

## How Can You Support Members With Special Needs?

You may have a member(s) on your 4-H team with a special need – physical, mental or developmental. Regardless of the special need, it is imperative to work with the child and their parents/guardians to set goals and modify experiences to meet the child's needs. It is important to be sensitive to the concerns of the parent and child. It is important not to single out a child or to make them feel different than their peers.

## What Can You Do To Help Ensure Positive Experiences?

- Learn about the child and their special need. Talk to the parents/guardians and research the special need on the internet, at the library or through a local support group.
- Treat each child as a special child – regardless of special need or not. Recognize each child's skills, abilities, talents and needs.
- Recognize and give lots of positive reinforcement. Make expectations realistic.
- Help the total club membership appreciate and understand special needs of members.
- Have parents/guardians share information with your County Extension Educator to help the 4-H organization better prepare for the special needs member's participation in project judging, Skillathons, camp, fair and other 4-H opportunities.

***Every 4-H player is a star...help each one shine!***

The goal is to provide a positive enriching experience for every 4-H member. Encourage all parents to explain special needs on the 4-H Enrollment Form. Even though this is optional, the information can assist your County Extension Educator in planning a positive 4-H experience for all youth.

## Where Can You Get Assistance In Meeting a Special Need?

First, contact your County 4-H Extension Educator to discuss specific needs. Your County 4-H Extension Educator will be able to assist you in meeting the special need requests. Whether this is to help secure an interpreter for sign language, arrange for handicap accessible facilities, or modifying learning experiences to meet developmental differences. The Ohio 4-H Foundation has program funds earmarked to assist County 4-H Programs with meeting inclusion of special need members participation in 4-H at the club, county, regional and state levels.