

How Can You Develop a Plan to Involve Fans (Guardian & Families)?

You would not recruit a new club volunteer without knowing how to involve them in the club. So, before actively involving adult family members - know where and how you are going to utilize their support. Nothing is more disappointing then when asked to help and then not feel useful. Busy parents are still willing to give their time, talents and energies to benefit their children and other youth. Use [Gaining Family Cooperation Checklist](#) to identify priorities and select ways to inform, involve and recognize family member involvement. Use these simple steps to develop your 4-H Club Fan network:

Create a 4-H Family Fan Affair. Recruit fans to assist you with the team's game plan.

Step 1: Evaluate Guardian Interest and Skills

Use [Yes I'd Like to Help](#) to assist your efforts to:

- Identify and assess the knowledge and skill level that each guardian brings to the club. They do not have to be experts to give a "helping hand". They could provide project help in an area currently lacking in the club.
- Probe the interests of parents to serve in task, activity, project and support roles.

Step 2: Inform Family

Communicate often, and in a variety of formats to inform, involve and direct family participation and involvement in the club. Here are some tools to get you started:

- Send or share a [4-H Family Letter](#) to inform and welcome families to your 4-H Club. You may use this simple letter or create your own.
- Hold a New Family Meeting. Use the [New Family Orientation Meeting Outline](#) with the New Family Orientation Booklet to conduct a meeting with your first time parents and guardians.
- Hold a Guardian Information Meeting. The [4-H Guardian Meeting Outline](#) can guide you in covering important points of interest. Use the Parent's Guide to Making the Best Better ([sample](#) included here; contact your [County Educator](#) for your county resource) to share important ways parents can make a difference and to cover the [4-H Lingo](#) with all parents.
- Distribute a copy of [The Do's and Don'ts of Being a 4-H Fan](#) and [Parent / Guardian Expectations](#). You may choose to use this as part of your [Family Orientation Meeting](#).
- Conduct at least one family activity during the club year. Examples include: club recognition program, member and officer installation ceremony, or family social activities (picnic, bowling, game night, etc.).

- Talk directly to parents at every opportunity. Members, especially young and inexperienced, can sometimes be unreliable messengers.

Step 3: Involve Parents/Guardians

Match parents' involvement with their interests and time. Parents do not want to become a club advisor, at least not yet. Clear parental support roles will enable guardians to help and say yes to the challenging as well as the simplest of tasks. The Ohio State University and Ohio 4-H Program do not recognize parent helpers as volunteers. When parents/guardians start assuming volunteer roles, they need to begin the process to become a 4-H volunteer.

Step 4: Recognize Fans

Praise fans just like your members. Say thank you, hold special family events and provide public recognition by including them in your club's recognition program. Encourage members to honor parents with cards, notes, phone calls, e-mails or a personal thank you.