



HOW TO...

Welcome New Families into 4-H

Hold an orientation for new members and families prior to or following a club meeting:

- ❖ Extend a personal invitation to the orientation by calling all new families.
- ❖ Include your entire club leadership team (officers and advisory board) in presenting the orientation. Give club officers the opportunity to teach!
- ❖ Review club and county policies and expectations. The Rock County 4-H Policy can be found at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/rock/4h/documents/policy.pdf>.
- ❖ Avoid potentially embarrassing “initiation” ceremonies. Plan appropriate activities in which everyone can choose whether or not to participate.
- ❖ Leave plenty of time for questions.

Provide new families with helpful resources:

- ❖ Give each new family a folder in which they can keep their 4-H club papers.
- ❖ Pick up current newsletters at the UWEX Office and distribute as needed.
- ❖ Make sure each family has received a New Family Handbook from the UWEX Office and review it with them.
- ❖ Refer new families to the Rock County 4-H website for additional resources: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/rock/4h/index.html>.

Consider a Family Mentoring program:

- ❖ Recruit experienced families who are active in club meetings and activities.
- ❖ Provide experienced families with a simple list of mentoring duties: call their new family with reminders; greet them at meetings; be available to answer questions.
- ❖ Assign new families to experienced families and explain the mentoring program at the orientation.
- ❖ Provide time prior to or following club meetings for new and experienced families to pair up as assigned for asking/answering questions.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Don't assume that new members and families know all about 4-H.

Just asking “Do you have any questions?” can be extremely effective.

It is the responsibility of EVERYONE in the club to welcome new families.

Visit <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/index.cfm> for more resources and links.