

# Ohio 4-H Cloverbud Connections

For 4-H Cloverbud Volunteers Working with Grades K—2

Jan - March 2014 Issue

## Cloverbuds and Their Grandparents: Bringing the Generations Together

*By James S. Bates, Field Specialist, Family Wellness (OSU Extension)*



Involving the grandparents of Cloverbuds can be an enriching and beneficial experience. Not only do grandparents have life experience, talents, and knowledge to share with grandchildren, but they too benefit from participating in activities with grandchildren. In truth, involvement in Cloverbud 4-H has the potential to build stronger individuals and families.

### How Can Grandparents Benefit from Involvement in Cloverbuds?

Research on grandparent-grandchild relationships is very clear: Grandparents enjoy, learn from, and feel better when they are engaged in meaningful activities with their grandchildren. It makes sense, and most people have seen grandparents “light up” when they get the opportunity to spend time with their grandchildren.

Grandchildren teach grandparents not only about technology but also about things they learn at school or in their extracurricular activities. My research has found that grandfathers who participate in a variety of activities with their grandchildren have fewer feelings of sadness and depression and increased feelings of happiness.

### How Can Cloverbuds Benefit from their Grandparent’s Inclusion in 4-H?

Grandparents are motivated to care for and nurture the next generation. A theorist named Erik Erikson referred to this innate motivation as *generativity*. The root of this word is *generate*, which suggests that grandparents want to create, share, foster, and guide. And when it comes to the people they love, grandparents want to share with grandchildren their knowledge, wisdom, talents, and resources to help them be successful in life.

Grandparents can be included in Cloverbud 4-H and demonstrate generativity in the following ways:

- Tell stories about the family’s history, ancestors, how things used to be “...back in my day”
- Teach skills related to sewing, mechanical things, cooking, woodworking, art, music, sports, and other interests of the grandparent
- Encourage with kind words and show love with physical affection
- Spend time doing leisure activities that both will find enjoyable
- Help grandchildren learn what it means to be a family, how to have a happy family life, and ways to foster strong family relationships
- Encourage opportunities for staying in school, getting an education or learning a trade
- Instill values, character, and ethics by being an example of good character



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### Clover Cubes

Looking for easy to teach resources for your next meeting? Check out the most recent Click it, Print it, Do it activity for your Cloverbuds!

## Cloverbuds and Community Service

*By Rhonda Williams, 4-H Youth Development Educator, Darke County (OSU Extension)*

The mission of the Ohio 4-H program is to help “youth to develop into capable, caring, competent and contributing citizens.” By teaching our Cloverbud members the importance of paying it forward, and giving service to others, we can establish a firm foundation towards the accomplishment of that mission.

As you begin to identify potential community service activities for Cloverbuds, be sure that the activity is age-appropriate. For example, visiting an assisted living facility may seem like a good idea, but this environment can be somewhat scary for a Cloverbud if they have not spent much time with elderly relatives or friends. Help Cloverbud members know what to expect before your visit.

Always be sure to obtain permission from a parent or guardian before involving any child in a community service activity. Inform the parents what their child will be doing and have them sign a written permission slip, if necessary. Your 4-H Educator can help you to decide if a permission slip is needed. They can also give guidance as to what information needs to be included in the permission slip.

When planning community service activities with your Cloverbud members, be sure to engage them in the decision making process. You may have to begin the process by explaining what community service is and why it's important. Give them examples of appropriate community service activities and help them to brainstorm others. Once they have completed a list, narrow it down to two or three choices and let them decide what activity to complete. If they are involved in the decision making, they will be more likely to participate in the activity itself.

Community service can be something as simple as sending thank you notes to the local fire and police department for their service to the community, collecting items for a local food pantry, or sending cards to residents of assisted living facilities. Or, your members might choose to pick up trash at a local park or send cards and letters to those serving in our armed forces. Whatever activity is chosen, be sure that it is meaningful to your members. Once the activity is completed, talk about what they learned. Help them to understand the importance of reaching out and giving service to others, and the value of paying acts of kindness forward. Celebrate their successes. Show your own enthusiasm for what they accomplish and encourage them to share what they learned and what they liked or didn't like about the activity. By involving our members in community service activities at a young age, we can help them to develop the lifelong habit of giving service to others. Who wouldn't want to live in a world where random acts of kindness occur on a daily basis?

Legendary Ohio State University football coach Woody Hayes once said, “paying forward... you can do it the rest of your life.” When we teach 4-H Cloverbud members to appreciate the satisfaction involved in serving and helping others, everyone wins.

## Military Kids – They're in Our Backyard

*By Katie Feldhues, Christy Malys, Theresa Ferrari, 4-H Youth Development (OSU Extension)*

Ohio's 33,000 military kids live in every county throughout the state. Military kids are just like any other kids; they have the same needs as all young people. But being in a military family adds an extra layer to their life, especially in the past 10 years when deployments have reached unprecedented rates. While a parent is deployed, youth may experience changes to their family routines. Separation may create greater anxiety, stress, emotional difficulties, behavior issues, and problems at school. Children often feel isolated because they don't know anyone in the same situation; they feel others don't understand what they're going through. The at-home parent experiences greater stress from worrying about their service member's safety, as well as from shouldering increased home responsibilities and dealing with difficulties their children may be having. When service members return from deployment the family often faces challenges that can continue long after a service member comes home.

In response to the many needs identified, Ohio 4-H became part of the national Operation: Military Kids (OMK) initiative in 2005. OMK aims to respond to the tensions deployment has placed on military kids. By working with community partners to enhance efforts to support military youth, OMK seeks to develop resilient youth who can cope with stress and thrive in the faces of challenges. Camp Kelleys Island, Hero Camps, Teen Leadership Camps, and Troop and Family Camps are part of the many different opportunities that OMK offers to help support military youth and their families. To find out more information about programs that are offered by OMK or ways to get involved as a volunteer check out the OMK webpage ([www.ohio4h.org/omk](http://www.ohio4h.org/omk)) or the OMK Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/OhioOperationMilitaryKids](http://www.facebook.com/OhioOperationMilitaryKids)).



# Dads Count

*By Kirk Bloir, Program Director, FCS Administration (The Ohio State University)*

According to many decades of research, kids benefit when dads fulfill their commitment to love, coach, and encourage their children, and strive to always be good role models. In fact, these are the areas the National Center for Fathering promotes in their *Championship Fathering* initiative, which is aimed at getting more dads to commit to being the best involved fathers they can be.

**Why should dads be involved in their kids' lives?** When dads are involved, nurturing, and playful with their infants, those children tend to have higher IQs and better language and thinking abilities that allow them to start school with higher levels of academic readiness. Kids of involved dads are also more patient and can handle school-related stresses and frustrations better than kids who have less involved fathers. What's more is that the positive impact of father involvement lasts into the teen years and young adulthood. As kids who have involved dads grow older, they have better and stronger friendships and are less likely to get in trouble at home, school, or in the neighborhood, and tend to be more independent and willing to explore the outside world.

**Be more involved!** Here are a couple ideas to get dads thinking about ways they can be more involved:

- ✧ Spend some time thinking about your dad and his involvement with you. What kind of father was he? What do you admire about your own dad or grandfather? What things do you not like so much? Are you doing more of the good things and working to minimize the less desirable things? What kind of relationship are you building with your kids? Ask yourself, "Am I the dad I really want to be remembered as? What do I need to do differently? What things am I already doing well?"
- ✧ Let your kids into your life. Invite them to sit next to you and read to you or you read to them. Look for ways you can include them in your life and age-appropriate activities, as well as ways you can be involved in theirs. Talk with your kids about the types of activities they would like to do. Ask them how they would like to spend their time with you.

You can learn more about, and even make a commitment to join, the Championship Fathering initiative at <http://fathers.com/>. There are several helpful videos and tips to love, coach, encourage and be good role models...the kind of involved dad every kid deserves.

## Sources:

*National Center for Fathering <http://fathers.com/>.*

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.: <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/usermanuals/fatherhood/chaptertwo.cfm>.*



## Campus Connections

*By Scott Scheer, Ph.D., State Extension Specialist,  
4-H Youth Development (The Ohio State University)*

Hello again! Great to make this 4-H Cloverbud Connection with you!

Let's talk about Cloverbud "meetings." The reason I have meetings in quotes, is that when Cloverbud children get together, it is not a meeting similar to what older 4-Hers participate in, but an activity period for improving the skills and knowledge of 4-H Cloverbud members.

Cloverbud age children are at a different place developmentally in how they think, feel, and relate to others. Their understanding of right and wrong is based only on what they are told by their parents or someone else. Reasoning and decision-making skills are just beginning to bud. Therefore Cloverbud age children do not conduct business meetings, election of officers, and so forth. Young children are "egocentric," that is, mostly concerned about themselves. As most of you know, leadership abilities require much more than just "looking out for number one."

It is important to keep in mind that the 4-H Cloverbud program is designed to nurture future leadership skills in young children during their formative years. Such life skills of self-understanding (self-esteem), social-interaction (getting along with others), and decision-making (making choices) are not acquired magically overnight. They begin to form early in life. The 4-H Cloverbud program is designed to enhance life skills in children as they mature into our leaders of tomorrow.



Remember to keep 4-H Cloverbud activities fun, short-term, non-competitive, success oriented, and positive.

Thanks for your commitment to the 4-H Cloverbud program as we enhance the healthy development of children throughout the state!



## Hot Chocolate Cones

*By Cindy Shuster, FCS Educator, Perry County (OSU Extension)*

These make great holiday gifts for teachers, babysitters or neighbors. Hot cocoa with all the trimmings is a perennial winter favorite.

### You will need:

- ¾ c. cocoa mix
- 2 (6 x 12-inch) cone-shaped cellophane bags (available at party stores)
- 2 clear rubber bands
- scissors
- ¼ c. mini chocolate chips
- ¾ c. mini marshmallows
- 1 large red gumdrop

- 1) Pour the cocoa mix into one of the bags. Close the bag with a clear rubber band, trim bag to 1 inch above the band.
- 2) Place the cocoa-filled bag into the second bag, flatten its top.
- 3) Layer the chocolate chips and marshmallows and top with gumdrop. Secure bag with the other rubber band.
- 4) Add ribbon and bows as desired.



**Cloverbud Connections** is published four times annually by OSU Extension in Monroe and Hocking Counties, providing volunteers and teachers working with kindergarten through second grade access to unbiased, research-based information.

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