



# 4-H Leader Line

An educational resource to share with 4-H leaders, volunteers and parents.

Volume 13, Number 2

August 2006

## 4-H Calendar

### August

- 1 Leader Line on line
- 15 2006 Colorado State Fair (Pueblo)

### September

- 12 Colorado 4-H Foundation board meeting

### October

- 1 ES237 and Blue Ribbon youth enrollment data due
- 2-9 National 4-H Week
- 6-8 Colorado 4-H Leaders' Forum (Brush)
- 12 Lights On After School
- 13-15 Colorado Leadership Camp, (Snow Mountain, Winter Park)
- 22-26 NAE4-HA (Milwaukee, WI)

### November

- 1 Leader Line copy deadline
- 1 IFYE Representative applications due
- 9-13 National Japanese Exchange Coordinator Training
- 15 Catch-A-Calf applications due
- 24-28 National 4-H Congress (Atlanta, GA)

### December

- 1 Leader Line on line
- 1 Urban Expansion reports due
- 12 Colorado 4-H Foundation board meeting
- 15 IFYE Ambassador applications due

## Learn By Doing



Mainstream public education is learning about the value of engaging young people in *doing* things to learn. Public education calls it experiential or service learning. But, being first in experiential learning doesn't necessarily mean we're doing it the best. The key is being intentional about the learning experiences we design and taking advantage of the accidental ones as they reveal themselves.

One of my best lessons in the *Learn By Doing* tradition was accidental.

My mom was very conscious of preparing me and my brothers to take care of ourselves in the laundry room and kitchen by teaching us important life skills. Either because she was in a rush or through simple carelessness, one evening my mother made an assumption. Even though she was usually a very careful, thoughtful and thorough person; she was also prone to abbreviating everything she could.

I was about 13 when my mom left instructions for me and my older brother to prepare dinner for ourselves and our two younger brothers while she and my father (an Extension agent) went to the county dairy association banquet.

The dinner preparation directions were written in a cryptic note that said to add one cup of  $H_2O$  to the other recipe ingredients. To our dismay, we couldn't find any  $H_2O$  in the cupboards, refrigerator, freezer, pantry or anywhere else in the house!

After a great deal of confused searching, we were forced to call the emergency number where the banquet was being held and ask our dad what and where we could find  $H_2O$ . It was an easy question for him to answer and my first chemistry lesson.

What were the characteristics of *Learning By Doing* that made this a valuable experience for me?

1. I had a reason for learning. I was intensely interested in finding  $H_2O$ . I was hungry, motivated and had the responsibility for the well-being of my younger brothers' stomachs.
2. My mom explained (after apologizing for the oversight) the simple concept of abbreviating elements and what their meanings could reveal.

**"When we work with 4-H members who have an interest in the topic, they're ready to learn."**

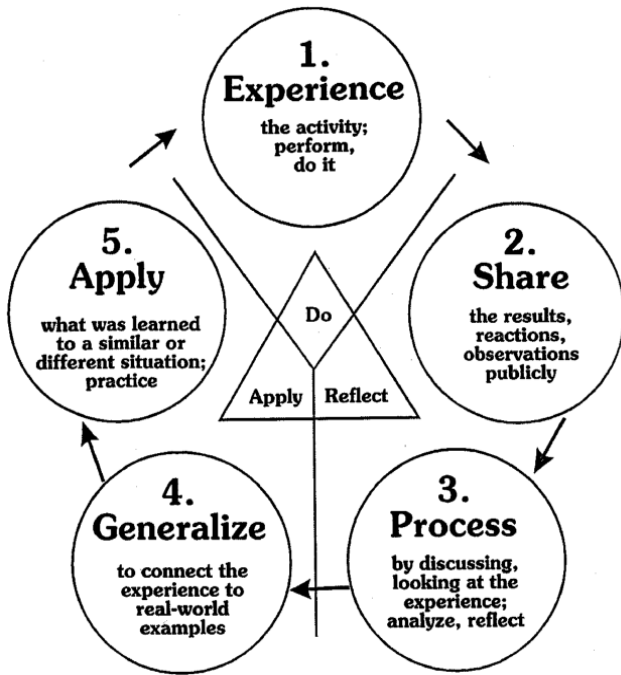
As adults, our responsibility is to process the learning experience with youth. Ask them what the experience was like, how it challenged them, if it was like anything else they'd ever done, how they might use the information later, or how it relates to anything else in their lives. The important step is asking the questions so youth can learn to apply what they learned in other situations.

It's one thing for adults to explain why something is the way it is. It's another for young people to discover things for themselves. The real power of learning is in self-discovery. It enables each of us to ask the simple questions. Then the youth can come up with the value and meaning themselves. This is *Learning By Doing*!

—Dale Leidheiser  
Colorado State University  
Cooperative Extension  
4-H Youth Specialist

# A Message from the 4-H Director

## Learn By Doing



**Experiential Learning Model**

What does *Learn By Doing* mean? As the old saying goes:

- Tell me how to do something and I'll probably forget.
- Show me how to do something and I might remember.
- But, involve me in doing something and I'll never forget!

This concept sounds simple but there is more to it than you may realize. The *involve me* part of this concept also means that we need to allow young people to learn from their mistakes. Too often parents want to *rescue* their kids from anything negative in their lives.

We all know that the life lessons we won't ever forget are often times negative. Negative experiences are often the result of a bad decision we made or a less than prudent action on our part.

The *learn from your mistakes* approach to learning is the basis for the Experiential Learning Model. In this model, young people *do* the activity by themselves. Then they reflect on what happened as a result of that activity. And, finally, they generalize about the lesson they learned and apply the newly acquired knowledge to other areas of their lives. Future actions are often related to this experience. For the process to be effective, adults must learn to sit on their hands and let the kids *do* and *experience* the activity.

Let's not rob young people of the chance to learn a lifelong lesson. Refrain from the urge to *rescue your kids*.

—Jeff Goodwin  
Colorado State University  
Cooperative Extension  
4-H Youth Development Director

### 4-H News of Interest

- Please send articles or letters of 4-H interest or upcoming events.
- All articles or letters must be signed. Provide your full name, address and phone number.
- Articles or letters will be edited for spelling and grammar.
- Because this publication is placed on-line three times a year, articles or letters that contain time-dated information will not be used.

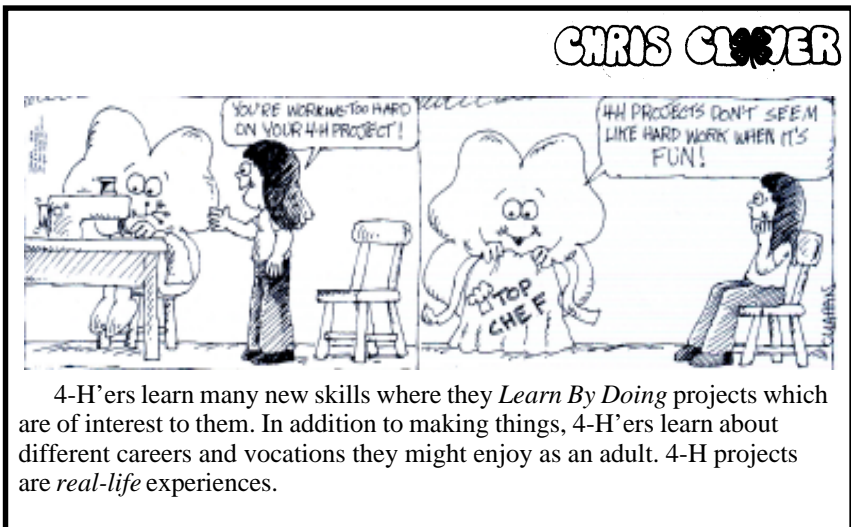
### 4-H Leader Line Editorial Board

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The *4-H Leader Line* is published three times a year by the 4-H Youth Development Program, Cooperative Extension, State 4-H Office, 134 Aylesworth Hall, NW, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado 80523-4050.



4-H'ers learn many new skills where they *Learn By Doing* projects which are of interest to them. In addition to making things, 4-H'ers learn about different careers and vocations they might enjoy as an adult. 4-H projects are *real-life* experiences.

# State 4-H Leaders' Council Update

The Colorado State 4-H Leaders' Council met on June 21 during Colorado State 4-H Conference in Fort Collins. The following are highlights of the meeting.

Dale Leidheiser reported on the Tufts University research study. It is a comparison of the impact of 4-H on youth versus the impact of other youth organizations.

## 2006 Colorado State Fair

Mike Grett circulated the sign up sheet for volunteers to help the display superintendents with exhibits of the winning 4-H projects and contests at the 2006 Colorado State Fair. Volunteers who help with the display set up are needed for Saturday, August 19 at 11 a.m. through 10 p.m. For their efforts, the volunteers will receive Saturday dinner, bottled water and a snack. If set up continues on Sunday, August 20, lodging at 4-H Camp Tobin on Saturday night and breakfast in the dining hall on Sunday are provided. The theme this year is *Bootin' Up With 4-H*. This is the western type of boots, not the computer type.

## 2006 Silent Auction Donations

Kim Latoski is taking care of the silent auction this year. Stop by and check out the items. Silent auction proceeds go to the leaders attending Western Regional Leaders' Forum for the first time. We have an auction at each of our three meetings. Please support them now.

## 2006 Fall Forum

Kathy Westhoff reported that Fall Forum will be held October 6-8, 2006, in Brush, Colorado. Registration pamphlets were distributed. There will be four workshops Saturday. Our leaders' meeting will be held Saturday morning, October 7 at 8 a.m.

## 2007 Western Regional Leaders' Forum

The 2007 Western Regional Leaders' Forum will be held in Phoenix, Arizona, January 11-15, 2007.

## 2009 Western Regional Leaders' Forum

The 2009 Western Regional Leaders' Forum will be held in Denver, Colorado at the Downtown Marriott Center, February 25 through March 1. Help is very much needed. For further information contact Shardy Paul at (303) 985-3796 or Schardelle@aol.com. Mike Grett could also answer your questions at (970) 323-7696 or grettgrouch2@doci.net.



Election was held for 4-H Leaders' Council. Lois Helgeland retained the position of Secretary-Treasurer and Joyce Conger is the new Chair-elect.

Our next Colorado State 4-H Leaders' Council meeting will be October 6 in Brush, Colorado. Please bring silent auction donations.

—Lois Helgeland  
Colorado State University  
State 4-H Leaders' Council  
Secretary/Treasurer



*Putting Knowledge to Work*

# Participating Parents

## The Facts

From the day of their birth, children imitate their parents. A child's first and most important teachers are their parents. Parents are the most significant people in their child's life. Most parents *want* to improve their children's life skills, learning abilities and knowledge. New parents put a lot of time and energy into their baby's care and nurturing. However, as children mature and develop their independence, they begin looking to other sources to expand their education/learning. When this change occurs, it *doesn't* mean a parent should put less effort into their child's education. Rather, parents need to alter *the way* they help their child learn and continue to actively participate in their child's formal education and school activities.

## Ways to Participate

Parental involvement is vital for children to become successful in their education. Parental participation involves two key components:

1. Encouragement and support for their child's learning, and
2. Becoming actively involved with their learning activities and environment.

Parents can demonstrate active and supportive roles in many ways. Parents can participate in their child's learning through parenting, communicating, volunteering, teaching/learning at home, creating an educational environment, mutual decision-making and working in partnership with the community. A few examples and tips are:

- Organizing fund-raising activities.
- Tutoring/mentoring students.
- Becoming a teacher's assistant.
- Joining a local parent-teacher organization (PTA).
- Helping out with extracurricular activities.
- Offering time to assist in school networking and resource groups.

If you want the best for your child's education, get involved. Time is crucial to all aspects of our daily lives. But, time seems to be running out of supply for many busy families. From attending late meetings to participating in weekend conferences, parents seem to be *on full speed*. Many busy parents find it hard to juggle all of their daily tasks, including school participation. The good news is that participating in your child's education can be easy and requires as much or as little time as you choose. The important fact to remember is that you are participating. No matter how large or small the task may be, your child will recognize your effort and tend to imitate you as a role-model.

## School participation can be as simple as:

- Communicating with the teacher through meetings, visits and emails,
- Volunteering your free time with field trips, parties, etc.,
- Periodically checking on your child's classroom progress through phone calls or visits,
- Visiting a library, museum or event with your child,
- Attending parent-teacher conferences, and/or
- Teaching your child the value of education by showing an interest in reading, writing and talking about educational concerns and topics.

The first step in participating with your child's educational and school environment is to gather information about how to do so. The web site, [www.greatschools.net](http://www.greatschools.net), provides a list of informational resources that are relevant to parental participation.

They are:

- The school's phone number and web site URL,
- Names, phone numbers and email addresses of the school's secretary, principal, your child's teacher and the parent-teacher organization president, and
- Dates the school newsletter is published and how to obtain it.

There are countless ways a parent can show support for their child's learning. The benefits derived from your active involvement in your child's education are priceless. Through your support and participation, not only will your child benefit, but you will too!

According to the National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE), family-school partnerships help students not only excel and succeed in school, but parents also gain confidence, teachers obtain the support they need, schools improve and communities become more strongly united. No matter the ages of your children, they are always growing and changing. They need your encouragement, support and participation to guide them and expand their growth psychologically, emotionally, physically, socially and educationally.

**PARTNERS  
IN  
PARENTING**

(800) 457-2736

## Paul Hoshiko Jr. Memorial 4-H Golf Tournament

We are very fortunate and also very appreciative of the work everyone does to build such a strong network of 4-H supporters through the Paul Hoshiko Jr. Memorial 4-H Golf Tournament. This year's tournament raised over \$31,000! The tournament wouldn't be this successful without the help of our golfers, 4-H staff and volunteers.

Every dollar of support takes us a step closer to our goal of keeping 4-H Youth Development programs, especially IFYE, affordable and accessible for our Colorado youth. The Hoshiko family's support, going back over two decades, has made a lasting impact on Colorado's 4-H programs. I understand that Paul Hoshiko Jr. had a vision of 4-H members being able to take educational trips to foreign countries and working toward world peace. Because of that vision, the IFYE program in Colorado is one of the best in the United States.

Thank you again to everyone for your willing participation.



**Paul Hoshiko Jr.**



**Left to right: Robert L. Abrams, Jean A. Hoshiko and John P. Watson, Golf Committee Members**

—Shami Loose  
Colorado State University  
Cooperative Extension  
Colorado 4-H Foundation  
Administrative Assistant