



4-H VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SERIES

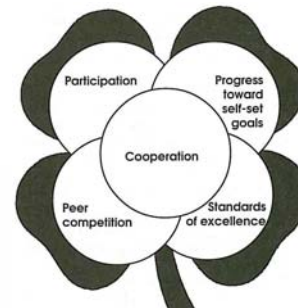
Nebraska 4-H Youth Development

Recognizing Youth and Adult Efforts

The purpose of recognition is to encourage and support the efforts of young people in learning to improve their knowledge and develop their life skills. Recognition should reward positive learning behaviors in youth including:

- **Participation** --- acknowledge that young people have been involved in 4-H youth educational experiences. For some youth, participation in a 4-H learning experience is an accomplishment. Participation may be the first step in building a positive self-concept.
- **Progress toward self-set goals** --- parents and other adults can help youth set realistic goals. Youth should be recognized for progress toward these self-set goals, no matter how small the step. It helps youth gain experience in goal-setting and realistic self-assessment.
- **Achievement of standards of excellence** --- standards are established by experts in a given subject matter area. By measuring personal progress against standards of excellence, youth gain insight into their own efforts and abilities. Standards of excellence provide youth an external, predetermined target.
- **Peer competition** --- subjectively identifies, in a specific time and place, ranking for competing teams or individuals. Competition is a strong motivator for some youth, but is inappropriate for others, especially youth aged 8 and under.
- **Cooperation** --- learning and working together promotes high achievement. Cooperation helps take advantage of all the skills represented in the group, as well as the process by which the group approaches the learning task/goal. Everyone is rewarded. Cooperation helps youth learn and practice teamwork.

Recognizing the contributions of adults to the 4-H program is also important. Adults also may be recognized in each of the five areas described above.



National model for recognition in 4-H youth programs.

Adapted from: *Piecing It All Together*. Eting, Melang, and Stanley. UNL Extension 4-H. *Highlights*. UNL Extension IANR.



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The 4-H Youth Development program abides with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.