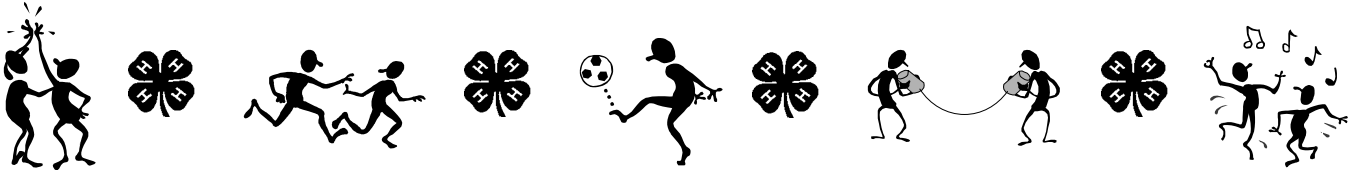




Ohio 4-H Cloverbud Connections



Winter 2004 Issue

For 4-H Cloverbud Volunteers working with grades K - 2

Thank You Notes Teach A Lifelong Skill!

Have you considered helping your Cloverbuds write and send handwritten thank you notes? Teaching children to write thank you notes is a simple act that goes a long way in the development of good social skills. Here are a couple of suggestions to help you get your Buds going:

- ◆ Be positive. Briefly explain that the gift-giver will feel good knowing the present is appreciated. The way you talk about thank you notes will influence whether your children think of writing them as a chore or as something thoughtful they can do for someone who has done something thoughtful for them.
- ◆ Give choices and help make writing thank you's fun. Provide a variety of interesting and colorful paper, pens/pencils, crayons/markers, glitter and glue. Let them choose the ones they will use. Consider taking pictures of your child playing with the toy or wearing the clothing to include with the note.
- ◆ Make the handwritten note a special message from the heart. Help your children understand the effort they put into creating a thank you is just as valuable as the gift itself.
- ◆ Be a good example and write letters! Children learn to be courteous and responsible by watching other adults.

If you would like more information on the finer details of writing thank you notes, contact your local Ohio State University Extension Office and request a copy of fact sheet # HYG-5170-96, *Being Courteous to the Gift Giver*.

*Kirk Blair, M.S.,
Extension Associate, Human Development & Family Science,
Ohio State University Extension*

Ideas for Making Thank You Stationery

- Use a variety of stamps and pads
- Lots of stickers
- Decorate plain note cards
- Stencils
- Use decorative-edged scissors
- Cut thank you post-cards from card stock
- Make thumbprints with washable ink pads (make balloons, flowers, patterns, people, words, or a clover)



CLAPP

(Cloverbud Literacy and Parenting Partners)

A high school senior that was a struggling reader once came to me and asked me to teach her how to read childrens' books. In spite of her difficulties with reading, she recognized the importance of reading and wanted to make it fun for her future children.

In 2001, Hancock County received an Ohio 4-H Foundation Grant to incorporate literacy into our Cloverbud program. Many books and supplies were purchased to assist us in getting the program off and running. It is our goal to make reading fun for all children. While accomplishing this, children are taught to understand concepts of print, parents and leaders are taught to extend a book, and a variety of reading strategies are introduced and practiced.

Our county-wide Cloverbud club meets six times a year. Each one-hour session is based upon a book. A parent or adult is asked to attend the program with his/her child. Community people may share with children, stories are read (in a variety of ways), crafts are made and refreshments are enjoyed. Often times, reading strategies are shared with parents and they are given the opportunity to practice those strategies with their child. Many times, each child was able to leave with a brand new book.

Response to this program has been wonderful. Approximately thirty-five children, along with an adult, attend each meeting. It's a relaxing atmosphere and children are discovering that reading is fun.

Books that have been used include:

- "Stranger in the Woods" by Car Sams
- "Give A Mouse A Cookie" by Laura Numeroff
- "Mrs. McNosh Takes Out the Wash" by Sara Weeks
- "How Much Is That Doggie in the Window" by Iza Trapani

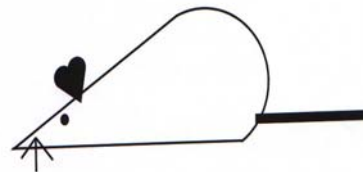
Thanks to Suzanne Arnold, Literacy Program Assistant and Karen McDougall, 4-H Program Assistant for coordinating this outstanding program.

Susan Russell

*Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development,
Ohio State University Extension, Hancock County, Ohio*



Heart Mice



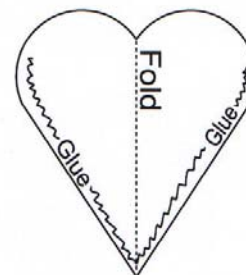
Heart mice make a great Valentine's Day project for Cloverbuds. You can even make them as favors and share with nursing home residents. If you don't want to include the candy sucker, use a pipe cleaner for the tail or a pen or pencil!

Materials needed:

- ♦ Red construction paper or felt for body
- ♦ White construction paper or felt for ears
- ♦ Heart pattern
- ♦ Glue, fabric glue, or glue stick
- ♦ Heart suckers or flat suckers
- ♦ Paper punch
- ♦ White or black thread for whiskers
- ♦ Sewing needle

Procedures:

1. Make a heart shaped pattern and trace onto red construction paper or felt
2. Cut out hearts
3. Fold hearts and glue the edges together leaving an opening for the sucker to fit in
4. Use a paper punch to make the eye
5. Use a sewing needle to thread the whiskers and tie off
6. Cut small hearts from white construction paper or felt for ears
7. Glue on ears
8. Insert heart sucker and the stick will be the mouse's tail



*Brenda VanTilburg, 4-H Cloverbud Volunteer
Trailblazers Cloverbud Club
Mercer County, Ohio*

♥ Happy Valentines Day ♥

Reading Makes the Best Better

Books, kindergartners, 4-H awareness, and celebrations describe what Reading Makes the Best Better is all about. The program was developed in Guernsey County in 1999 to address literacy issues and increase awareness of the 4-H Cloverbud program. Almost 3,000 children have participated in the reading program since that time, and it continues to be the highlight of our 4-H week celebration.

Objectives of the program are to create an interest in books, encourage parents and children to read together and increase awareness of the 4-H Cloverbud program. Teams of teens and adults visit each kindergarten classroom to read stories to the students, give each child a free book, promote the 4-H Cloverbud program and celebrate reading and 4-H with juice and cookies.



The program takes about 30 minutes and begins with an overview of the 4-H Cloverbud program. After introducing the reading program, teen and/or adult volunteers read about 3 stories to the children. Each child receives a free book, Cloverbud brochure, and parent survey. We conclude the celebration with juice and cookies and recognition of sponsors.

Teams of teens and adults visit each kindergarten classroom to read stories to the students, give each child a free book, promote the 4-H Cloverbud program and celebrate reading and 4-H...

Funding for the program comes from a variety of sources. The Ohio 4-H Foundation was our initial sponsor. Current sponsors include our 4-H and Extension Advisory Committee Endowments, local businesses and manufacturing plants. We budget about \$1.50/child for books, cookies and juice. Book fair supply companies, grocery stores, juice packaging companies, service clubs and foundations are good contacts for this program.

Evaluations of the program have been very positive. Cloverbud enrollment has increased from 50 to 206 members. We usually have 20-25% of the parents respond annually to survey questions about the reading program. Their responses consistently agree that their child enjoyed the book; a family member read the book with their child; and they thought the program would encourage their child to read more.

The Guernsey County program is presented to each kindergarten class in the county during 4-H week, however the program can successfully be adapted to any size. You can invite teens to read stories to your club. You can work with older 4-H members to have their club adopt a classroom. They could include publicity about your meetings during their presentations. You can volunteer to read to kindergartners and share first hand what goes on at a Cloverbud meeting.



Reading Makes the Best Better is a fun program for students, teachers and volunteers. It serves an important community need by promoting literacy, provides leadership opportunities for teens, and increases awareness of 4-H. Purchase your gift books, select your stories to read, line up your volunteers, and get ready for your version of Reading Makes the Best Better.

*Carolyn Wilson
Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development,
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Campus Connections

Hello 4-H Cloverbud Volunteers!!!

I recently wrote a column for the *Ohio 4-H CloverGraham* newsletter that I would like to share with you to dispel any myths or fiction about the 4-H Cloverbud program, specifically in comparison to our 4-H program for older youth. Of course I realize that I am “preaching to the choir.”

Fiction: The 4-H Cloverbud program is not “real” 4-H.

Fact: More than 47,000 children are involved in the 4-H Cloverbud program and they are “real” 4-H members.

Fiction: 4-H Cloverbud members do not participate in community clubs.

Fact: 4-H Cloverbud members participate in community clubs and many other delivery systems such as camps, after-school programs, and school-enrichment. They just participate differently because of where they are developmentally in how they think, feel, relate, and function.

Fiction: The 4-H Cloverbud program simply helps children pass time.

Fact: The younger the individual, the greater the impact programs can have for positive youth development.

Fiction: 4-H Cloverbud members cannot participate in county fairs.

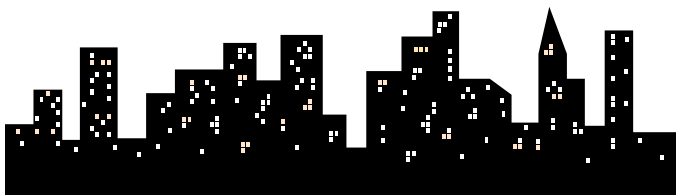
Fact: Fairs are open to participation for 4-H Cloverbuds, but for exhibit only: children can exhibit work completed in their 4-H Cloverbud clubs or groups.

Fiction: Competition is best for advancing life skills in young children.

Fact: Hundreds of studies (including specific research with 4-H members) comparing the effectiveness of cooperative and competitive learning have proven that cooperative learning environments produce higher achievement, social skills through positive relationships, and healthier psychological adjustment (self-esteem) than competitive programming.

Remember, the 4-H Cloverbud program is designed to be developmentally age-appropriate; so there are differences in how we implement programming between 6 and 16 year-olds; BUT both groups are still part of ONE GREAT 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT program.

*Scott D. Scheer, Ph.D.
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Molded Candy Hearts

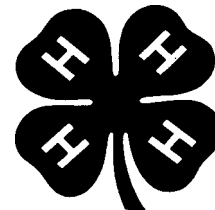
Cloverbuds will enjoy helping to make molded candy hearts. The candy can be used as a meeting snack or wrapped in plastic wrap and given as a gift. Adult supervision is necessary. Here's how:

Purchase a heart-shaped candy mold and a 24 oz. package of white or dark melting chocolate. They are usually available at candy, craft, and/or grocery stores.



To make the candy, use a double boiler or place a small pan (like a bread pan) on top of a pot holder or folded kitchen towel that has been placed inside an electric skillet. Pour about a half-inch of water into the skillet. Heat the double boiler or skillet to boiling then reduce the temperature to simmer. Overheating the chocolate will cause it to scorch. Place about half of the chocolate in the small pan. Stir the chocolate constantly as it melts. After the chocolate is melted, spoon it into the mold. Gently tap the mold on the counter top so that any trapped air bubbles will be removed. Put the mold into the refrigerator until the chocolate hardens (about five minutes). Remove the chocolate from the mold by gently twisting it or tapping it against the counter top. Enjoy!

*Submitted by: Joyce Shriner
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Ohio State University Extension

Cloverbud Connections is published four times annually by OSU Extension in Monroe and Hocking Counties, providing volunteers and teachers working with kindergarten through second grade access to unbiased, research-based information.

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