to provide an educational program to youth at their school, there is NO expectation to collect a \$10 cost recovery fee. If the educational program is targeted to youth outside of the school who are not 4-H members, this program would be subject to the \$10 or 10% fee following partial cost recovery guidelines.

**What about district leader training or project workshops?**

Yes, the participants will be assessed a \$10 cost recovery fee. If it is a meeting only (not an educational program, training, or workshop) then it would not be subject to the fee.

**Does the 4-H Foundation receive a portion of the funds from 4-H participation fees?**

Yes, they will receive a standard 5% administration fee on the portion of funds remaining after administration has received their portion for the partial cost recovery plan.

**Are volunteers subject to the \$20/\$25 participation fee?**

Volunteers are exempt from this participation fee but will still be subject to the \$10 volunteer background check. Volunteers will also be subject to the \$10 cost recovery fee if attending multi county, district or state training, meetings, workshops, etc.

**What if the program we are delivering is funded by a grant?**

Grants that County Extension Agents receive to conduct educational programs of which a stipulation of the grant is that participants cannot be charged for their participation will obviously not be asked to pay the 4-H participation fee.

**Are there additional fees throughout the year?**

The state level annual 4-H youth participation fee is only charged once per year. Any other fees that have previously existed as part of the 4-H program continues to apply as usual.

**Can a county make one payment for all members in the program?**

YES, the county will have that option.

**Can a county charge more than the \$25 for participation fees?**

They can charge additional county fees, however, 4-H CONNECT will have a fixed rate of either \$20.00 or \$25.00 for participation fees. Any additional fees assessed by the county or a club would have to be paid separately to the county/club 4-H.

**How does charging the participation fee and cost recovery efforts effect the existing 501(c)3 status?**

It doesn't affect 501(c)3 status' at all. The Texas 4-H Foundation is a 501c3. Clubs work under the umbrella of national, but that is fixing to go away and we are the process of making a Texas Plan. Bottom line, this does NOT effect this status.

**When providing quality counts training for both 4-H youth and FFA youth, do you only charge the FFA youth since the 4-H youth are covered through the participation fees? We also talked about it being a series of meetings. Do we charge for every gathering or can it be a series of meetings that we only make one charge?** FFA members would be ask to pay for the education workshop or they could be \$20 / \$25 participation fee and become a member. A suggested management plan would be to have the youth pay for the entire course up front at one time to eliminate the need for multiple fee collection.

**While some of our families can afford to pay the participation fee, we have several families who simply cannot. One of the strategies mentioned is to have a “donate to 4-H” button on 4-H CONNECT, what will that consist of?**

Currently we are in the process of modifying 4-H CONNECT to add a “Donate to 4-H” in each of the family profile area. Additionally, a general “Donate to 4-H” button will be added so a community volunteer, alumni, or supportor can give on-line to the program. The donation area will allow for donations to be directed to particular areas such as their county 4-H Program, state events, etc.

**For those families that cannot afford participation fees, how will they request assistance?**

Families will work directly with the County Extension Agent/Office based on their needs. From there, County Extension Agents/Offices will work directly with Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program Director to evaluate need and award of support.

**If a 4-H Club is established as a SCHOOL CLUB, then do they pay the participation fee?**

Yes, if they are a club and under chartering process, the members would be expected to pay the participation fee.

**We have been told in the past that any youth who was in curriculum enrichment had the privilege of participating in any of our county activities and events, but they would need to enroll as a club member on 4-H CONNECT. Will that rule still be in effect for the upcoming year?**

Yes, school enrichment is designed to entice youth to become more involved in 4-H through community, school, or activity clubs. When a young person transitions from a curriculum enrichment experience to a club they would be expected to pay the participation fee.

**When we are asked to provide a program (one-shot or lesson series) in an afterschool setting (Clayton, PTA, Boys & Girls Club, etc.) we are faced with various situations. Do we assess the \$10 fee per participant?**

If you are asked to come into another youth organization and conduct a meeting, Extension and/or 4-H would not be considered the lead organization, so not assessment would be necessary.

**The following page may be used  
by the County Extension Office  
to reproduce and provide to 4-H  
families in explaining the 4-H  
participation fee.**



Dear Texas 4-H Families:

Thank you for being an integral part of the largest youth development program in Texas, and the largest 4-H Program in the world. Texas is proud to boast the largest 4-H membership enrollment, total 4-H participation, and the largest 4-H volunteer base in the United States.

In saying that, we are also compelled to tell you that this is indeed a challenging economic time for everyone. The Texas AgriLife Extension Service and 4-H are no different; however, we remain committed to ensuring a strong 4-H and Youth Development Program for our families.

To maintain the level of programming and opportunities in the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program, an annual participant fee is necessary for each 4-H member starting with the 2011-2012 4-H year on September 1, 2011. This participant fee of \$25, or \$20 if enrolled from September 1st to October 31st, will hopefully ensure that the Texas AgriLife Extension Service can continue to deliver the highest quality 4-H program in the world. A recent national research study shows:

- Members reporting better grades, higher level of academic competence, and an elevated engagement at school.
- Two times as many members likely to plan to go to college than non-members.
- Members that reveal significantly lower drug, alcohol and cigarette use than their peers.
- Members that are three times more likely to actively contribute to their communities when compared with youth that do not participate in 4-H.

Quite simply, we are convinced that this participation fee is an investment in the youth of Texas. The Texas AgriLife Extension Service is committed to the youth of Texas and it is critically important that each 4-H family knows we are dedicated to continuing to provide the best program worldwide. As we all go through a transition period, we ask each of you to partner with us in creating a positive environment for all our 4-H members.

Thanks for all you do and thanks for **MAKING THE BEST BETTER!**

The Texas AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program



*4-H equipped me with the tools needed to build a successful future. It taught me how to be personable, work efficiently in teams, and how to be a kind leader. Most importantly the relationships that were built during my time in 4-H are priceless and I will treasure every memory made.*  
Former 4-H Member & Current Texas A&M University Student



**We teach life skills  
We instill values  
We build leaders  
WE ARE TEXAS 4-H!**