

MODULE 1 – WHAT IS 4-H?

PRIMER FOR 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS INSTRUCTORS



**Promoting Positive Youth Development through
Comprehensive Education,
Life-Long Recreation, and
Healthy Competition**



National 4-H Shooting Sports



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Please send requests in writing to:

Program Coordinator
National 4-H Shooting Sports
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Introduction

4-H is a Community¹

“4-H is delivered by Cooperative Extension System - a community of more than 100 public universities across the nation that provides experiences where young people learn by doing. Kids complete hands-on projects in areas like health, science, agriculture and citizenship, in a positive environment where they receive guidance from adult mentors and are encouraged to take on proactive leadership roles. Kids experience 4-H in every county and parish in the country—through in-school and after-school programs, school and community clubs and 4-H camps.”

Overview of what will be covered in this module:

1. What is 4-H?
2. Organizational Structure and History
3. 4-H Program Fundamentals
4. Mission Mandates
5. Roles and Accountability



What is 4-H?¹

4-H is America's largest youth development organization – empowering over six million young people nationwide each year with the knowledge and skills to lead for a lifetime. 4-H believes in the power of youth. 4-H recognizes the valuable strengths and real influence that every child possesses to improve the world around us.

4-H provides:

1. “Hands-on” learning experiences
2. Safe, supportive environments
3. Guidance from caring adult mentors
4. Encouragement towards leadership roles
5. Accessibility for all youth

The 4-H team comes from every corner of America through an amazing network of over 3,500 4-H professionals and more than 500,000 dedicated 4-H volunteers who operate under the direct supervision of those 4-H professionals.

4-H, Why's it important?²

The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development is a longitudinal study that began in 2002 and was repeated annually for eight years, surveying more than 7,000 adolescents from diverse backgrounds across 42 U.S. states.

4-H members are:

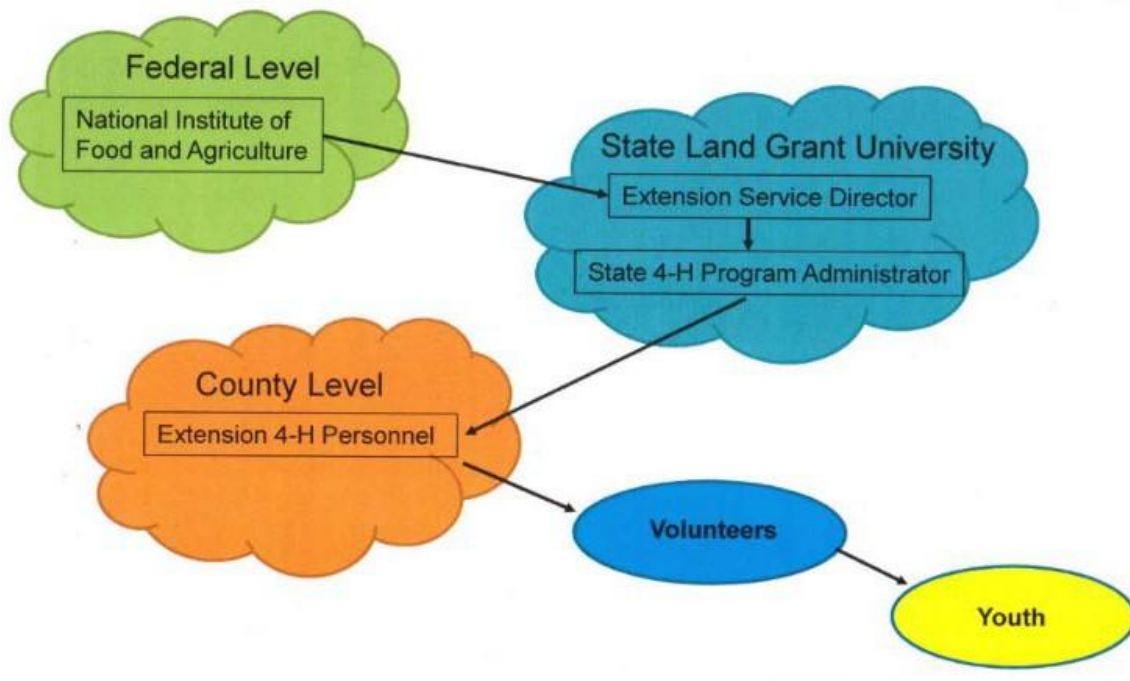
- Nearly 4X more likely to make contributions to their communities,
- About 2X more likely to be civically active,
- Nearly 2X more likely to participate in science programs during out-of-school time,
- About 2X more likely (Grade 10) and nearly 3x more likely (Grade 12) to take part in science programs compared to girls in other out of school time activities, and
- Nearly 2x more likely to make healthier choices.

Organizational Structure³

Extension programs, including 4-H, are the result of a unique three-way partnership at the federal, state and county levels. Federal oversight comes from National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) which is a division of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). These priorities channel through the Land Grant University System to respective state institutions.

At the state level, responsibility for 4-H is routed through the Cooperative Extension Service director to the respective State 4-H Program Administrator. This position provides oversight and establishes basic parameters for all 4-H programs within the state or their jurisdiction.

However, to most effectively reach youth, the State 4-H Program Administrator delegates local 4-H program leadership and management responsibilities to the county/parish Extension 4-H Educators. Those individuals then work with authorized volunteers and other appropriate resources to deliver high-quality educational youth programs



History of 4-H¹



In the late 1800's, universities realized they could achieve greater acceptance of new technology by introducing these concepts to youth on a small-scale basis. Thus, in 1902, A. B. Graham started the first youth program in Clark County, Ohio. Considered a precursor to 4-H, these clubs focused on corn production and growing/processing of tomatoes.

The Smith-Lever Act of 1914 created the Cooperative Extension Service within USDA, launching nationalization of 4-H. Extension has expanded to more than 100 land-grant universities and over 3,000 county offices, combining federal, state and county resources and personnel to meet local research and educational needs.

Evolving to meet society's changing needs, 4-H today is tackling issues from global food security and sustainable energy to childhood obesity and food safety. Reaching beyond traditional agriculture and family sciences, 4-H engages in a multitude of STEM opportunities, improving our ability to compete in key scientific fields and more effectively address the challenges of the 21st century.

What are the Four H's?

William Danforth⁷, in his book *I Dare You*, believes youth have a four-fold life to live: a body, a brain, a heart and a soul . . . these are your living tools. To use and develop them is not a task It is a golden opportunity." Note that each "H" of the 4-H clover aligns with one of those tools.

- **Head** – empowers youth to learn how to think, plan and reason
- **Heart** – promotes concern for others, accepting responsibility, developing positive attitudes
- **Hands** – encourages development of useful, helpful physical skills
- **Health** – engages youth in promoting personal health and productive use of leisure time

The 4-H Pledge⁴

The 4-H pledge, adopted in 1927, is a tangible reminder for all 4-H participants and their families as to the real purpose of this dynamic program. Start each meeting, activity, and/or event with the 4-H Pledge. From time to time, after reciting the pledge, ask youth what one of the specific lines means to them – and what they are committing themselves to do. This brings the 4-H Pledge to life.



I pledge ...

*My HEAD to clearer thinking,
My HEART to greater loyalty,
My HANDS to larger service, and
My HEALTH to better living*

For my club, my community, my country and my world.

Using the 4-H Name & Emblem⁵

The USDA first used the term “4-H Club” in 1918; U.S. Congress approved the four-leaf clover emblem in 1924. The name and emblem is one of only five federal marks, having protections and standards exceeding those of trademarks and copyrights. [Note: the other federal marks include the Presidential seal, the Olympic rings, Smokey Bear and the Red Cross emblem.]

Use of the 4-H Name and/or Emblem requires authorization from either county, state or federal Extension 4-H personnel, depending on the intended use. Strict specifications exist regarding appropriate graphic representation of the 4-H emblem. Under 18 U.S.C. 707, unauthorized or inappropriate use is subject to criminal penalties, fines or imprisonment. Check with your local Extension personnel before finalizing or distributing materials to insure proper compliance.

Mission Mandates³

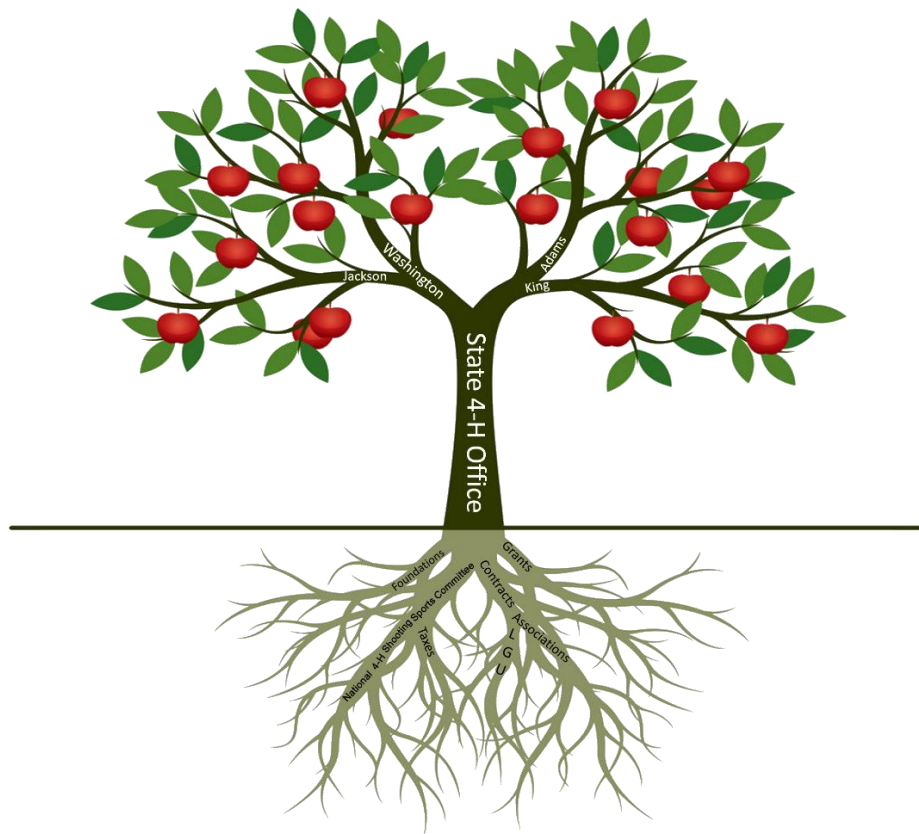
Three national 4-H mission mandates exist to provide guidance to all 4-H programs. Look for ways to incorporate each into the various 4-H programs you offer. They are:

1. **Science** - Focuses national emphasis on STEM and empowering youth for the future.
2. **Healthy Living** - Targets national health crisis and emphasizes positive nutrition and lifestyles.
3. **Civic Engagement** - Promotes greater community awareness and engages youth in service to others.

Roles and Accountability⁶

Just as within any successful team or organization, there are processes and hierarchies that must be observed to insure peak performance. During the power point presentation, you may recall starting with the tree trunk (State 4-H Office), primary branches (counties) and secondary branches (clubs). The leaves (volunteers) provided energy that ultimately help develop the high-quality fruit (members). Finally, you'll remember the tap root represents the Land Grant University system's research based information and best practices. The vast root and rootlet system are the various funding sources that support a healthy tree.

As 4-H Shooting Sports instructors, it's essential that you operate within the scope of your assigned duties while providing an organized, safe and supportive environment for youth. Just as the tree can exist without a few unproductive secondary branches, leaves or fruit, the opportunity to participate in the 4-H program is a privilege – not a right. While 4-H is inclusive of all, it cannot let anyone's inappropriate actions jeopardize the safety of others.



References

1. National 4-H Council. (n.d.) *What is 4-H?*. Retrieved from: <https://4-h.org/about/what-is-4-h/>
2. National 4-H Council. (2013). *The positive development of youth: Comprehensive findings from the 4-H study of positive youth development*. Retrieved from: <https://4-h.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/4-H-Study-of-Positive-Youth-Development-Fact-Sheet.pdf>
3. National Institute of Food and Agriculture. (n.d.). *Organization of 4-H*. Retrieved from: <https://nifa.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource/4-H%20Organizational%20Chart.pdf>
4. National 4-H Council. (n.d.). *4-H pledge*. Retrieved from: <https://4-h.org/about/what-is-4-h/4-h-pledge/>
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7. Danforth, W. H. (2006). *I dare you!*. Cosimo, Inc..

2025 Changes to Module 1 Primer

1. Added Curriculum Authorization statement to page 2 and updated contact information.

MODULE 2 – INTRODUCTION TO 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS

PRIMER FOR 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS INSTRUCTORS



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Introduction

The 4-H Shooting Sports Program reaches thousands of youth annually. They are drawn to the program through interest or curiosity in the safe and responsible use of archery equipment, firearms, and participatory living history. The 4-H Shooting Sports Program promotes and enhances life competencies that make a community's youngest citizens open to challenge and discovery, feel they have a sense of purpose, affirm the importance of something greater than themselves, accept personal responsibility, feel positive and optimistic, and be able to set and achieve realistic goals.

Overview of what will be covered in this module:

1. National 4-H Shooting Sports Goal & Objectives
2. What is 4-H Shooting Sports
3. National Structure & Guidance
4. State Program & Workshops Fundamentals
5. What Makes 4-H Shooting Sports Unique



Goal of 4-H Shooting Sports¹

4-H Shooting Sports provides the high-quality programming necessary for Positive Youth Development by engaging youth in the safe, responsible use of firearms and archery equipment, in a variety of settings, through comprehensive education, life-long recreation, and healthy competition.

National 4-H Shooting Sports Objectives¹

To enable youth to:

1. Find and explore passions and interests
2. Engage in an effective 4-H program setting
3. Develop positive relationships with adults, youth, and peers
4. Explore a vast array of 4-H educational, recreational and competitive activities
5. Thrive in multiple settings
6. Enhance developmental and long-term outcomes
7. Practice safe and responsible use of firearms and archery equipment, enhancing existing shooting, conservation and hunter education programs
8. Explore the three National 4-H Mission Mandates (STEM, Healthy Living, Civic Engagement)
9. Model safety, sportsmanship and ethical behavior
10. Strengthen knowledge and life skills

History of 4-H Shooting Sports²

Initially founded by Texas State 4-H Director, Tom Davidson, in 1980, shooting sports is among the fastest growing 4-H projects throughout the United States. Each year, nearly 500,000 youth engage in dynamic hands-on learning experiences, under the guidance of 20,000+ authorized adult 4-H volunteer instructors.

As safety is our foremost concern, each locally certified instructor must successfully complete 12 to 15 hours of in-depth instruction for each discipline they will be teaching. Youth must typically be ages 8 to 18 to participate; 4-H Clover/Cloverbud members are not eligible for shooting sports (consult the local Extension office regarding your state's age specifications).

All 4-H programs (including shooting sports) are administered by the respective State 4-H Program director, with county/parish Extension 4-H Educators responsible for program leadership and management at the local level. While 4-H strives to be inclusive of all, the opportunity to participate is a privilege – not a right; actions or behaviors that could jeopardize the safety of others are grounds for removal.

National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee³

This nationally chartered organization provides continuity in addressing the diverse array of potential audiences and opportunities. Committee members represent the north central, northeast, southern, and western regions. Members serve staggered three-year terms, with current representation from State 4-H Program Leaders plus 1862 and 1890 land-grant universities.

It provides nationwide leadership for curriculum development, instructor training & certification, image enhancement, program oversight, and overall continuity within 4-H Shooting Sports. Two documents that everyone (youth, parents, instructors, Extension personnel, etc.) need to know are:

Minimum Standards⁴

Provides critical information/requirements regarding instructor and youth specifications, curriculum, training expectations, equipment, targets and risk management.

Best Management Practices⁴

Provide reasonable and prudent program management and safety guidelines regarding appropriate attire, inventory control, ammunition, plus the storage and transport of equipment.

You will learn more about these two important documents during the Risk Management section.

4-H Shooting Sports Disciplines

There are currently eight approved discipline (or project) areas available:

1. Archery
2. Coordinator
3. Hunting/Outdoor Skills
4. Muzzleloading
5. Pistol
6. Rifle
7. Shotgun
8. Western Heritage



Instructor Certification Levels⁵

Within the 4-H Shooting Sports program, there are three levels of available certification. Besides completing the specific discipline certification requirements for each discipline they will be teaching, all instructors must meet all their respective state's requirements to serve as a certified 4-H volunteer.

Level 1

Upon annual acceptance as a certified 4-H volunteer and successful completion of 12-15 hours of discipline-specific instruction, these individuals are able to teach youth at the local level within that discipline topic. If they wish to teach multiple disciplines, they must gain certification in each area. These individuals are not authorized to train or certify other adult instructors.

Level 2

Instructors who have demonstrated proficiency at Level 1, may contact their State 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinator requesting permission to attend a national Level 2 training.

If approved and upon successful completion of that 40-hour discipline specific workshop, they may return to teach prospective instructors at state Level 1 trainings. Those attending a Level 2 training are expected to provide at least one Level 1 training annually for the next three years.

Level 3

Outstanding Level 2 instructors may apply to serve as an apprentice instructor at a nationally-sanctioned Level 2 training. Those current Level 3 instructors present will closely evaluate the candidate's knowledge and teaching abilities to determine if they should be advanced to Level 3 status – and thus qualify to serve as a primary instructor at future national trainings.

State 4-H Shooting Sports Committees

Many state 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinators, draw upon the experience and expertise of local instructors and resources to guide their respective state program; frequently enlisting Level 2 or 3 volunteers. They often include representation from each of the discipline areas offered within their state.

Committee members can share valuable input, strengthen communication and often assist in conducting state-level activities and events. They also aid in recruiting new instructors, which ultimately helps to expand the 4-H Shooting Sports program to more youth.



Why Level 1 Workshops?⁶

For some, especially those with other experience/credentials, this is the most commonly asked question. While we value these skills, they often center around performance/tactical knowledge – not in how to effectively work with and teach youth. Therein, lies a significant difference.

Within 4-H, our focus is on safety and Positive Youth Development. We have vast experience in teaching adults how to teach youth, along with an extensive network of training and youth development resources that most organizations do not have. Through 4-H we also strive to integrate STEM and experiential/hands-on learning experiences to develop critical life skills.

In addition, Level 1 workshops help clarify the role, responsibilities and expectations of instructors; which are essential to achieve peak performance. Many land-grant universities also extend liability coverage to their 4-H volunteers, provided they operate within the scope of their assigned duties. Therefore, for their personal protection, it is vital that 4-H Shooting Sports instructors clearly understand what they can and cannot do.

Level 1 Workshop Fundamentals

While potential instructors will encounter a substantial amount of information regarding both youth and discipline subject matter, these are six fundamental topics that should be addressed:

1. Safety & Risk Management
2. First Shot Fundamentals
3. 4-H Volunteer Training
4. Teaching Adults to Teach Kids
5. Developing Life Skills
6. Positive Youth Development

Each of these topics will be addressed in greater detail as you progress through the youth development/ risk management portion of this training; whether it be in-person, or via modules 3 through 4 of the 4-H Shooting Sports eLearning series which is available online.

4-H Shooting Sports Priority Pyramid⁶

This pyramid illustrates our three program priorities and the degree of emphasis needed to ensure an effective 4-H Shooting Sports program. While competition appears at the top, it comprises a relatively small portion of the pyramid and is not our primary emphasis.

Recreation occupies a much larger portion of our pyramid. It provides the hook that keeps youth coming back – if it's not fun, youth will go somewhere else that is. This also supports the concept of strengthening families, by uniting parents and youth around a common interest.

Rightfully, education provides the foundation for 4-H Shooting Sports. While opportunities exist for Positive Youth Development and acquisition of Life Skills at all three level, our priorities must be anchored in education. Otherwise, we could easily lose the support of our land-grant universities, and thus our entire 4-H Shooting Sports program.



Words Have Meaning⁶

What do these items have in common?



Do you see tools? Do you see weapons? Do you see both? The reality is that these are all tools used within various 4-H projects. They can only change, based on the intent of the person using them. When used in a positive, productive manner, they're tools. If intentionally used to harm another, each item could become a weapon. So why does that matter?

Some people believe that 4-H should not be teaching youth about the use of firearms and archery equipment. They believe that with knowledge comes the potential these items could be misused. The manner in which we express ourselves to others when talking about the 4-H Shooting Sports program can have a profound effect.

If instructors, members or even parents refer to firearms as weapons, we only further reinforce a negative perception of 4-H Shooting Sports. We collectively need to eliminate the “W-word” from our vocabulary when working with or discussing the 4-H Shooting Sports program with others.

*For a more in-depth understanding of how “Words have Meaning” and implications for 4-H Shooting Sports programs, see **The 2nd Amendment, Common Sense and Words Have Meaning!** Narrated power point found on National 4-H Shooting Sports website.*

What Makes 4-H Shooting Sports Unique?

While many organizations offer extensive subject-matter or tactical training and certification, 4-H Shooting Sports focuses on the fundamentals of Positive Youth Development.

Our programs are designed to create a supportive environment and foster appropriate youth/adult partnerships where youth can develop critical life skills and thrive. Incorporating STEM activities enable youth to discover the “why” and “how” related to 4-H Shooting Sports mechanics – enhancing their educational experience. Youth recognize personal growth through active civic engagement – giving back to their communities.

Yes, we encourage youth to gain proficiency (To Make the Best Better); however there is one vital concept we trust that all 4-H Shooting Sports instructors understand and model.

We don't focus on making champion shooters, we focus on developing champion kids.

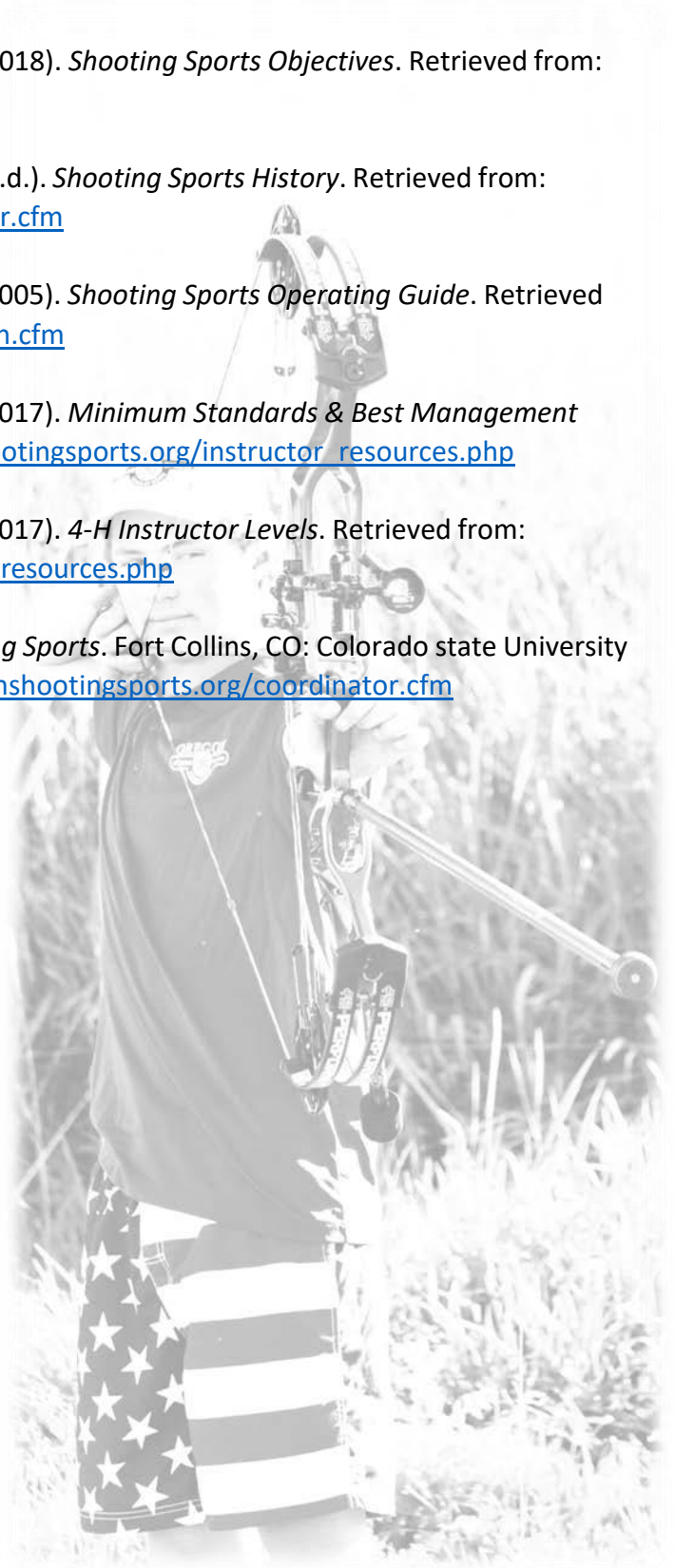
What Makes 4-H Shooting Sports Unique?

The following chart identifies the focus and outcomes of programs and services provided by Hunter Education, NRA Range Officer, Law Enforcement, Military (Army Marksmanship), and 4-H.

Program	Focus/Outcome
Hunter Education	Hunter education strives to instill responsibility, improve skills and knowledge, and encourage the involvement of beginner and veteran hunters.
NRA Range Officer	NRA Range Safety Officers are people who possess the knowledge, skills, and attitude essential to organizing, conducting, and supervising safe shooting activities and range operations.
Law Enforcement	The law enforcement firearm instructor's job is to teach officers how to be safe, effective, and timely in the use of their firearms and tactics, and to win the lethal encounter. Our programs provide the hands-on training to help you teach your officers to win.
Military	To use a weapon in combat.
4-H Youth Development	The National 4-H Shooting Sports Program helps youth transition into adulthood by helping them develop in areas of citizenship, leadership, and life skills, through experiential learning with a caring adult volunteer. The volunteers use firearms and archery equipment as the tools to reach these outcomes.

References

1. National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee. (2018). *Shooting Sports Objectives*. Retrieved from: National Committee Minutes January 2018.
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2025 Changes to Module 2 Primer

1. Added Curriculum Authorization statement to page 12 and updated contact information.

MODULE 3 – CREATING AND IMPLEMENTING A HIGH-QUALITY PROGRAM

PRIMER FOR 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS INSTRUCTORS



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Introduction

Volunteers are an important part of what we do, and how we do it.

Across the nation, 4-H Youth Development relies on the passion and generosity of nearly 500,000 volunteers to fulfill the educational goals of the program.

It is important to understand that 4-H is not simply an activity provider but rather a Youth Development program that utilizes research-based information and best practices in positive youth development to design and conduct our 4-H educational program. 4-H Volunteers are volunteer educators for the Land Grant University system.

Overview of what will be covered in this module:

1. What is Positive Youth Development?
2. Creating a High-Quality Program
3. Elements of a quality program setting
4. Solid Teaching Principles
5. Strategies for Effective Teaching
6. Ages and Stages of Youth Development
7. Art of Teaching Kids



Section 1: 4-H and Positive Youth Development¹

4-H is a global network of youth organizations whose mission is "engaging youth to reach their fullest potential while advancing the field of youth development."



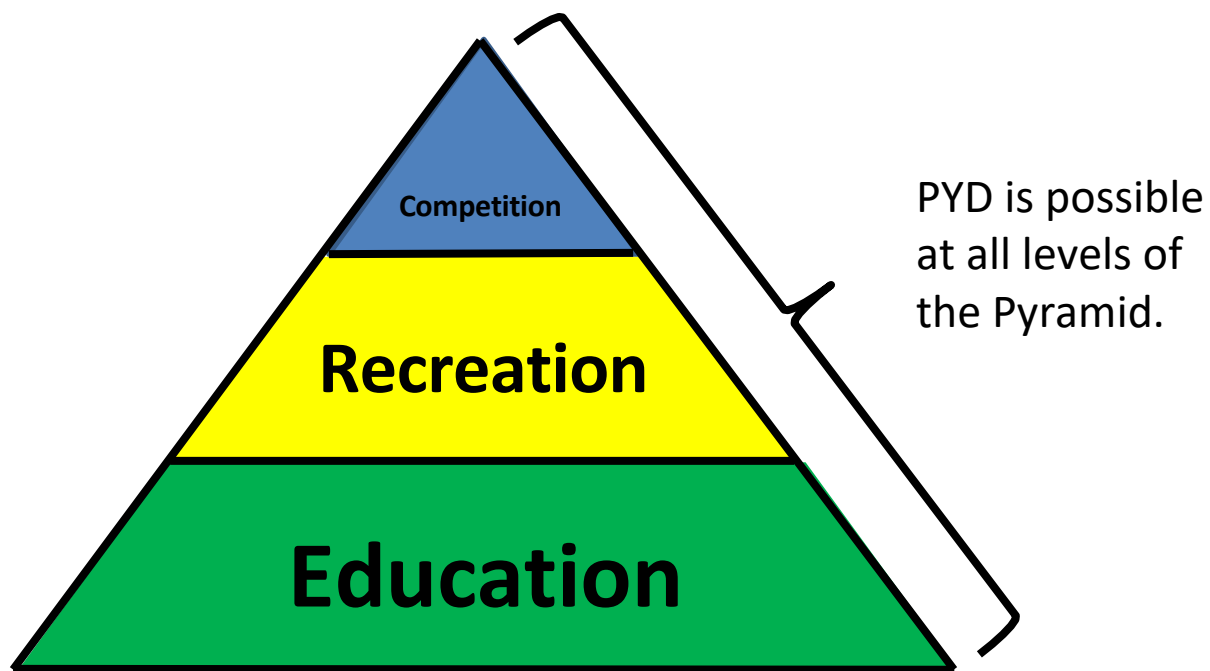
Positive Youth Development is...²

1. **Intentional,**
2. **Pro-social approach** engaging youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families,
3. **Productive and constructive,**
4. **Focused on youths' strengths,**
5. **Promoting positive outcomes** for young people by:
 - a. **providing opportunities,**
 - b. **fostering positive relationships,** and
 - c. **providing the supports** to build youth leadership skills.

4-H Shooting Sports Priority Pyramid³

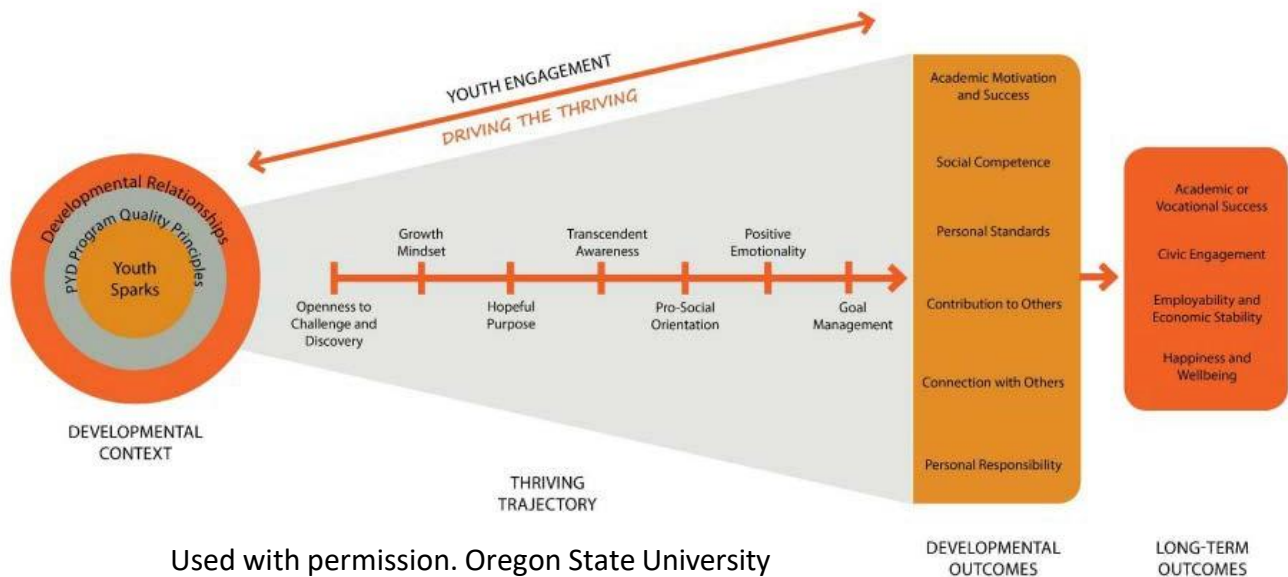
The 4-H Shooting Sports Program engages youth through comprehensive education, life-long recreation, and healthy competition.

This means each level of the Priority Pyramid plays an integral role in Positive Youth Development. What you do at the club level to integrate education, recreation, and competition has a significant impact on youth as they mature from early childhood and transition into adulthood.



Section 2: Creating a High-Quality Program (Developmental Context)

The 4-H Thriving Model



Developmental Context

The above 4-H Thriving Model is the first predictive model to explain how Positive Youth Development works within the context of the 4-H program. Note the 4-H Thriving Model⁴ has four sequential sections: **Developmental Context**, **Thriving Trajectory**, **Developmental Outcomes**, and **Long-Term Outcomes**. Developmental Context is the piece of the model a volunteer has the most influence over. The Developmental Context contains the components of a High Quality 4-H program or club. This is where the good things happen. When Developmental Context is done right, youth will thrive and thriving youth will achieve developmental and long-term outcomes.

Developmental Context is the piece of the model a volunteer has the most influence over. The Developmental Context contains the components of a High Quality 4-H program or club. This is where the good things happen. When Developmental Context is done right, youth will thrive and thriving youth will achieve developmental and long-term outcomes.

Up next is a closer look at some of the components within Developmental Context.

<https://health.oregonstate.edu/sites/health.oregonstate.edu/files/thriving-model/pdf/2018-thriving-model-summary-booklet.pdf>

Creating a High-Quality Program

Thriving Model - Developmental Context⁴

4-H Programs done well help youth thrive by...



There are three components of the Developmental Context of a quality 4-H Youth Development Program. Think of Developmental Context as the setting or makeup of a 4-H club or program. A high quality 4-H Program includes: Opportunities for youth to find or foster their SPARK, a focus on creating a sense of BELONGING for youth, and the cultivation of DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS with adults.

More information about the 4-H Thriving Model can be found at:

<https://health.oregonstate.edu/sites/health.oregonstate.edu/files/thriving-model/pdf/2018-thriving-model-summary-booklet.pdf>

Creating a High-Quality Program

Encouraging Youth Engagement



- **Engaging youth** with sufficient program dosage, intensity and duration

The last piece of creating a quality program is encouraging youth engagement. “4-H has its greatest impact on positive youth development when youth are fully engaged in the program, especially when youth participate for multiple years. Youth should be encouraged to participate in 4-H actively and regularly, as well as participate in extended 4-H learning opportunities at the local, state, national, and even international level’.⁵

Engagement includes the Duration, Intensity and Breadth of the experience for the 4-H member.

Research shows that intentionally providing the Developmental Context of a High Quality Program and Encouraging Youth Engagement in 4-H programs will set youth on the Thriving Trajectory that ultimately leads to both positive Developmental and Long-Term Outcomes that benefit youth in their transition to adulthood.

More information about the 4-H Thriving Model can be found at:

<https://health.oregonstate.edu/sites/health.oregonstate.edu/files/thriving-model/pdf/2018-thriving-model-summary-booklet.pdf>

Section 3: Solid Teaching Principles and Strategies

Over time, solid teaching principles have been developed to help educators engage the audience, deliver an impactful message, and promote a high quality program. This section will illustrate how these principles work within the Developmental Context of the 4-H Program.



- Providing a place for youth to explore their interests and passions – their **sparks!**

First Shot Fundamentals



Specific to Shooting Sports, but applicable in all projects areas, is the concept of First Shot Fundamentals. Learn by Doing is an important concept in 4-H. In fact, it is the 4-H slogan. Without the experience and knowledge acquired by doing a particular task, it is very hard to understand and comprehend what the educator is teaching. Put another way, if the student has never held or fired a pistol, it is really difficult for them to understand the intricacies of grip, stance, breath control, sight picture, and sight alignment. To assist the student in the learning process 4-H Shooting Sports educators practice First Shot Fundamentals. First Shot Fundamentals simply recognizing the value of getting youth to the line quickly, and safely, to fire successful first shots. Once a youth has successfully fired a shot or two they have a much better comprehension of what the firearm feels like in their hand, how it will behave once fired, and what it feels like to try to align the sights or control breathing. The practice of First Shot Fundamentals will potentially allow youth to find their spark, and more importantly make sure that the spark isn't prematurely extinguished by hours of tedious rote learning that isn't applicable without the experience of having fired shots in the beginning.

Solid Teaching Principles and Strategies

Program Quality

- Offering programs that follow youth program quality principles with a focus on youth **belonging**

Rules, Policies and Procedures



Program Quality extends beyond just Belonging and how 4-H programs are planned and led. Leaders will be often called upon to act as an authority. A leader's knowledge of 4-H Club Rules, 4-H Shooting Sports Contest Rules, and 4-H Policies and Procedures is important. Whether being asked by a youth member, a parent or the media, it is important that leaders are able to give clear, precise and accurate answers. Take the time to learn about the local 4-H Program, and the applicable rules, policies and procedures.

It's OK not to know all the answers. It's always better for volunteers to say "I don't know but I will find the answer." Don't ever espouse something as fact if the facts are not known. People generally allow leaders to find the right answer, and tolerate that much better than giving an answer that later proves to be wrong.

Program Quality

- Offering programs that follow youth program quality principles with a focus on youth **belonging**



Appearance

Most 4-H programs have a dress code for 4-H youth. Leaders should always adhere to the same dress code as the youth, and be ready to explain why the way 4-H'ers dress is important – Safety and Professionalism are but two reasons to dress the part when participating in a 4-H activity.

Solid Teaching Principles and Strategies

Program
Quality

- Offering programs that follow youth program quality principles with a focus on youth **belonging**

Behavior and Sportsmanship



Program Quality also promotes Positive Social Norms including good behavior and sportsmanship. It is easy, especially in the heat of competition, to forget the reason for being involved in the 4-H Program. Adults want 4-H youth to perform well and be successful. But successful outcomes in the program are often much, more subtle than a champion ribbon or a state medallion. A youth that models good behavior in the face of a disappointment or demonstrates great sportsmanship are much more meaningful long term behaviors gained in the 4-H Youth Development Program.

Youth learn those behaviors and traits from the people that they look up to, or aspire to be like. And, likely that person will be the leader! Remember, the youth are watching. Always model good behavior, and emphasize the importance of Sportsmanship.

Program
Quality

- Offering programs that follow youth program quality principles with a focus on youth **belonging**

Hands-on Technique



From the beginning 4-H has recognized the benefit of Hands-On or Experiential Learning. Learning based on real-life situations where youth are interacting with and actively engaged in the experience. The 4-H Slogan is, "Learn by Doing" and 4-H Educators value and adhere to that practice. Try to incorporate the use the Hands-On approach to learning.

However, it is important to remember that education that takes place in real-life situations has huge impact on the youth, but also comes with some inherent risk. One of the ways to manage risk when working with youth is by using appropriate "Hands-on" technique. Managing that risk, is part of module 4.

Solid Teaching Principles and Strategies

Sparks

- Providing a place for youth to explore their interests and passions – their **sparks!**

Experiential Learning⁶

Learn by Doing has long been the process of 4-H Youth Development – in fact, as mentioned previously, it is our slogan.

Youth (and adults) often learn best by hands-on activities that engage them in the learning process. For this reason, leaders employ the Experiential Learning Process whenever possible.

Experiential Learning is really quite simple. Start with any hands-on activity. Do the activity, reflect on what was done, then apply that learning to real-life situations. Do, Reflect, Apply.

For example, when teaching kids about sight alignment, an instructor could stand in front of them and lecture about how to properly align the sights of a firearm. Or, the Instructor could use the Experiential Learning Process. Use Experiential Learning to conduct a hands-on activity – maybe having teams make large front and rear sights out of cardboard, then demonstrate how to properly align them – up and down, left and right (This is the DO part of Experiential Learning). Once youth have mastered aligning the sights, REFLECT on what was learned or why that is important – If sights aren't properly or consistently aligned, it is not possible to hit the same place twice except by accident. Then APPLY that learning by doing an exercise like the "Triangulation" exercise that can be found in the 4-H Shooting Sports Pistol or Rifle curriculum.

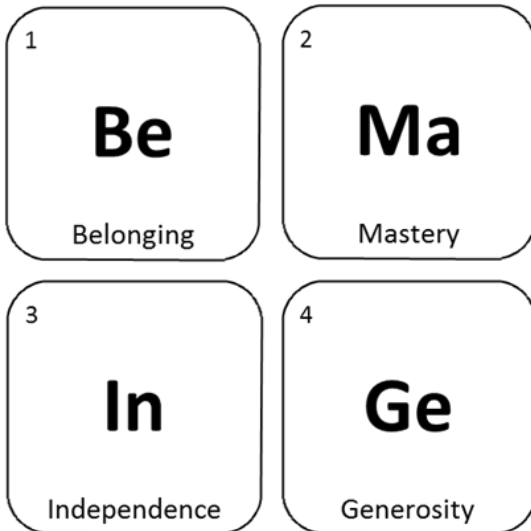
Do, Reflect, then Apply will create a circle of mutually reinforcing activities that will help the 4-H members to retain and perform the required steps to be successful.



Solid Teaching Principles and Strategies



- Providing a place for youth to explore their interests and passions – their **sparks!**



With the introduction of the 4-H Thriving Model⁴ of positive youth development, many of you may be wondering the whereabouts of the Essential Elements⁷ of Youth Development and Targeting Life Skills Wheel⁸ – two other models that have been used extensively in 4-H for the past few decades.

These two models still have value in the 4-H program. Many experienced leaders may recognize Opportunities to Belong (the emphasis of Program Quality) as one of the Essential Elements of Positive Youth Development. It is still critically important to create a space for Belonging, Mastery, Independence and Generosity into a 4-H Project. Likewise, youth in a well run program are constantly honing skills that are found in the Targeting Life Skills Wheel and gaining new 21st century competencies. This wheel reminds us of the way in which those skills and competencies are connected.

We hope youth gain these skills as a result of their engagement in 4-H.

Solid Teaching Principles and Strategies



- Emphasizing **developmental relationships** with adults who are caring, challenge growth, and share power

Teaching for Early Success

Teaching for early success is important in the promotion of Developmental Relationships. Quality education allows student to feel successful in their new knowledge and skills and uses confidence and success as building blocks to achieve increasingly difficult goals. Recognizing and rewarding early successes will allow youth to gain the confidence needed to master increasingly difficult tasks and will challenge the growth of 4-H members



- Emphasizing **developmental relationships** with adults who are caring, challenge growth, and share power

Modeling Behavior

4-H members are like sponges that are soaking up information on the way adults behave, dress, talk and act. 4-H leaders are role models for young people. What is said and done, actions, and even the things posted on social media sites, will be modeled by youth.

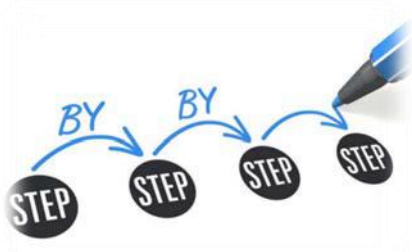


4-H instructors must always be professional in their actions, and interactions with 4-H members and the community. Be a positive influence on these young peoples' lives.



- **Engaging youth** with sufficient program dosage, intensity and duration

Concise Step-by-Step Instruction



By and large, educators are passionate about the subject they teach and they generally have a huge wealth of knowledge about that subject. Always remember, that it is easy to overwhelm your students. Always practice concise, step-by-step instruction – just enough information when the student needs to know it. Give the student time to understand, learn and practice the simple steps before moving onto new, more difficult techniques.

Ages and Stages of Youth Development⁹



- Emphasizing **developmental relationships** with adults who are caring, challenge growth, and share power

Early Childhood, 5-8 years of age-

Children of this age are learning to master physical skills by using large muscle groups for running, jumping and climbing. They are just beginning to develop their fine motor skills like tying their shoes. When working with this age group in relation to their physical development, focus on activities that encourage the use of large motor skills more than fine motor skills.

Socially these children are learning to develop relationships and may have several best friends. They can fight with each other, but they get over those fights quickly.

Emotionally these children are very focused on themselves, they have a hard time understanding someone else's point of view.

Intellectually these youth base their thought in the concrete ideas, not abstracts.

Needless to say, for a variety of reasons, don't allow these youngest youth to participate in 4-H Shooting Sports Programs. Check with your local Extension Agent for your state's shooting sports age requirements.



Ages and Stages of Youth Development



- Emphasizing **developmental relationships** with adults who are caring, challenge growth, and share power

Middle Childhood, 9-11 years of age-

This age group is active they cannot sit still easily or for long periods of time. Girls will mature before boys. Active learning experiences are essential.

Socially, children of this age want to be with their own sex, boys with boys, girls with girls – after all, boys have cooties!

Emotionally they want everything to be fair or equal, and they often judge things in absolutes with very little middle ground. An idea is either wonderful, or disgusting.

Intellectually, this group is easily motivated and eager to try new things – however they may lose interest quickly too. Simple, short lessons are importation for this age group, keep the learning experiences brief. Provide a variety of learning experiences and activities that ensure success for each child.



Ages and Stages of Youth Development



- Emphasizing **developmental relationships** with adults who are caring, challenge growth, and share power

Early Adolescence, 12-14 years of age-

Children between ages 12 to 14 are experiencing many physical changes. They are entering puberty, boys' voices are changing. Boys are experiencing growing spurts in which they overtake the girls in stature. Both boys and girls are concerned about their body image. When working with this age group, be sensitive to their feelings and avoid comments that criticize or compare youth physically. Watch for youth who are making fun of others and put a stop to it, to avoid hurt feelings.

Socially, children at this age prefer activities that include both boys and girls. They are more interested in what their peers say than their parent's advice. They are becoming more opinionated and independent and tend to reject solutions from adults because they feel their solution is better. It is important to select activities they can do with their peers. They are also ready to begin working on individual goals they want to achieve, instead of just focusing on group goals.



Children at this age still tend to compare themselves to others. They are sometimes characterized as the drama kings or queens. Their emotions are all over the place—one minute happy and having a great time, the next, the world is against them. Be careful not to embarrass or criticize these children. Help them explore their identity, values and beliefs by providing activities that challenge their thinking in these areas. Let these early teens assume responsibility for planning events and activities and set expectations that they follow through with their duties.

The intellectual development of 12 to 14-year olds is expanding to include more abstract thinking. They are beginning to understand cause and effect and they are ready for more in-depth, and long-term experiences. When working with this age group on their intellectual development, begin to give them real-life problems to solve. Let them make decisions and evaluate the results, so that they can learn from mistakes and celebrate achievements. This age group will thrive with service-learning projects where they can identify an area of need and put a total plan together to address that need.

Ages and Stages of Youth Development



- Emphasizing **developmental relationships** with adults who are caring, challenge growth, and share power

Teens, 15-18 years of age-

Typically, teenagers are approaching maturity with their physical development and are concerned frequently about their body image. Acne, weight, physical activity, and other issues are concerns to them. They are impressionable where physical appearance is concerned and can be easily misguided by advertising and the emphasis our society places on physical appearance. While working with teens, it is important to avoid comments criticizing their appearance or implying that their physical appearance is related to who they are inside or their success and happiness.

In their social development, 15 to 18-year olds desire status among their peer group. Although they want to be part of a group, they also want to be recognized as individuals. They are interested in coeducational activities and dating. They are learning how to make commitments and follow through. Encourage their social development by involving them in planning their own programs and holding them accountable for the success or failure of their plans. Emphasize personal development and leadership skills with teens.

Their emotional characteristics center around respect, developing confidence and developing independence. They are looking for ways to express their uniqueness but still want approval from their peers. They are also developing their own set of values and beliefs. As teens mature, encourage their emotional development by letting them assume more responsibility. Continue to challenge their thinking on identity, values, and beliefs. Encourage them to work in youth/adult partnerships to achieve common goals.

Some intellectual characteristics of the 15 to 18-year-old age group include mastery of abstract thinking and their ability to imagine how their behavior can impact the future. They like to show others what they have learned. This age group does not do well with meaningless activities or things that just take up time. To keep teens engaged intellectually, provide real life problems for them to solve. Career exploration is important as this is when they are thinking about whether they will go to college, what career they will pursue, and other important decisions.



Section 5: The Art of Teaching Kids¹¹

The Art of Teaching Kids is a publication put together by Dr. Jeff Goodwin in 2000 while he was the State 4-H Specialist University of Idaho and also Member of the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee.

The Art of Teaching Kids is a compilation of simple, time-tested strategies, that are easy to understand and employ in daily activities with 4-H Youth. Each strategy comes with a representative picture to help visual learners remember the strategy. Often these graphics are posted on large format paper around the room so they can be referred to when reinforcing a topic or lesson. Try to remember to use some of these in programming efforts and pay attention to the successes.



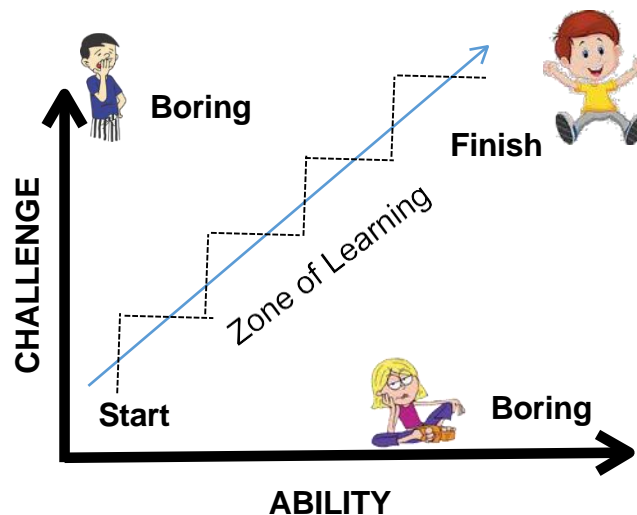
- Emphasizing **developmental relationships** with adults who are caring, challenge growth, and share power

Ability Balanced with Challenge – ABC's¹⁰

The model works like this. Start with a child who is capable of only handling a small challenge that is within their low ability level. They are at the lower left quadrant of the model.

To move this youngster through the zone of learning to a higher level of knowledge and capability, first challenge them just a bit—enough to make them slightly uncomfortable, then let them practice until they improve their skills and are back in their comfort zone---the zone of learning. Then let them experience a higher challenge, then let their ability catch back up. Repeat this sequence until they are ratcheted up to having the ability to handle challenging situations.

The result looks like a staircase of small successes that put the child on a thriving trajectory and give them the ability to handle increasingly challenging situations.



The Art of Teaching Kids

Program
Quality

- Offering programs that follow youth program quality principles with a focus on youth **belonging**



Focus on the Kids

This graphic expresses the need for leaders to focus on the kids. The kids are the leader's audience and should be the priority. It's easy for adult leaders to forget that the kids have fewer life experiences. It is easy to talk beyond their comprehension. It's important to always teach to the audience, not above them and to realize that the program is all about the youth.

Youth
Engagement

- **Engaging youth** with sufficient program dosage, intensity and duration

Teachable Moments

TM stands for "Teachable Moment."

The trademark of an effective educator is the ability to devise and utilize the teachable moment. To set up a teachable moment is actually like setting a trap, then springing the trap at the opportune moment. When the trap has been sprung, the student knows that they have been had, or in the case of education, they know what the point is as it is being made.

Educators must make the effort to both set the trap and spring it at the right moment. Teachable Moments don't just happen. Educators must be intentional about planning and setting those educational traps. More teaching means finding consistent places to set educational traps for maximized results.

TM

The Art of Teaching Kids



- **Engaging youth** with sufficient program dosage, intensity and duration

No No-Mistakes



This double negative is a reminder that it's OK for adults to make mistakes and allow kids to make mistakes as long as they are in a safe and controlled environment. If teaching someone to operate a chain saw, it's best not to let them let them screw up too badly.

The true life-long lessons that stick with youth are those in which youth have learned from their mistakes. Many times adults want to rescue kids from adversity. When that is done, young people are robbed of powerful learning experiences.

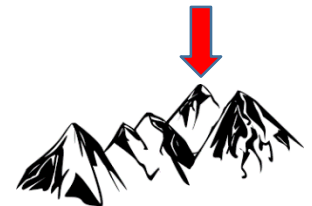


- **Engaging youth** with sufficient program dosage, intensity and duration

Leave them on a High Point

Leave them on a high point. Many times educators pull out their best educational tricks at the start of class. If the "best trick" is used in the first 10 minutes of the activity and the last 50 minutes are "Boring!," What will the kids remember on the way home? Of course they will remember the boring part. Conclude the activity with the "best trick." That's what will be remembered and that's what they will talk about on the way home. Leave them on a high point with a best trick and they will come back for more at the next educational event or activity – and they might even bring a friend!

Furthermore, recognize when the kid is in a good place to quit for the day. If a kid is struggling to hit the target, don't let them fail and send them home deflated. Set the stage for success. If that means moving closer to the target, or making the target bigger, do it! The minute they hit the target, congratulate the child and call it quits. Let that kid have some success to take home and remember.



The Art of Teaching Kids

Program
Quality

- Offering programs that follow youth program quality principles with a focus on youth **belonging**

Debrief

What does debrief have to do with teaching kids? Educators many times do a tremendous job of educating but then fail to stop and discuss what has just happened, and drive home their educational message in a good de-briefing session. De-Briefing is the second step in Experiential Learning, remember Do, Reflect, Apply. Too many times the plan is to set and spring the educational trap successfully, then let kids wander off without a thorough explanation of what just happened and why is it important. The good de-briefing session cements the educational event into the mind of the student so that they will never forget it.



Youth
Engagement

- **Engaging youth** with sufficient program dosage, intensity and duration

Fun

FUN!!!

Quality Educational Experiences for youth must incorporate Fun. Educational Experiences that don't incorporate fun will not be as effective as they could have been. And, if the educational event isn't fun there might be no one at the next scheduled event. Kids just want to have fun.

Youth-Adult
Relationships

- Emphasizing **developmental relationships** with adults who are caring, challenge growth, and share power

TSI
Tell me,
Show me,
Involve me!

TSI - Tell me, Show me, Involve me

This concept really goes back to the root of 4-H Youth Development and the premise that youth learn best when actively engaged in the learning process. The 4-H Slogan is "Learn By Doing." The Doing part is important. TSI, Learn by Doing, and Experiential Learning are different ways of saying the same thing.

The Art of Teaching Kids

Program
Quality

- Offering programs that follow youth program quality principles with a focus on youth **belonging**

Sneaky Preventative Education

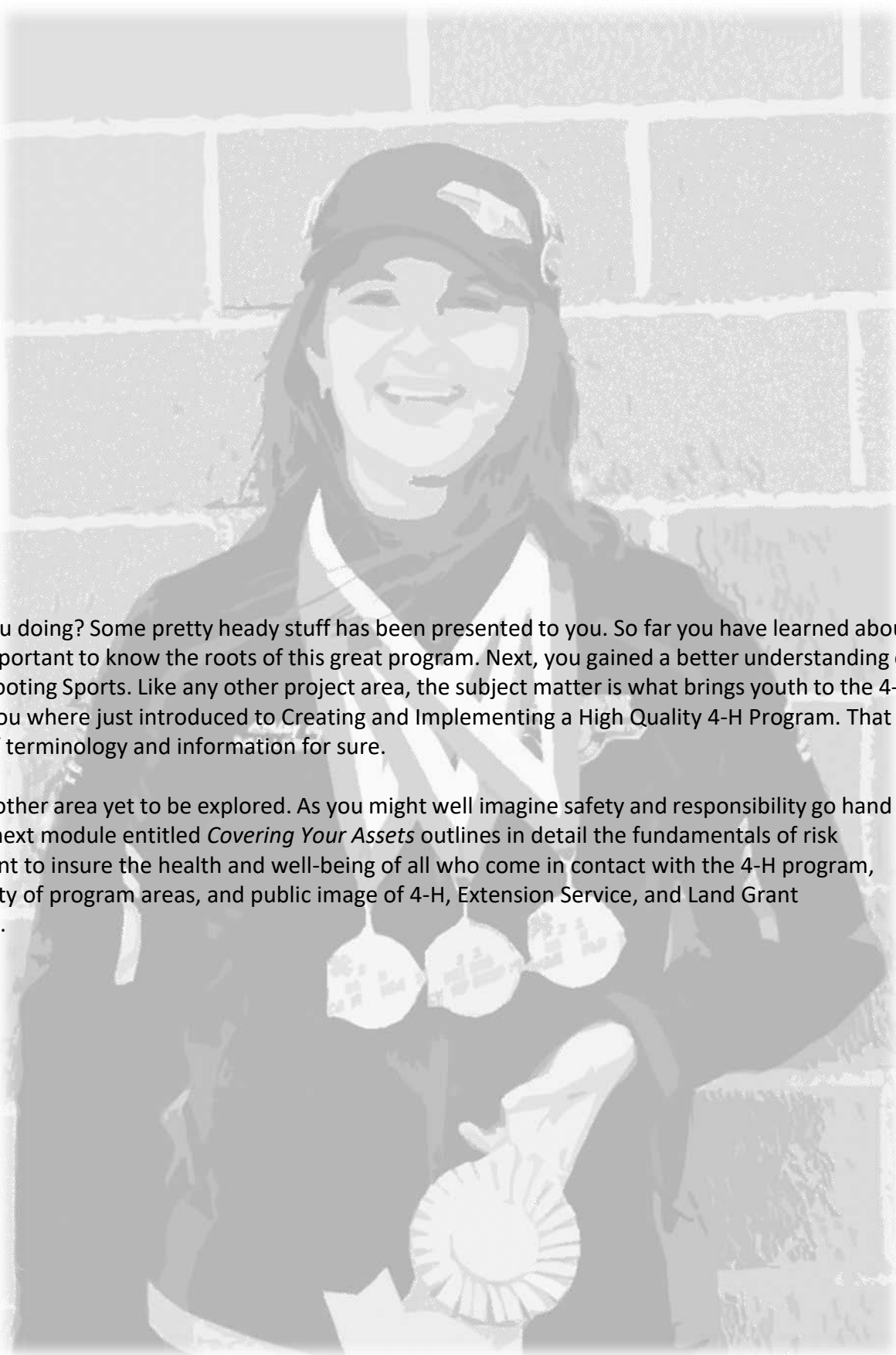
Dr. Ron Howard, one of the Godfathers of the National 4-H Shooting Sports Program says it like this...

“Very few young people are interested in a program overtly focused on coping, competencies and contributory skills. The concept of life skills development is neither attractive nor exciting. As a result, these elements are imbedded in hands-on, experiential learning in subject matter that is FUN. Leaders and coaches must understand their role in teaching life skills, but they must carefully coat the medicine of life skills education with the easily swallowed activity of shooting and related interests.”

In short, we don't always have to inform the youth exactly what we're doing, and why we're doing it. Yes, we involve them in the process. They give voice to the design of the program and share power. Much of the learning transferred is through the growth they've achieve and the skills they've acquired without even knowing it - not rote memorization. Make it fun and engage youth as active learners and leaders of their educational journey.



Conclusion



How are you doing? Some pretty heady stuff has been presented to you. So far you have learned about 4-H. It is important to know the roots of this great program. Next, you gained a better understanding of 4-H and Shooting Sports. Like any other project area, the subject matter is what brings youth to the 4-H program. You were just introduced to Creating and Implementing a High Quality 4-H Program. That was a lot of terminology and information for sure.

There is another area yet to be explored. As you might well imagine safety and responsibility go hand in hand. The next module entitled *Covering Your Assets* outlines in detail the fundamentals of risk management to insure the health and well-being of all who come in contact with the 4-H program, sustainability of program areas, and public image of 4-H, Extension Service, and Land Grant Universities.

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2025 Changes to Module 3 Primer

1. Added Curriculum Authorization statement to page 24 and updated contact information.

MODULE 4 – RISK MANAGEMENT: COVERING YOUR ASSETS

PRIMER FOR 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS INSTRUCTORS



**Promoting Positive Youth Development through
Comprehensive Education,
Life-Long Recreation, and
Healthy Competition**



National 4-H Shooting Sports



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2019
Sports Program

reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any recording, or any information and retrieval system, the 4-H Shooting Sports Program. Under no circumstances

Shooting Sports instructors who have successfully completed the state where they are enrolled as a certified instructor with appropriate training are not authorized to conduct a 4-H Shooting Sports Program nor are they authorized to lead any 4-H Shooting

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Introduction

On the Cover

The cover photo has a purpose. It reminds us that we regularly send a massive amount of lead and sharp pointy things down range. We must never forget the force, the power, and the deleterious potential of this activity in which half a million 4-H kids take part. Guiding 4-H members, parents, and other 4-H volunteer leaders through this process without injury or harm is your major responsibility as a 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor.

Overview of what will be covered in this module:

1. 4-H Members and Firearms: The Case for 4-H Shooting Sports
2. The National Minimum Standards for 4-H Shooting Sports
3. State Level Best Practices
4. Your Risk Management Plan
5. 4-H Shooting Sports Risk Management Model



4-H Members and Firearms: The Case for 4-H Shooting Sports¹



The Instructional Focus of 4-H Shooting Sports

1. Life Skill and Positive Youth Development (PYD)
2. Training Adults to Teach Kids
3. Teaching the First Shot
4. Safety
5. National 4-H Mission Mandates - Healthy Living, Citizenship, STEM



Safety Record of 4-H Shooting Sports²

1. Reach 338,621 4-H age youth per year (2014)
2. About half in short-term experiences, i.e. camps or fair
3. About half in long term community club experiences
4. The program began in 1980
5. More than 6 million youth have been reached
6. Four documented injuries requiring emergency medical attention (1980-2013)

Youth Sports Injury Data

Sport	2014 Total Annual Participation	Number of Injuries Annually (2013)	Injury Rate
Football	5,286,000	354,300	6.7%
Wrestling	805,000	38,900	4.8%
Basketball	9,694,000	359,300	3.7%
Softball	2,622,000	53,000	2.0%
Soccer	9,828,000	171,000	1.7%
Baseball	6,711,000	106,100	1.6%
Hockey	743,000	11,200	1.4%
Gymnastics	2,809,000	33,000	1.1%
4-H Shooting Sports	338,621*	0.12**	Less than 0.00004%

* 2014 enrollment

** 4 injuries from 1980 – 2013 * 6 Injuries in 38 Years

Youth Sports Injury Comparison



1. Soccer vs 4-H Shooting Sports
 - 42,500 times more likely to be injured
2. Football vs 4-H Shooting Sports
 - 167,500 times more likely to be injured
3. 4-H Shooting Sports is one of the safest activities for youth

Rationale for Introducing Youth to Firearms



1. Teach safe and responsible use of firearms
2. Significant adults in the life of a young person
3. Opportunity for quality family involvement
4. Positive peer groups for kids
5. Respect the power of firearms and archery equipment
6. Education that emphasizes respect of other people

The Goal of 4-H Shooting Sports

The goal is not to claim Olympic gold medals.....

But to create “Gold Medal” kids!

Suggested Reading:

Goodwin, J., White, D. J., & Sandlin, M. R. R. (2019). 4-H Members and Firearms: The Case for 4-H Shooting Sports. *Journal of Extension*, 57(1), Article 1COM2. Available at: from <https://joe.org/joe/2019february/comm2.php>

National 4-H Shooting Sports Minimum Standards³



Developed by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee, Approved and Supported by the 4-H National Headquarters, These Items are Non-negotiable for State 4-H Shooting Sports Programs.

1. The **National 4-H Shooting Sports Curriculum** is the established adult teaching curriculum for training adults to teach youth the shooting sports within the 4-H program.
2. All instructors accept and abide by the **National 4-H Shooting Sports Code of Ethics**.
3. State, County, and Club level 4-H Shooting Sports Programs should have a **written risk management plan** which includes items such as emergency response and preparedness, insurance, safe storage of firearms and ammunition, etc.
4. All certified 4-H shooting sports instructors are a **minimum of 21 years of age** and have completed a state level 4-H shooting sports workshop in the specific discipline they will be teaching.
5. State level 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor certification workshops must provide a minimum of **twelve (12) hours of instruction**; including a minimum of nine (9) hours instruction in each specific discipline and a minimum of three (3) hours instruction in teaching positive youth development, life skills, and risk management.
6. To **maintain certification** as a 4-H shooting sports Level I or Level II instructor, one must teach or assist in instruction within the discipline certified at least once every three (3) years. In addition: Level 1 Instructors – must be re-certified a minimum of every seven (7) years. Re-certification could include any of the following, as determined by the State Coordinator: Continuing education credits, Updates to curriculum or state standards/requirements, Refresher course on curriculum, Attend a Level 1 training, Other options. Level 2 Instructors – Must be re-certified after a major revision of the curriculum, as determined by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee, or at the determination of the State Coordinator. Re-certification could include: Attend a Level 2 training, Attend an update training hosted by a Level 3 Instructor or a Level, 2 Instructor certified using the revised curriculum. Level 3 Instructors – Must be re-appointed annually by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee.
7. Only **factory ammunition** is used at 4-H shooting sports competitive events.
8. **Regarding simulated combat sports (physical or virtual) including but not limited to, paintball guns, air-soft, laser guns, archery tag, eSports.** Pointing any type of gun including paintball guns, air-soft guns, laser guns, archery tag bows & arrows or sighting devices at any person or any humanoid shaped target is prohibited in any 4-H program activity.

National 4-H Shooting Sports Minimum Standards

9. Any firearm built or modified to give the impression of a modern military style firearm such as an AR or AK is not allowed in the 4-H Shooting Sports Program. Front pistol grips, heat shield/shroud, suppressors, and magazines extending more than 2 inches below the receiver are prohibited. Below are visual examples of firearms that would not be permitted.



10. **Reactive Targets** – Targets which make use of or are composed of 1) live ammunition, 2) explosive; flammable; chemical substances, or 3) pressurized containers are to never be used at any 4-H program activity.
11. **Cloverbud** age 4-H youth are not allowed to participate in ANY live-fire activity involving firearms, air rifles, air pistols, or archery equipment.
12. All 4-H Shooting Sports functions (events, meetings, club practices, etc.) which include the handling or use of firearms or archery equipment requires the **physical presence and constant supervision** of at least one adult 4-H Shooting Sports instructor who is currently certified in that respective discipline(.

National 4-H Shooting Sports Code of Ethics⁴



I will:

- ✓ Set a good example as a mentor and role model for 4-H Shooting sports youth and volunteers,
- ✓ Conduct myself and my 4-H Shooting Sports program in a professional and ethical manner,
- ✓ Strive to be knowledgeable of the like skills embodied in the 4-H Shooting Sports Program and positive youth development through adherence to those principles,
- ✓ Strive to be technically competent in the subject matter I teach, adhere to state and national 4-H shooting sports guidelines, curriculum, standards of safety, best practices and policies,
- ✓ I will respect the dignity of each individual participant and stakeholder in the 4-H shooting sports program.



National 4-H Shooting Sports – Best Practices³

The National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee, recognizing the diversity of the 4-H shooting sports programs within each state recommends the following Best Practices in the implementation of a state level 4-H Shooting Sports program:

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1. Eye protection - Adequate eye protection is required for all participants in Muzzle Loading, Pistol, Rifle, and Shotgun disciplines. This includes Hunting and Western Heritage live fire events. Such protection is strongly advised for archery events as well. Coaches or spectators on or near the firing lines are subject to the same requirements.
 2. Ear Protection: Adequate ear protection carrying an *OSHA Noise Reduction Rating (NRR) of at least 25 dB* is required for all participants in Muzzle Loading, Pistol, Rifle, and Shotgun disciplines. This includes Hunting and Western Heritage live fire events. *Noise Canceling devices without an OSHA NRR rating are not adequate as they are designed to make listening more enjoyable, not reducing the dB of sound entering the ear.* Coaches or spectators on or near firing lines are subject to the same requirements. In all disciplines, devices placed over, on, or into the ear are not allowed to receive wireless, communication, background noise or similar broadcasts that could interfere with range commands.
 3. Footwear – Participants in any shooting event or activity, while on the shooting line, are required to wear shoes that completely cover their feet, including soles. Examples of footwear that are not acceptable include, but are not limited to: sandals, clogs, flip-flops, slippers, house shoes, and bare feet.
 4. Lead Contamination – The National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee recognizes the potential dangers of lead contamination and includes ways to mitigate lead contamination into all 4-H Shooting Sports Training and Curriculum. The 4-H National Committee also suggests that states include ways to mitigate lead exposure into your specific State Plan including:
 - Wash up: Wash your hands, face, forearms, etc. with cold water after shooting, handling spent ammunition, cleaning guns, or reloading. Use an effective lead removal product, as standard soap and water may not be enough.
 - Change clothes and shoes: Change your clothes and shoes before leaving the range. Wash your range clothes separately from your other clothes.
 - Clean up properly: Use the right methods to clean the range, such as wet mopping or using a HEPA vacuum. Don't dry sweep, as this stirs up lead dust.
 - Don't eat, drink, or smoke: Never eat, drink, or smoke inside a firing range.
 - Shower: Shower at the end of the day after handling lead objects.

Lead can enter the body through inhalation or ingestion and can damage organs and cause health problems. Symptoms of lead poisoning include high blood pressure, joint and muscle pain, headaches, and abdominal pain. Seek medical attention if you suspect lead poisoning.

5. Inventory Control
 - Inventory list of equipment should be maintained by one individual in charge of equipment for the local group/county program/state program. A sign-out process will be used to record who/when/what/when returned.
 - Approved, current instructors, only, may sign out program equipment from inventory.
 - Extension staff responsible for the 4-H Shooting Sports program in the county/state should



also have access to all program equipment, the inventory list, and sign-out records.

- Equipment inventory should be audited at least annually (or more often if requested) by local and/or state Extension personnel responsible for 4-H Shooting Sports program. *The state Extension staff person responsible for 4-H Shooting Sports program has the ultimate authority to remove 4-H Shooting Sports program equipment from any 4-H Shooting Sports club or instructor based on lack of safety practices, inadequate storage and transportation safeguards, concerns about inventory control, inadequate emphasis on positive youth development, or other reasons based on professional judgment.*

6. Storage of Firearms & Muzzleloading Equipment

- All Firearms will be stored unloaded in a commercial firearm safe with an open bolt or open bore indicator when not in use.
- All gun safes should be secured in a locked storage area, following local statutory requirements, if applicable. If no local laws apply, suitable locations include local law enforcement department firearm storage, storage closet or room with limited access, etc.
- Keys and combinations should be available only to certified instructors, county coordinators, and state coordinators. Extension staff responsible for the 4-H Shooting Sports program in the county/state should also have access to all program equipment.

7. Storage of Air Guns

- Air guns will be stored in gun cases that can be locked and stored in a storage room accessible only to instructors, county coordinator and state coordinator.
- Keys to the storage area should only be available to instructors, county coordinator and state coordinator. Extension staff responsible for the 4-H Shooting Sports program in the county/state should also have access to all program equipment.

8. Storage of Archery Equipment

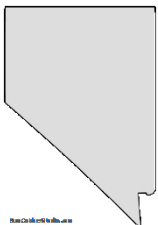
- Archery equipment will be stored in a locked closet or room accessible only to instructors, county coordinator or state coordinator.
- Doors should be double locked, and a key should only be available to instructors, county coordinator and state coordinator. Extension staff responsible for the 4-H Shooting Sports program in the county/state should also have access to all program equipment.

9. Ammunition

- All ammunition, shotgun shells, rifle shells, pistol shells, powder, caps, BB's, and pellets will be stored separately from the guns which use them. Access to the ammunition should have access limited: the instructors, county coordinator or state coordinator. Extension staff responsible for the 4-H Shooting Sports program in the county/state should also have access to all program equipment.
- Ammunition should be stored in a closet or room where there are at least two separate locks on the door.

10. Transportation of Equipment

- All applicable local, state, and federal laws are to be followed when transporting firearms, ammunition and other 4-H Shooting Sports program equipment and supplies. Only licensed individuals aged 18 or older are permitted to drive vehicles transporting 4-H Shooting Sports equipment.
- When transporting firearms, air guns, ammunition and muzzleloading guns, the transporter should have the guns in locked hard cases with gun locks on each gun (either a trigger style gun lock or a cable style gun lock).
- Equipment should be transported in such a way that the equipment cannot be seen from outside the vehicle. Some examples of concealment include transporting in the vehicle's trunk, in a locked trailer, beneath a pick-up truck bed topper, etc. The vehicle should not be left unattended when equipment is being transported.



11. Youth & Adult Participation

- A 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor has the right to refuse any participant from the shooting sports activity in the interest of safety for the participant and others in the program.
- Instructors are encouraged to identify strategies to accommodate youth / adults with disabilities.
- 4-H Shooting Sports Programs are open to all youth 8 years of age or older (as of Jan. 1 of the current year) without regard to race, color, sex, handicap, religion, age, or national origin. Each state Land Grant University determines 4-H maximum age eligibility. Note that age eligibility for National 4-H Shooting Sports Events is determined by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee and may be different than that of states. 4-H Clovers (age 5-7) are not eligible for any aspect of 4-H shooting sports programs as these are not age-appropriate activities.



The Risk Management Model and Legal Implications⁵

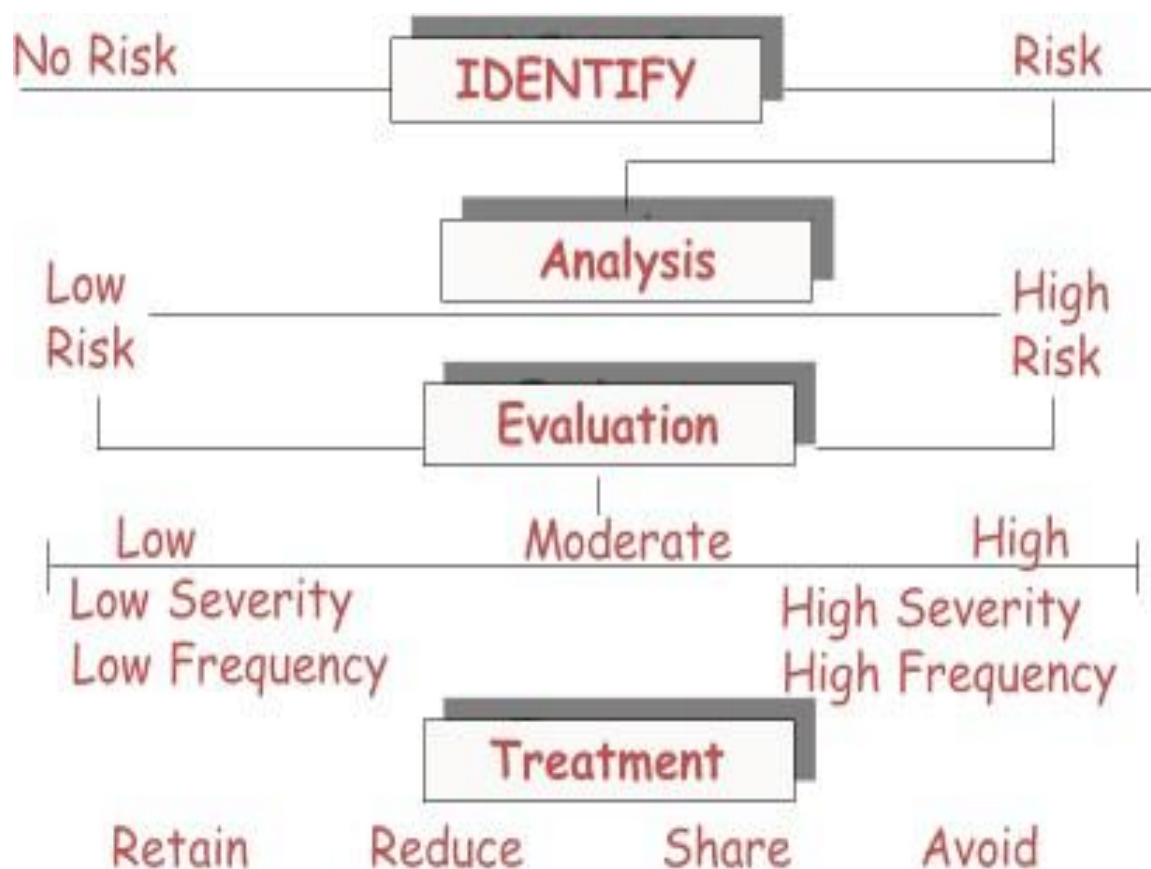


The Four Steps of the Risk Management Model

- **Identify Risk** – There are no 100% Risk-free human activities. So know that there is a risk, then, identify the possible risks involved with an activity. Think outside the box and try to think of every wild, crazy, and unexpected thing that could happen which might harm someone.
- **Analyze Risk** – After risks are identified, the next step is to analyze the risk to determine if it would be a low-risk activity or a high-risk activity.
- **Evaluate Risk** – Further evaluation of the risk helps to identify both the severity and the frequency of the risk. When the severity and frequency characteristics of a risk are known, we can go to the final step of treating the risk.
- **Treatment of Risk** – We have four choices in how we deal with a risk:
 - A. **Avoid the risk.** This means that we do not engage in the activity. This not an option if we conduct youth programs—remember nothing is risk free.
 - B. **Retain the Risk.** We make this choice by being involved with the activity.
 - C. **Reduce the Risk.** We do this by training our instructors, having risk management plans in place, etc.
 - D. **Share or transfer the risk,** with an insurance policy, as an example.

How Do You Manage Risk?

Risk Management Model



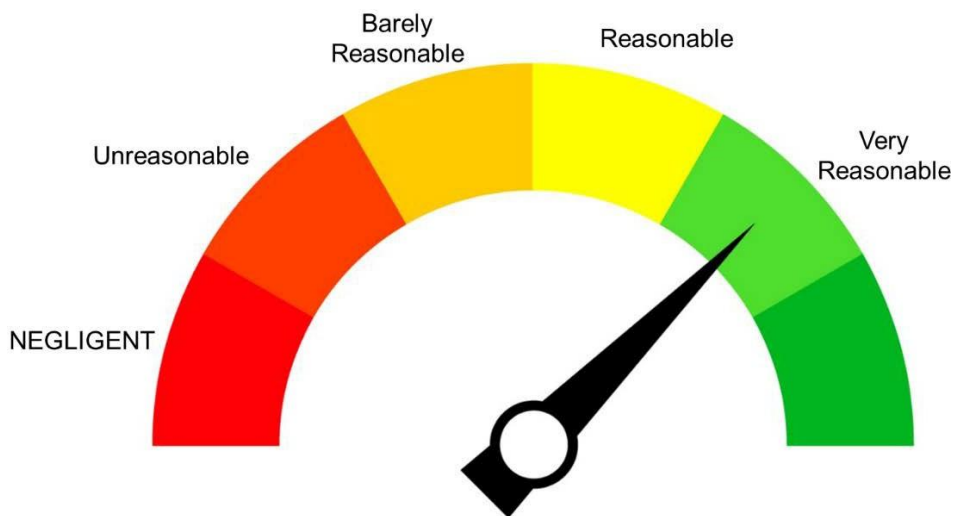
Pick a risk that might be associated with a 4-H shooting sports activity. Some examples might include:

1. paper cuts from completing the 4-H Record Book,
2. ricochet at an air gun range, and
3. accidental discharge of a shotgun while resting the barrel of the gun on the toe.

Then run the activity, a step at a time, through the risk management model above. Discuss ways that the risk associated with these three activities are treated.

What Does it All Mean?

1. You have a **duty** – You have a duty to:
 - A. Provide a **safe environment** for this program, and
 - B. Conduct activities in a **reasonable** and **prudent** manner.
2. **Reasonable and Prudent** – If someone is injured on your watch, a jury of your peers will be asked to assess your actions as to whether or not they were **reasonable** and **prudent**.
3. **Negligence** – The failure to perform a duty owed as a **reasonable** and **prudent** person would perform; with that failure resulting in a consequence of the breach of duty that should have been foreseen.
4. Elements of Proving **Negligence**
 - A. Duty Owed
 - B. Duty Breached
 - C. Actual Damages
 - D. Proximate Cause



Duties Owed by You

1. Properly plan the activity
2. Provide proper instruction
3. Explain the inherent risks
4. Monitor for injury
5. Provide safe equipment
6. Provide for proper emergency response
7. Maintain adequate records
8. Provide close supervision
9. Inspect, Inspect, Inspect!

This is a lot to remember....

Write it all down....

It is called your Risk Management Plan!



Your Risk Management Plan

There should be written and current risk management plans in place for any state, county/parish, or club level 4-H Shooting Sports activity or event.

Example items in a risk management plan:

1. Goals
2. Personnel/Volunteer Management Policies
3. Job Descriptions
4. Logs and Records – Attendance, injury, etc.
5. Supervision Procedures
6. Emergency Response Procedures
7. Equipment Care, Use, and Storage
8. And whatever else is needed in your situation

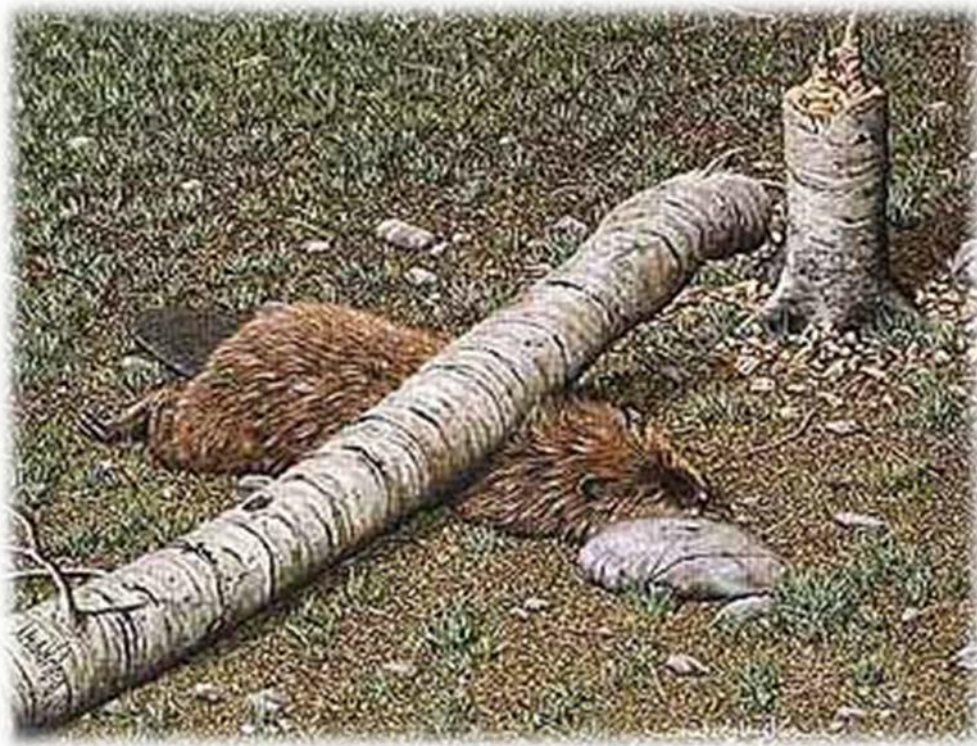
Example Risk Management Plans are available on the National 4-H Shooting Sports Website available at <http://4-hshootingsports.org/>

Download the Coordinator Workbook for more information on state plans and risk management plans available at <http://4-hshootingsports.org/>

So You Think There is Nothing to Worry About, Correct?

1. You've carefully thought out all the angles.
2. You've done it a thousand times.
3. It comes to you naturally.
4. You know what you are doing, it's what you've been trained to do your whole life
5. Nothing could possibly go wrong---correct??

Think Again!



Never let your guard down.

References

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2025 Changes to Module 4 Primer

1. Added Curriculum Authorization statement to page 50 and updated contact information.
2. Pages 55-56: Updated the minimum standards to the ones approved by National Committee December 2024 at the annual meeting.
3. Page 57: Updated the code of ethics to the ones approved by National Committee December 2023 at the annual meeting.
4. Page 58-60: Updated the best practices to the ones approved by National Committee December 2024 at the annual meeting.