

Ohio 4-H Cloverbud Connections

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

January - March 2017 Issue

What Makes Kids Happy?

By Joyce Shriner, 4-H Youth Development Educator/CED, Hocking County (OSU Extension).



This issue of the Ohio 4-H Cloverbud Connections newsletter focuses on the second “H” in 4-H: “Heart.” What makes kids happy? Is it presents or presence; receiving or giving; being independent or belonging; focusing on self or others?

A researcher asked college students what made them happy as children and learned “the most frequent source of happiness for 89% involved doing relatively simple things with a specific person or persons” (Westman, 1990).

Other researchers have found that children find “happiness not in things, but in experiences, relationships, and activities that offer meaning, satisfaction, and joy” (Taylor, 2009). Other sources of happiness include: receiving love, respect and encouragement from others; helping those in need; having and spending time with close friends; and developing spirituality. According to researchers at The University of British Columbia, spirituality and happiness are linked because “spirituality produces a sense of meaning, stimulates hope, reinforces positive social norms, and provides a social support network” (Mortenson, 2008).

4-H volunteers can facilitate activities that focus on the heart and help to increase Cloverbud’s happiness. For example, invite Cloverbuds to talk about things for which they are thankful and/or good things that happened today. They can also plan and do activities that help others and contribute to the community.

References:

Mortenson, B. (2008). *What makes kids happy? UBC researchers surprised at the role spirituality plays. UBC Reports, 54, 2.*

Taylor, J. (October 30, 2009). *Parenting: Raising happy children. Psychology Today. Retrieved from the website: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-power-prime/200910/parenting-raising-happy-children>.*

Westman, A. S. (1990). *Do people’s presence more than their presents makes children happy? Perceptual and Motor Skills, 71, 674.*



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Activities that Make Your Heart Happy

By Demetria Woods, 4-H Youth Development Educator,
Miami County (OSU Extension).

In *100 THINGS that make me HAPPY*, Amy Schwartz uses colorful illustrations and rhyming words to celebrate “everyday things” that bring children pleasure. Below are other activities to help your Cloverbuds explore and appreciate the things that bring smiles to their hearts.

LAUGH – “Knock, knock. Who’s there? Tomato. Tomato who? Splat!” Whether told properly or not - jokes can cause a “gaggle of giggles”. Have children share their favorite “Knock, knock” jokes, or play a game in which they make silly faces and try not to laugh.

SING – Sing songs that incorporate words and movement, such as “Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes”, or “If You’re Special and You Know It”, from the Personal Development section of the *Big Book of 4-H Cloverbud Activities*.



DANCE – Play a fun, “happy”, upbeat tune and let members dance individually around the room. Select a “leader” and have other members imitate the movements of the “leader”, or do the “Chicken Dance” together.

READ – Have members bring in their favorite books to share. They can read the story or have someone else read it to the group. Talk about why the book makes them happy.

PLAY – Discuss the importance exercise and healthy eating play in building a strong healthy heart. Have members do activities that get their hearts pumping. For example, have them roll a dice and call out an exercise, such as jumping jacks. Whatever number they roll will be the number of times they do the exercise. (Source: Cloverbud “Fitness Fun Kit”)



GIVE – Smiles, kind words, thank you notes – *Have You Filled a Bucket Today?: A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids* - talks of many ways to give. Talk to your Cloverbuds about an activity that they can do together for others.

CREATE – Give members a blank calendar page. Have them write or draw three activities that they would like to do at home with their families to create new memories as they continue to make their hearts happy. Calendar resources to inspire families include: “The 7 Habits of Successful Families” and the online “Get Moving Today!” calendar.

References:

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/ages-stages-dont-forget-laugh-importance-humor>

<http://www.healthychildcare.org/PDF/LetsMove%20CalendarENGLCalendarFULL.pdf>

Campus Connections

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

Hello again! It’s great to make this 4-H Cloverbud Connection with you!

What does it feel like to be joyful and happy? For young children it might be when they come in contact with a significant social other or accomplishing something. You know it when you see it in the faces of children as they light up with smiles and sparkling eyes or in their bodies as they move about, jump, shake, or spin. There are many positive outcomes when Cloverbud kids are joyful and happy which includes creativity, engagement, and productive learning.



We can foster joyfulness with our 4-H Cloverbud members by having a safe, nurturing environment in which 4-H Volunteer Leaders are caring adult role models. As Cloverbud kids are involved in activities allow them the freedom to move at their own pace and time. Give respect and support for each individual child by listening and showing genuine interest. Much of this is what you already do, but keep in mind that by being intentional about these efforts will result in joyful, happy Cloverbud kids.

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 and Hocking Counties, providing volunteers and teachers working with kindergarten through second grade access to unbiased, research-based information.

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