

## Policies for the Ohio 4-H Cloverbud Program

(Written for use by OSUE professional youth educators - Approved & Revised 9/2015)

1. Youth can participate in the Ohio 4-H Cloverbud program when they are enrolled in kindergarten and are age five as of January 1 of the current year. Cloverbud membership ends when a child is enrolled in the third grade and is age eight as of January 1 of the current year.
2. The educational system for the 4-H Cloverbud program is activity based. "Activity based" means a variety of short-term experiences for youth that create an eclectic, cooperative, and fun approach to learning through immediate, positive feedback responses to the youth's involvement in the activity. Activities created beyond those approved for statewide curriculum use must follow [Ohio's 4-H Cloverbud Program Foundations](#) or be submitted for approval to the State 4-H Office.
3. Ohio 4-H Cloverbud membership is offered in every county in Ohio. Enrolled Cloverbud youth, because of age appropriateness, are not eligible for any activities or projects designed for older 4-H youth program members. It is not the intent or the objective of the Cloverbud program to duplicate the 4-H program for older youth, nor to create a mini 4-H concept. While many Cloverbuds will continue with their 4-H experiences, the 4-H Cloverbud program is designed with specific educational objectives for children of that age and grade level.
4. Counties will utilize age-appropriate, cooperation-based methods to give feedback and recognition, ensuring success in the activities of the 4-H Cloverbud curriculum. The focus of this feedback is to promote the youth's confidence in meeting new challenges. Research on this grade level indicates the best way to build confidence is to have many opportunities in activities that emphasize success, however small. Competition with self and others is inappropriate for the 4-H Cloverbud grade level, and therefore 4-H Cloverbud members are not eligible for any competitive events.
5. County junior fairs provide an excellent opportunity to provide reinforcement to the success building for 4-H Cloverbuds. County junior fairs are open to participation by 4-H Cloverbuds, **but for exhibit only**. Any fair participation recognition system, special prizes, or awards must be given equally to all Cloverbud 4-H members. While individual and group 4-H Cloverbud fair exhibits are encouraged, **there will be no:**
  - Formal scoring of 4-H Cloverbud members.
  - Competition of any kind between individual Cloverbud members, or between Cloverbud members and members in the 4-H program for older youth.
6. Volunteers working with the 4-H Cloverbud program will be oriented and trained in:
  - The policies of the Ohio 4-H Cloverbud Program.
  - Use of Ohio 4-H Cloverbud curriculum.
  - Information concerning learning and developmental characteristics of 4-H Cloverbud age children.
  - Cooperative work with parents in providing the best learning environment and support for Cloverbud members.
  - The Ohio 4-H Standards of Behavior for volunteers, with particular attention to a sensitivity of working with Cloverbud members, and all other applicable policies of The Ohio State University.
7. Cloverbuds may participate through any authorized 4-H delivery system (e.g., community, project clubs, school enrichment groups, or special emphasis groups), depending on the needs and resources of the individual county 4-H program. Counties are to utilize the state approved curriculum or activities that meet the [Ohio's 4-H Cloverbud Program Foundations](#).
8. If the 4-H Cloverbud program does not match an existing club's direction or resources, it will be the individual option of 4-H volunteer(s) whether they will work with this program. The 4-H professional in the county should make every attempt to place Cloverbuds in existing single 4-H Cloverbud or multiple-age clubs and groups, and initiate new multiple-age groups.

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## **Policies for Implementing Ohio Cloverbud 4-H Guidelines in Camp Settings**

*(Approved & Revised 9/2015)*

1. Ohio 4-H Cloverbud members may only participate in resident and/or day camps that are planned and conducted for them and meet their developmental characteristics and needs. In addition, 4-H Cloverbud members may be included and encouraged to participate in single parent and family camps.
2. Required: there will be no less than one approved volunteer or professional staff member per five campers (for overnight camps) and no less than one approved volunteer or professional staff member per six campers (for day camps) - 80% of these individuals will be 18 years of age or older as of the first day of camp.
3. All 4-H Cloverbud campers will be constantly within sight or hearing supervision of a staff person, so there will need to be a minimum of two staff with each group (even if the group is small in number).
4. The staff (this includes the resident staff) will be trained in the Ohio 4-H Camping Program and supervisory responsibilities in a camp setting.
5. Ohio 4-H Cloverbud overnight camps will be three nights or less in duration.
6. 4-H Cloverbud campers will not sleep in top bunks unless they have a safety rail.

\*For more information on working successfully with 4-H Cloverbud members in camps, refer to the Ohio 4-H Camp Management Resource in the State 4-H Website or contact your local Extension professional.