



*"Avoid the crowd.*

*Do your own thinking independently.*

*Be the chess player, not the chess piece"*

*~ Ralph Charell*

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*And....*

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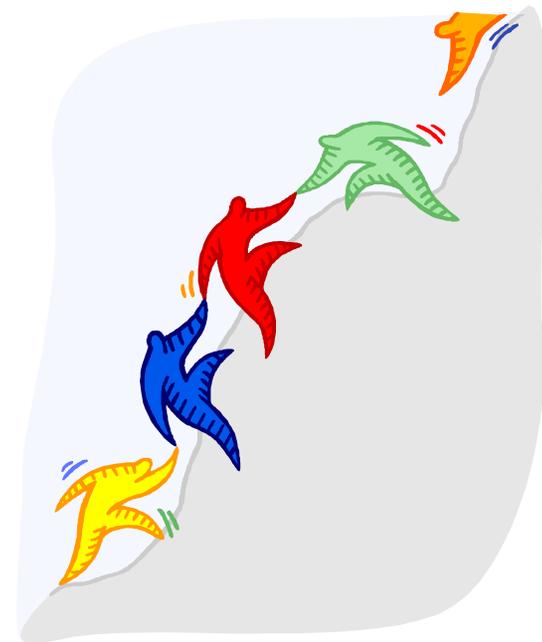
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# BUILDING STRONG CLUBS



*Based on the Four Essential Elements*



*To make the best better!*

## Leadership/Teambuilding Activity

### Fox and Squirrel

For this activity, you will need three balls - two large and one small. Everyone stands in a circle. Hand the three balls to three different people. The two large balls are the foxes, and the smaller ball is the squirrel. Start the game on "Go!" Everyone starts passing the balls from player to player. The object is for the foxes to try to catch the squirrel and for the squirrel to avoid being caught. The squirrel, as in real life, is able to hop (be tossed anywhere across the circle), while the foxes can only go from person to person, in either direction around the circle. With a little practice, the foxes should be going around the circle at full speed. Have everyone call out "fox" or "squirrel" each time they pass a ball. When one person ends up with a fox and the squirrel at the same time, then the squirrel has been caught. You can make this game extra crazy by adding more squirrels and foxes.

Ask these questions to make this **game** into a **learning activity**:

- Which are you trying to help, the fox or the squirrel?  
Why?
- How did the squirrel finally get caught?
- How did you feel when the squirrel got caught?
- How would the game have been different if there were two teams; one trying to catch the squirrel and one trying to protect the squirrel?
- Is it possible for one team to effectively try to accomplish two different, opposing goals at the same time? Why or why not?



*"Age is foolish and forgetful  
when it underestimates youth."*

~ **J. K. Rowling**,

*in Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince (2005)*



*"Treat your friends as you do  
your pictures,  
and place them in their best  
light."*

~ **Jennie Jerome Churchill** (1854—1921)



## More Games

### **The Northwoods Hop**

Everybody on their feet. Turn to the person next to you. Introduce yourself to your partner!

We are going to do the Northwoods Hop. You have three choices in the Northwoods Hop. You can be a Bear (claws out -at head level, silent snarl), or a Moose (antlers above head), or a Wolf (head pointed toward sky in a mock howl).



Practice!- Bear...Moose...Wolf...

OK -- Backs together - not touching—when I say three hop as you turn around and do one of the three Northwoods animals. Remember, you are trying to match your partner.

1-2-3. If you matched, sit down. (Keep doing this until all partners have matched. Give everyone a big round of applause!)

### **Islands** (the "new" way to play musical chairs)

When the music stops (or the clapping), players must touch an island - it's as easy as that. The only other rule is that they may not touch one another.

Start with a number of islands - they can be things like a frisbee, a marker, a book..., and of course, take one island away each time. Eventually you'll be down to one island - and everybody has to touch it without touching each other. Can you do it with 20 people? How about 30? Then, you ALL win! Hint: If you have smaller numbers, use smaller islands!



### **Ice Cube Race**

Each team of 2- 3 people tries to be the first to melt their ice cube. The only rules are these:

- The ice cube must not touch the ground, or be put inside anyone's mouth.
- All members must hold the ice cube at some point during the game.

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*“Once an organization loses its spirit  
of pioneering and rests on its early  
work, its progress stops.”*

*~ Thomas J. Watson, Sr.*

### **The Original Name Game**

All members of the group stand or sit in a circle. Each person thinks of an animal, adjective, action or food that begins with the same first letter of their first name. One person starts and gives their name (example: Mallard Millie, Kentucky Ken, Sandy Suzanne, Jumping Jenny, etc). The next person says their own name and the name before theirs. The next person will say their name, the name before theirs, and the first name; and so on, adding as each person says their name. The last person has to try to remember all of the names before theirs. Members are allowed to ask if they forget. You can also try this activity with an action or rhythm instead.

### **To Tell the Truth**

This activity requires three people and a facilitator. Three people leave the room and think of one thing interesting about one of the three. Examples of this include: “I am a prize-winning pig caller,” “I once lost a tooth while playing Pass the Potato,” “I ate an entire watermelon on a dare,” etc. When the three people return to the room, the facilitator will announce the fact, and all three will act as though the fact is true for them, while answering questions from the audience. The audience votes on who they think the fact is true for, and in the end, the real person is reveals themselves. This activity can go quickly if questioning is limited to 2-3 minutes per round. This is a great way to learn something someone may have never told anyone about.

### **Name by Name**

Stand in a circle. Have the group shout their first name on the count of three. Then, they must silently rearrange themselves in the circle alphabetically by first name. Go around the circle to see if they got it correct. Have them try again to fix their errors. For groups that know each other well, have them shout their middle name.

## NAMES AND GETTING-TO-KNOW-YOU-GAMES

Here are some suggestions for activities that can help your club get to know one another and increase a sense of **belonging**. It is important that members, especially new members or those that are younger, because someone who feels out of place or left out may not want to come back!

### **Roll Call**

Simple activities like the monthly roll call can be used as a **belonging** activity. Choose (or have a member choose) something to say when members' names are called at the beginning of meetings. For example, have everyone say what they are going to do this weekend, what their favorite project is, where they would go if they could go anywhere in the world, etc.

### **Two Truths and a Lie**

Every member thinks up three small tidbits of information about themselves to share with the rest of the club. The only catch is, one of them is not true. The rest of the group tries to guess which tidbit is a lie. If they do not figure out the lie in about a minute, the answer can be given and move on to the next member.

### **I like people who...**

Everyone stands in a circle with one person in the middle. Place something to mark each spot around the circle, such as a piece of tape, a paper plate, or a shoe. The person in the middle says "I like people who..." followed by something true to them. For example, "I like people who have gone skydiving," "I like people who like red," or "I like people who have never touched a goat." Then, people who fit that statement must run to a different space, including the person in the middle. You cannot move to the space directly next to you. The last person without a space is now in the center.

## Introduction

Welcome! This guide is designed to help build strong 4-H clubs, strengthen involvement in the 4-H program, and help 4-H in Oconto County be the most effective youth development program it can be.

This booklet focuses on the Four Essential Elements of Positive Youth Development, what they mean, and how they can be applied to 4-H clubs and members.

The **Four Essential Elements** are:

1. Belonging
2. Mastery
3. Independence
4. Generosity



Through a basic understanding of the Four Elements, 4-H members and leaders will be able to greatly improve their clubs, making stronger, happier, and more constructive to positive youth development.

This guide also includes a number of games and leadership activities based on the Four Essential Elements, designed to help youth in 4-H clubs develop leadership and teambuilding skills, and improve club application of the Four Elements. Enjoy!

## Belonging

Belonging consists of **a positive relationship with caring adults and a safe and inclusive environment.**

Caring adults act as advisors, guide and mentor. Adults **help** youth set expectations and boundaries, yet allow for freedom, or **independence.**

An inclusive environment is one that creates a sense of belonging for all members. It encourages and supports its members with positive feedback. In a safe 4-H environment, youth should never fear physical or emotional harm, whether it be from the learning environment itself, adults, or other participants (including spectators and visitors to events).

### **What can we do to strengthen Belonging?**

- Introduce new members and guests to the club
- Do activities that require use of names or getting to know others (*see "Names and Getting to Know You Games", page 20*)
- Ask for the opinions of members who don't speak often
- Strongly encourage youth-adult partnerships
- Make others comfortable
- Accept others for their differences
- Work to resolve conflict in a peaceful, fair manner
- Offer to help others
- Mentor new members/families
- Engage all members at all ages and skill levels

## **Passing the Buck**

Form a circle. Take a ball or some other easy to toss object and throw it to someone in the circle. That person must make up a line from a story. The ball is then tossed to someone else in the circle, who must continue the story immediately. Players can say as much or as little as they wish, but they must say something as quickly as possible. Enjoy your story!

## **Press Conference**

One person leaves the room and goes out of hearing range. The group thinks up a character and something that happened to them. The person outside is then brought back in, and while answering leading questions from the audience, must guess who they are and what happened to them. Some examples include: "Mary Poppins, who lost all her penguins," "Mr. Rogers, who decided to become a hermit," "Abraham Lincoln, whose hat was lit on fire by a dragon," etc. The player can guess who they are and what happened at any time, but if the questions start to stagnate, you may need to speed things up by asking if the player knows who they are and telling them who they are if they do not figure it out.

## **Cat Can Eat Mud Yes?**

Break into groups of around six (you may do this with larger groups if you wish, but it is more manageable with groups of six). Sit in circles. Each person gets a piece of paper and a writing utensil. At the very top of the paper, each person writes a sentence about whatever they want. Descriptive sentences work best. Then, pass the paper clockwise one person. That person must then draw a picture of that sentence. Fold the paper over at the top so as to cover up the sentence. Pass the paper again clockwise. That person then writes a sentence describing the picture. Fold over the picture, and pass again. Continue until you reach the bottom of the paper, making sure to end with a sentence. You can then open up the papers, and see the (often) hilarious effects of switching between sentence and picture over and over again. This is sort of like an advanced version of the Telephone Game. (Suggestion: If you have access to a copy machine, make copies of all the papers for members to take home.)

## Communication Activities

All of the following activities are loads of fun for any club, but also serve as great tools for working on communication skills. Communication skills are critical at every level of the club, in every activity. Having good communication between all club members and adults can help improve your ability to excel at **belonging**, **mastery**, **independence**, and **generosity**.

### **Catch Your Eye**

Everyone in the group stands in a circle. Have everyone look down, and silently stare at someone's shoes, without looking up. On the count of three, everyone must look at the face of the shoe's owner. If two people make eye contact, they must both scream "AHHH!!!" and sit down. When you get down to two people, they are your winners, and you may start again.

### **Who's Bob?/Killer Frog**

Form a circle, sitting or standing. Pick one person to be the detective, and send them out of the room. Pick a "Bob." When Bob does an action, all other players must copy that action. The detective is brought back into the center of the circle and tries to catch Bob. When Bob is caught, he may become the new detective, or you may pick new players for both roles. This activity works best if players do not stare at Bob.

**Killer Frog Variation:** (For this variation, sitting works best) Instead of a "Bob," secretly pick a killer frog by having everyone close their eyes and tapping one player. The killer frog must stick out their tongue, and if a player sees the killer frog stick their tongue out at them, that player pretends to die, preferably very loudly and over-acted. The detective tries to catch the killer frog in the act of killing someone.

### **Counting**

In this simple activity, players must count as a group as high as they can. The catch is that if two people speak at once, the group must go back to the beginning. Members are also advised not to point or make other motions when counting. Try counting as high as possible with little or no communication. You can also try this activity with the alphabet.

## **What works in Oconto County 4-H?**

- Nametags!
- Having one or more members in charge of welcoming people as they come in the door.
- Fun projects to get everyone involved.
- Games!
- Being REALLY friendly
- Special events
- Parties
- Snacks
- Make sure everyone knows when the meetings are — newspaper articles, email, postcards, and/or telephone calls
- Use encouraging words
- Explain 4-H to the new folks
- Get people involved
- Be kind
- Be generous
- No teasing or pranks!
- Kids run the meeting
- Officers spread out around the table
- Older members pair up with Cloverbuds
- Icebreakers, icebreakers, icebreakers!



## Mastery

This essential element of 4-H allows **opportunities for mastery and engagement in learning.**



Mastery is the building of knowledge, skills, and attitudes followed by the demonstration of the competent use of this knowledge and skills. This is a process occurring over time in 4-H.

An engaged youth is one who is mindful of the subject area, building relationships and connections in order to develop understanding. An engaged learner has a higher degree of self-motivation and a great capacity to create.

### **What can we do to strengthen Mastery?**

- Advocate working on projects early
- Try things in more than one way, more than one time
- Have educational content at every meeting
- Offer hands-on opportunities
- Identify resources for the club to utilize
- Plan ahead for projects and events year-round
- Make learning fun
- Use the experiential learning model (see page 14)
- Compliment members on their work
- Work toward a deeper understanding of projects
- Ask club members what they want to learn

## Adults in 4-H

Although 4-H is a youth organization, adult involvement is critically important to the program. 4-H is an organization primarily run through adult volunteers. Volunteer leaders help organize 4-H clubs, lead project meetings, help arrange 4-H activities, and lend guidance and instruction to 4-H youth. Without adult volunteers, the 4-H program could not exist. Adult volunteers should, however, remember that 4-H is a youth organization, and should encourage and support youth leadership as much as possible.

### **Constructive ways for adults to become involved:**

- Become the *General Leader* of a 4-H club
- Become a club or county *Project Leader*
- Become a member of the 4-H *Leader's Association*
- Become active on any county-wide committee (projects, awards, etc.)
- Provide refreshments for meetings
- Volunteer at club and county 4-H events
- Assist youth with:
  - Coordinating meetings
  - Planning recreational and/or educational activities
  - Managing club finances
  - Managing projects
  - Encouraging participation



## Service Learning

**"What is service learning?"** Service learning is exactly what it sounds like: learning by doing service to others. It is community service with an educational element. You are providing a service to the community, while learning about something or how to do something. Think of it as a way to get more out of your 4-H experience. Not only can you help others, but you can learn life skills as you go along.

**"Where do we get started?"** A good place to start with a service learning project is to put education into a more standard community service project. For example, say your club wanted to save up money to buy blankets for a homeless shelter. If your club were to instead **make** the blankets yourselves, teaching members a new skill as you work, it would then be considered a service learning project.

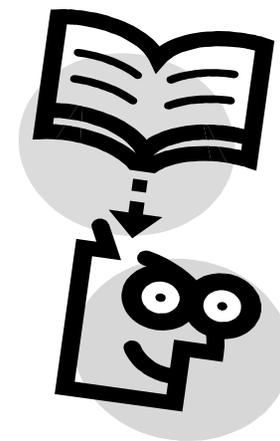
An important thing to remember about service learning is that a project may be service learning for one member, but community service for another. Using the same example above, if a member already knows how to make a blanket, then they would not necessarily learn something, whereas a member who has never made a blanket would be doing a service learning project.

It is most important to **never devalue community service**. Service learning is about getting more out a project for the members completing the project, but that does not mean that community service is less valuable to the community, or that it is not a good experience for 4-H members. You are still providing a service to your community, and that is the most important thing to remember.

Once you have a firm grasp of what service learning is, you should realize that almost anything can be turned into a service learning project, and you can even seek out new service learning opportunities for the betterment of your club, your community, and ultimately your county and your world!

## What works in Oconto County 4-H?

- Older youth as role models
- Great Project Leaders
- Encouragement
- Try new things (even if you don't think you'll like it!)
- Demonstrations at club meetings
- Keep an open mind



*Gather your resources, rally all your faculties, marshal all your energies, focus all your capacities upon mastery of at least one field of endeavor. "*

*~ John Haggai*

## Independence

Independence provides **opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future and opportunity for self-determination.**

The ability to see oneself in the future is to have hope and optimism to shape life choices. Then you can see yourself as a PARTICIPANT in the future. Along with other 4-H skills, independence allows for members to develop into productive members of society and good citizens.

When youth have a sense of influence over their lives, they exercise their potential to become self-directed, independent adults.

### What can we do to strengthen Independence?

- Make sure meetings are run with little adult intervention (*see "Adults in 4-H", page 17*)
- Plan ahead for the year
- Ensure members have input into all aspects of the club
- Provide opportunities for important work outside of meetings
- Work in groups as well as individually
- Create an environment where personal strengths are valued



## The Experiential Learning Model

The experiential learning model is what sets 4-H learning apart from formal education, such as in your school. Experiential learning can be simplified in three stages: **Do**, **Reflect**, and **Apply**. "Do" is pretty self-explanatory — we *do* the activity. We can remember the other two stages with a few simple questions.

R  
E  
F  
L  
E  
C  
T

### What?

What happened? Share what happened during an activity, what the results were, and what observations everyone had. What did each person do? What was the most difficult thing about the activity?

### Gut?

Discuss how the experience went and analyze it. How did it feel to be left out? How did it feel to lead? You can link the experience to the targeted subject matter and life skills being learned. What problems or issues seemed to occur over and over? What similar experience have you had? How did you feel when a particular thing happened?

A  
P  
P  
L  
Y

### So what?

How do we apply this to the situation at hand? Generalize the event to connect it to real-world examples. What did you learn about yourself through this activity? What did you learn about making decisions? How does this activity relate to real life outside of the activity? How did you go about deciding what to do?

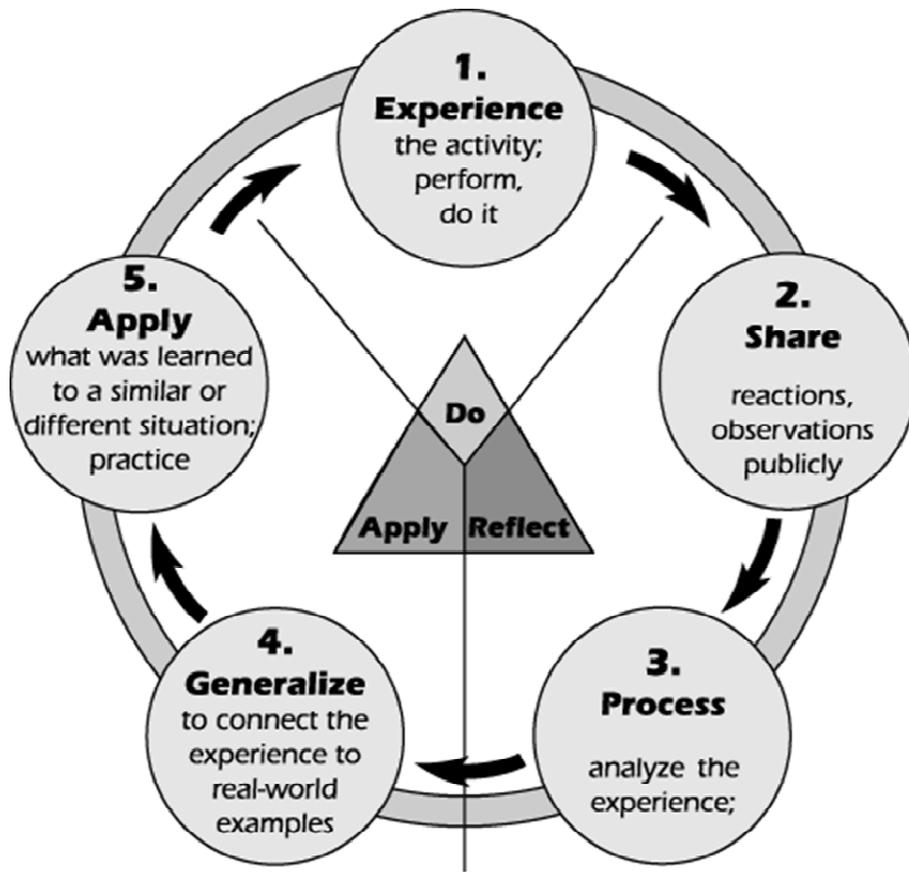
### Now what?

How can you apply what you've learned to a similar or different experience? What is another situation in which this skill can be used? How will the issues raised by this activity be useful in the future? How will you act differently in the future as a result of this activity?

Questions are what the experiential learning model is all about. By observing the activity and asking questions to cover **what**, **gut**, **so what**, and **now what**, almost anything can be made a learning experience.

## What works in Oconto County 4-H?

- Let youth make the decisions in their club
- Provide important roles for kids in and out of the club
- Remind parents not to talk at meetings, unless we ask their advice
- Older kids help younger kids
- Kids working together



The Experiential Learning

*Discovery consists of seeing what everybody has seen and thinking what nobody has thought.*

~ **Albert Szent-Gyorgyi** (1893—1986)

## Generosity

Generosity allows for **opportunity to value and practice service to others**. Finding one's self begins with losing oneself in the service of others. Service is a way for members to gain exposure to the larger community and the entire world itself.

Through community service and service learning, all four elements have a chance to come together in a culmination of experiences in 4-H.

### What can we do to improve Generosity?

- Teach ways to help others
- Increase the quality of community service projects
- Reflect on community service projects after they are done
- Keep a positive attitude toward helping others
- Try new service projects that challenge club members
- Do projects with varying commitment levels
- Look for educational content in service projects  
(see page 16)
- Practice generosity outside of service project

*"That's what I consider true generosity.  
You give your all, and yet you always feel as  
if it costs you nothing."*

~ Simone de Beauvoir

## What Works in Oconto County 4-H?

- Community Service makes you feel GOOD
- The kids decide which community service project they want to do
- Youth plan the community service



### Here are some community service project ideas from Oconto County 4-H'ers:

- Bingo at the nursing home
- Swap meets
- Food stand
- Toys for Tots
- Valentines to the troops
- Roadside clean-up
- Bake Sale
- Perform club play at nursing home and schools
- Pick apples
- Ring bells
- Supplies to soldiers
- Earth Day activities
- Gardening