September

Recognition

4-H Focus

September marks the final month of the 4-H year. During this time, it would be pivotal to evaluate 4-H programs. The National 4-H Common Measures instruments are designed to assess the impacts of programs in science, healthy living, civic engagement, college/career readiness, and universal positive youth development. It's important to have members share their 4-H experiences. By sharing, it helps better understand youths' learning experiences in major programs and make meaningful decisions to improve 4-H programming.

Recognition is an acknowledgment and affirmation of the personal growth in an individual. It can be public or private. It can be within the individual or provided by others. 4-H uses recognition as one strategy to help youth become more capable and competent. It does this through recognizing and appreciating each person's effort and providing positive reinforcement to continue participating in learning activities. Young people come from varied backgrounds and with different experiences. They vary in their interests, values, needs, attitudes, and aspirations. For some youth intrinsic, or internal, recognition is far more powerful than any extrinsic, or external, recognition. The 4-H recognition model provides for a balanced approach. It encourages a variety of forms of recognition to meet the diverse needs and interests of today's youth. It is based upon the principles that recognition is a basic human need that can be done in many forms and must be structured to build positive self-esteem.

Quote

"Each and every accomplishment starts with a decision to try."

Building Leaders

4-H is not just learning by doing. It's learning by doing it, sharing it, understanding it, relating it, and using it. The purpose of 4-H record keeping is to teach how to keep records, which is an important life skill. Record keeping is an ongoing process that does not end when the 4-H year ends. Youth are encouraged to select from a variety of alternatives to meet their individual record keeping needs and styles.

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Learning Life Skills

There is power in storytelling and communicating the impact of our efforts as well as experiences. However, the first step in sharing our story is data collection and analysis. The 4-H program is founded on a hands-on learning approach. Through this evaluation skill-a-thon members will engage in participatory evaluation not only taking part in the data collection but also then interpreting that data. The benefits of participatory evaluation include member empowerment, organizational learning/growth, and member ownership to name a few.

4-H Spotlight

4-H recognition is used to encourage and support the efforts of youth as they increase their 4-H project area knowledge and develop life skills. There are three kinds of recognition available to 4-H members: participation, achievement, and project awards. There are other high honor awards youth can achieve at a certain point in their 4-H career.

Participation Awards: Pins are given to any 4-H member completing their first, fifth and tenth year of 4-H.

Achievement Awards: Basic skill awards are designed to help members gain skill and learn more about the 4-H program. Members may begin to earn them during their second year in 4-H. As the member progresses, earning the awards require a little more work.

Project Awards: Projects are opportunities for members to learn about a subject of interest to them. After three years of 4-H, members are eligible to earn medals in the projects they have completed.

SD 4-H Key Award: This award recognizes 4-H members who have demonstrated consistent growth in their 4-H involvement, developed and applied their leadership skills and actively participated in the function of their 4-H club and community.