

Ohio 4-H Cloverbud Connections

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

April - June 2016 Issue

Is One of Your 4-H Parents a “Helicopter Parent”?

By Pam Montgomery, 4-H Youth Development Educator/CED, Morgan County (OSU Extension)



Helicopter parenting is described “as a style of child rearing in which an overprotective mother or father discourages a child’s independence by being too involved in the child’s life, swooping in at any sign of challenge or discomfort to assist or rescue their child” (Dictionary.com, 2016). If you are working with this type of parent in your 4-H Club it can be a real challenge.

What strategies can you implement to reduce the challenges and frustrations they create? A good strategy for any 4-H Volunteer is to get to know your parents and members. A parent meeting for parents new to 4-H and Cloverbud membership prior to the first meeting to explain goals of the program and learn about their expectations is a good first step towards getting to know them. Recreation, especially get acquainted activities, helps you get to know your members.

Communication is key to dealing with any difficult situation. It is important that you make time to communicate with a “helicopter parent.” Effective communication allows for clarification to avoid misunderstandings. Make sure to set boundaries/time limits because they could demand or want more time than you have available.

Reinforce the parent’s helpfulness by having a task or activity for them to do that is not directly interacting with their child or other Cloverbuds. They could research a possible site for a field trip or set up snack in another space.

Avoid second-guessing yourself or becoming defensive (Hawk, A. 2015). A parent that always questions what you are doing or compares their child’s experience to that of Cloverbuds in other clubs or other youth programs could lead you to uncertainty about the activities planned. If you are utilizing OSU Extension Cloverbud resources and following policy and procedures for Cloverbuds you have nothing to be concerned about.

Be honest with them about the challenges they present for the Cloverbuds when they hover or try to control the activities. Remember to be honest without being offensive or attacking. If you continue to struggle, call the 4-H Extension Professional in your county; they will help explore additional options for managing a “helicopter parent”.

References:

Hawk, A. (2015, October 20). The Do’s and Don’ts of Dealing with Helicopter Parents [Web log port]. Retrieved from <http://freespiritpublishingblog.com>

Helicopter-parenting. (n.d.) Dictionary.com Unabridged. Retrieved February 05, 2016 from Dictionary.com website. <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/helicopter-parenting>

Click it, Print it, Do it!



Family Activity Time

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!

Tips for Building Self-Reliance

By Bruce Zimmer, 4-H Youth Development Educator,
Washington County (OSU Extension)

As a 4-H Cloverbud Volunteer you have the ability to model and teach children self-reliance and responsibility. By modeling these skills at 4-H Cloverbud meetings you will be teaching children how to make their own decisions, succeed, make some mistakes, learn from their decisions and even try again. Isn't this really the 4-H way, to Learn by Doing? Here are a few tips for your 4-H Cloverbud group and some ideas you might even suggest to overindulgent parents.

- 1) It can be challenging for parents to know when to step back. When parents stay to help with 4-H Cloverbud activities you might want to set some ground rules for helping. One rule you might try at a meeting is – they can help all the other members but their own children.
- 2) Even young children can make good decisions. For example, allow the members to choose the activity for the next 4-H Cloverbud meeting. Give them some options you feel comfortable teaching and let them discuss the pros and cons of each activity.
- 3) Think about your role as a Cloverbud coach. When children ask you questions about how to do something or what to do, respond by asking questions rather than providing answers. Questioning will help children build self-reliance and critical thinking skills.
- 4) Provide Cloverbud members with responsibilities and tasks. These tasks could be completed before, during or after a 4-H Cloverbud meeting. Take time to teach how to do each task properly and break the task into manageable chunks for younger Cloverbuds.
- 5) Plan extra time when completing an activity. Don't be rushed as you are teaching Cloverbud members Learn by Doing activities. Most often it is the journey rather than the completed activity that children enjoy and remember.

Your Cloverbud members are relying on you as a volunteer to be nurturing and kind as well as the club providing a welcoming and safe environment for all members. Making an effort to practice these tips will help ensure your members are being challenged and taught how to become self-reliant and independent.

Reference: You can do it! 7 Ways to Teach Your Children Self Reliance and Responsibility [Retrieved 3/11/16 from www.drrobysilverman.com weblog post]

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!

Save the date! 4-H Cloverbuds will have its third annual 4-H Cloverbud Day Camp at the Ohio State fair. It will be offered for one day only – first day of the fair. The date will be Wednesday, July 27, 2016. Registration information will be available from your county extension office.



The day camp will provide 4-H Cloverbuds an enjoyable and educational event of their own to look forward to at the state fair. Objectives for this year's camp are gain new knowledge, meet new friends to develop social and learning skills, and explore the Ohio State Fair. We are looking forward to continuing this annual opportunity for 4-H Cloverbuds which promises to be an educational and fun event!

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



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

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