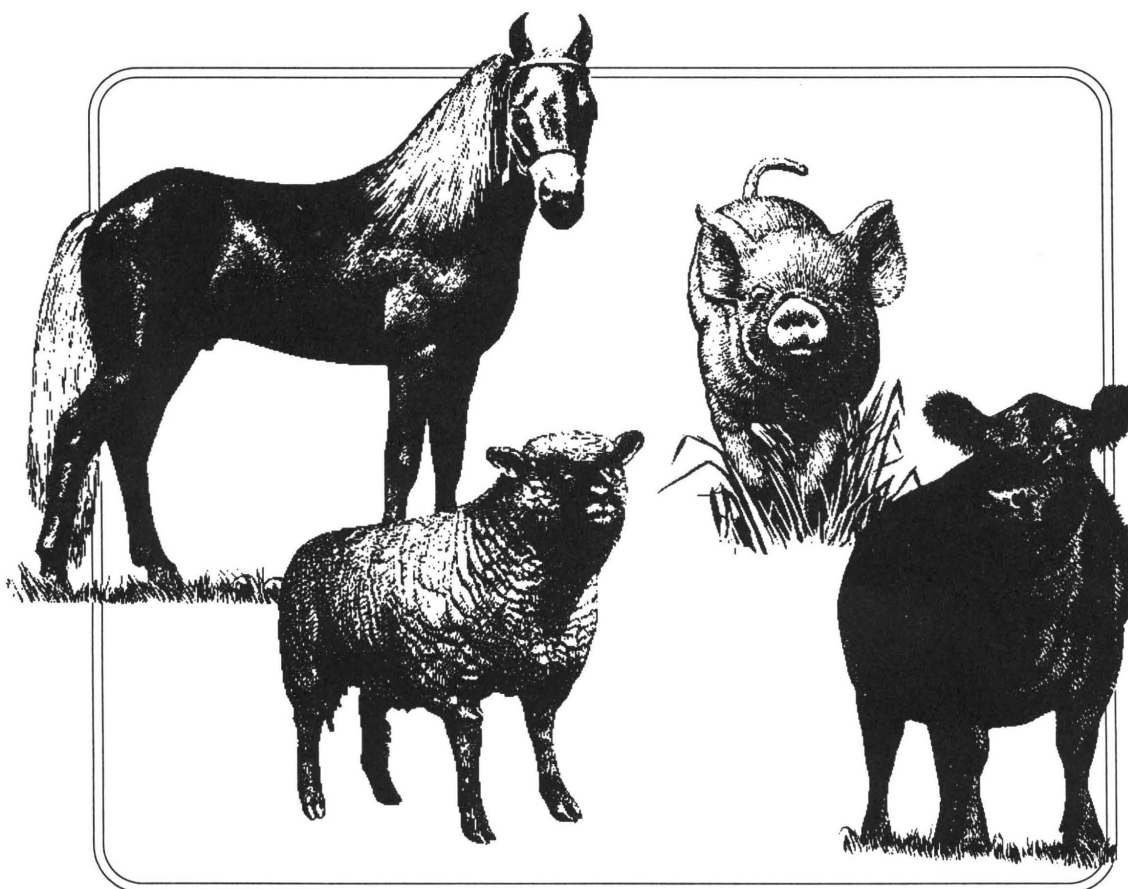


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A BASIC TRAINING GUIDE FOR New 4-H Parents & Volunteers Involved with Livestock Projects



Virginia Cooperative Extension



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
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A Basic Training Guide for New 4-H Parents & Volunteers Involved with Livestock Projects

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4-H Philosophy

4-H is the youth development education program of Virginia Cooperative Extension. 4-H is committed to assisting youth, and those adults working with them, in acquiring the knowledge, life skills, and attitudes that will enable them to become self-directing, contributing and productive members of society. The central theme of 4-H education is "learn by doing."

4-H participants are all youth, age 5 to 19, taking part in programs provided as the result of actions planned and initiated by Extension personnel in cooperation with volunteers. 4-H is characterized as being community centered, volunteer led, extension staff supervised, research based, home and family oriented, publicly and privately funded, and responsive to change.

This non-formal education program is conducted by our state land-grant universities (Virginia Tech and Virginia State), the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments. The land-grant university system consists of teaching, research, and Extension education. The Cooperative Extension Service was established by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 for the purpose of serving the needs of people throughout the state and nation.

Extension 4-H programs are a partnership involving local residents, volunteers, private support, three levels of government, and universities. 4-H is the only nationwide youth education program that is an extension of the knowledge resources of a university system.

Developmental Characteristics and Programming Implications

Satisfaction from participation in 4-H is based on matching the degree and level of involvement to the needs and readiness of the boy or girl. All people have certain needs throughout life while other needs arise at different stages of development. *Needs* and *readiness* evolve from *maturation* and *experience*. Physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development are dependent upon *maturation* and sequential learning *experiences*.

Although each individual matures at his/her own pace, the order varies very little and the transition from one stage of development to the next is gradual. Understanding characteristics and needs at different developmental stages is important to planning 4-H learning opportunities to promote progressive acquisition of subject matter information and life skills. This understanding is important for all salaried and volunteer staff.

The following "Developmental Characteristics and Program Implications" schema gives a brief summary of developmental characteristics and programming implications. It is designed to be read two ways, down for a composite picture of each age group in physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development and across for sequential examples of maturation and programming implications.

"The Sequential 4-H Curricula System" which follows the schema outlines how different curriculum components can provide sequential experiences appropriate for different 4-H age groups.

The mission of Virginia 4-H is to assist youth, and adults working with those youth, to gain additional knowledge, life skills, and attitudes that will further their development as self-directing, contributing, and productive members of society.

Developmental Characteristics and Program Implications-Schema

Children and Youth 9-19

Readiness determined by maturation and experiences

Basic needs

- to experience a positive self-concept
- to experience success
- to become increasingly independent
- to develop and accept ones own identity

Juniors 9-11

Slow steady growth for most. Puberty starts for some girls usually accompanied by a growth spurt. Extremely active, will overdo, need 10-11 hours sleep. Large muscles pretty well developed.

- Be sensitive of concern over body changes.
- Plan action, hands-on doing.
- Field trips and tours are good if stops are brief. Plan for needed rest. Better at making things, but still don't expect perfection.

Many are still concrete thinkers, some beginning to think logically, and symbolically.

- When introducing abstract ideas or concepts, relate to something concrete, something they can do, touch, or feel.

Easily motivated, eager to try something different. Interest will jump from one thing to another.

- Guide to stay with tasks to completion. Work closely to have them record accomplishments as they happen. Help reflect back and set new goals.

Intermediates 12-13

Wide range in physical development, early maturing girls may have appearance of young women, some boys will not have entered puberty. Growth spurts may cause clumsiness. Much concern about changing bodies. Interested in grooming, but probably won't admit it.

- Include learning experiences related to understanding self and the changes taking place. Provide opportunities for acquiring good grooming habits.

Most have moved from concrete to more abstract thinking. They enjoy playing with ideas.

- Adult should provide supervision without domination. Allow them to discuss ideas and concerns in small groups.

Values, justice, and equality important issues - can become very intense. They want to be sure things both in and out of 4-H are judged fairly.

- Help them understand scoring process used in 4-H. Arrange for discussing values, justice, and equality as they relate to a variety of issues. Introduce the concept of personal values.

Seniors 14-19

Body changes have been accepted by most, some continue to struggle. Individual talents and abilities emerge.

- Be sensitive to late developers, help them feel they are OK.
- Provide opportunities to help recognize their special talents and abilities. Individual counsel is good - highlight talents and skills.

Mastering abstract thinking. Can interact on adult level. Beginning to plan for their future.

- Include career education including opportunities to research careers. Encourage setting career goals and planning to accomplish goals.

Significant moral growth, difficulty understanding compromise. Often think society is made up of a bunch of hypocrites.

- Continue opportunities for understanding how values are acquired and the importance of a set of personal values. Promote discussion and action related to current issues.

Juniors 9-11

Approval from leaders and parents is important. Want to know how much they have improved and how they can do better next time.
Give individual evaluation, suggest ways to improve.

Comparison with success of others is difficult for them.
Build positive self-concept by comparing past and present performances of the individual and to emphasize positive changes.

Joining a club is popular, stronger identity with peers.
Admire older boys and girls.
Plan opportunities for club enrollment. Use teen teachers. Encourage teen mentoring.

Intermediates 12-13

Dependence on the opinions of adults shifts to dependence on the opinions of peers. Now seek peer recognition.
Recognize this as healthy growth and help parents understand this also.

Changes in hormones create mood swings, also a time of fragile self-concepts for many.
Plan self-discover activities. Support, encourage, but don't dominate. Still important to avoid comparing with other teens.

Moving toward more independence. Want to plan own activities and explore beyond a community. Better at planning than carrying out the plan.
Involve members in planning. Help them develop realistic plans and then provide necessary guidance for completion and evaluation. Plan activities beyond the community.

Seniors 14-19

Opinions of peers remain important but self-recognition of accomplishments is also important. Becoming more independent, acquiring values and setting goals.
Adults need to continue to give support and guidance during this period when teens are making serious decisions.

Unsettled emotions cause them to be stormy or withdrawn at times, but will usually pride self on increased ability to be responsible.
Consistent treatment from adults is important even though some will act like adults one day and children the next. Provide opportunities to use special talents.

Many can plan and interact on the adult level. Can initiate and carry out tasks such as researching area of special interest without much adult supervision. Achieving independence and identity important goals for this age. Achieving satisfactory adjustments to sexuality and definition of career goals are important factors of these goals.
Become an advisor, let teen plan and assume responsibility for carrying out plans. Time is precious, if programs are filled with busy work teens will lose patience and interest.

Sequential 4-H Curriculum System

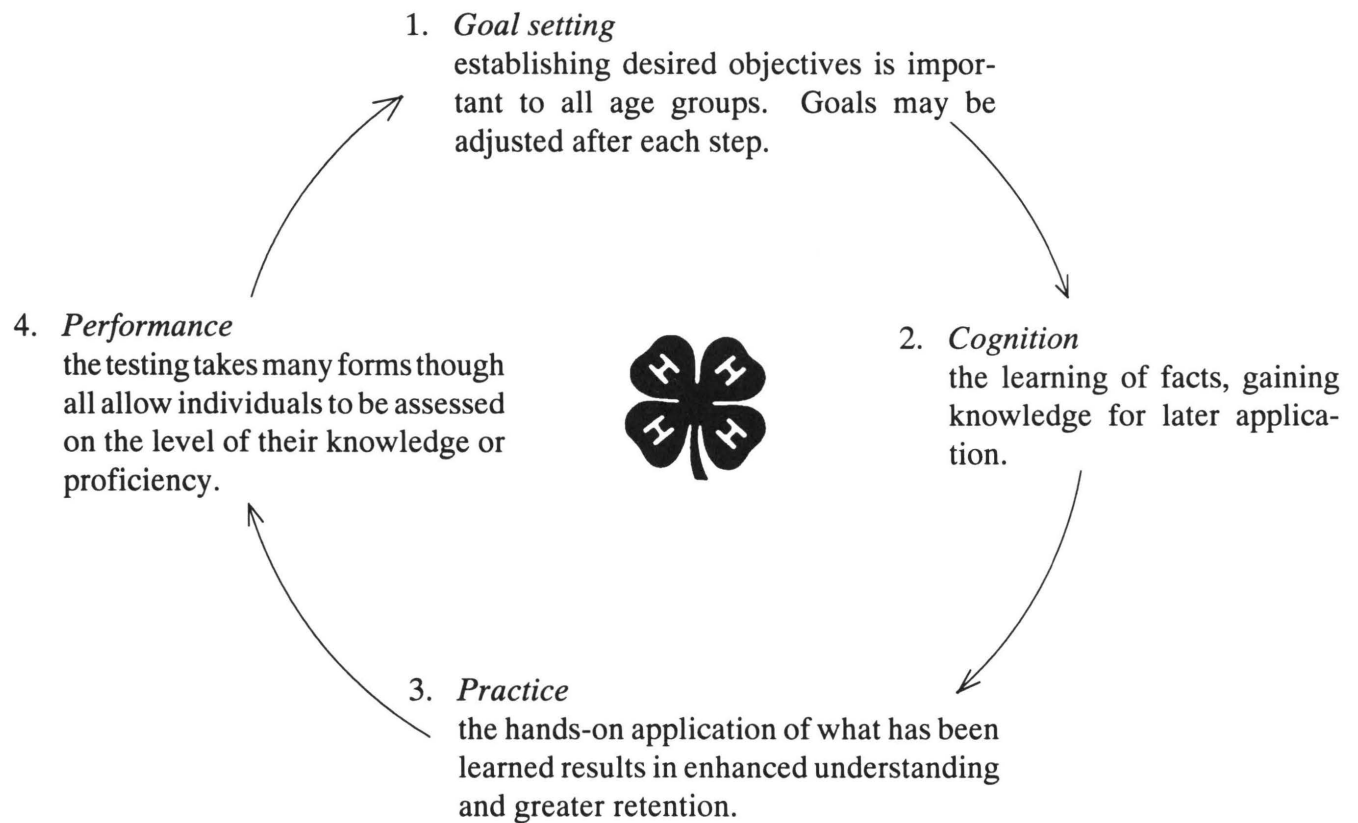
Curriculum Components	Juniors	Intermediates	Seniors
Projects	1-2 each year Explore areas to find individual interest	2-3 each year Some continued from junior years More in depth	3-4 continued several years Some advanced levels
Activities/Events Participation	County/city tours and exhibits Day and resident camping Computer educational games Bowl, judging, presentation, and skill participation activities at the project, club, and unit levels	Resident camp with more advanced sessions Multi-county/state 4-H intermediate congress Special interest district level bowl judging, presentation, and skill activities at the project, club and unit levels.	District Ambassador, State Ambassador, VA Heritage Focus, Citizenship, Washington Focus, District Teen Weekends, LABO Japan Exchange, State Leadership, Inter & Intra State Conference, Exchange Study Tours, IFYE Ambassadors, National 4-H Congress, Electric Conference, Issue Conference, Participation at project, club, unit, district, state, national, and international levels. Trips, tours, scholarships
Recognition and Awards	Recognize for participation Progress toward goals Achievement of standards No top winners; group awards	Recognize for participation Progress toward goals Achievement of standards Peer competition	Recognize for participation, progress toward goals, achievement of standards. Peer competition.
Leadership	Members of committees Some may hold office	Member, Chairman of committees, Club officer	Club/Unit, State officers, District officers Significant leadership roles Leadership roles in unit/district activities Teaches other teens and adults Teach younger members
Citizenship/Community Service	Concern for environment Club/community improvement Awareness of local government.	Environment improvement activities Increased concern for others Understanding local government Service to others	State, national, and international understanding. Host international visitors. Participation as LAB or IFYE delegate

The 4-H System

Experiential Education

Learning by doing, the key concept of experiential education, has been central to 4-H since its beginning. The process puts the focus on the learner and enables her/him to process through several stages.

Experiential Learning Process



Experiential learning takes place when a person is involved in an activity, looks back and evaluates it, determines what was useful or important to remember, and uses this information to perform another activity.

How People Learn

People learn in many ways through their five senses: sight, learning, smelling, taste and touch or feeling. People retain more of what they learn if they are actively involved in the educational process compared to reading a book or listening to a lecture.

Retention Rate



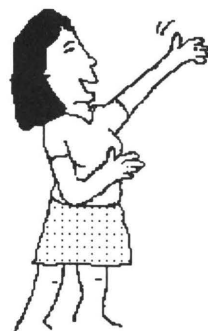
READ...20%



HEAR...20%



SEE...30%



HEAR & SEE...50%

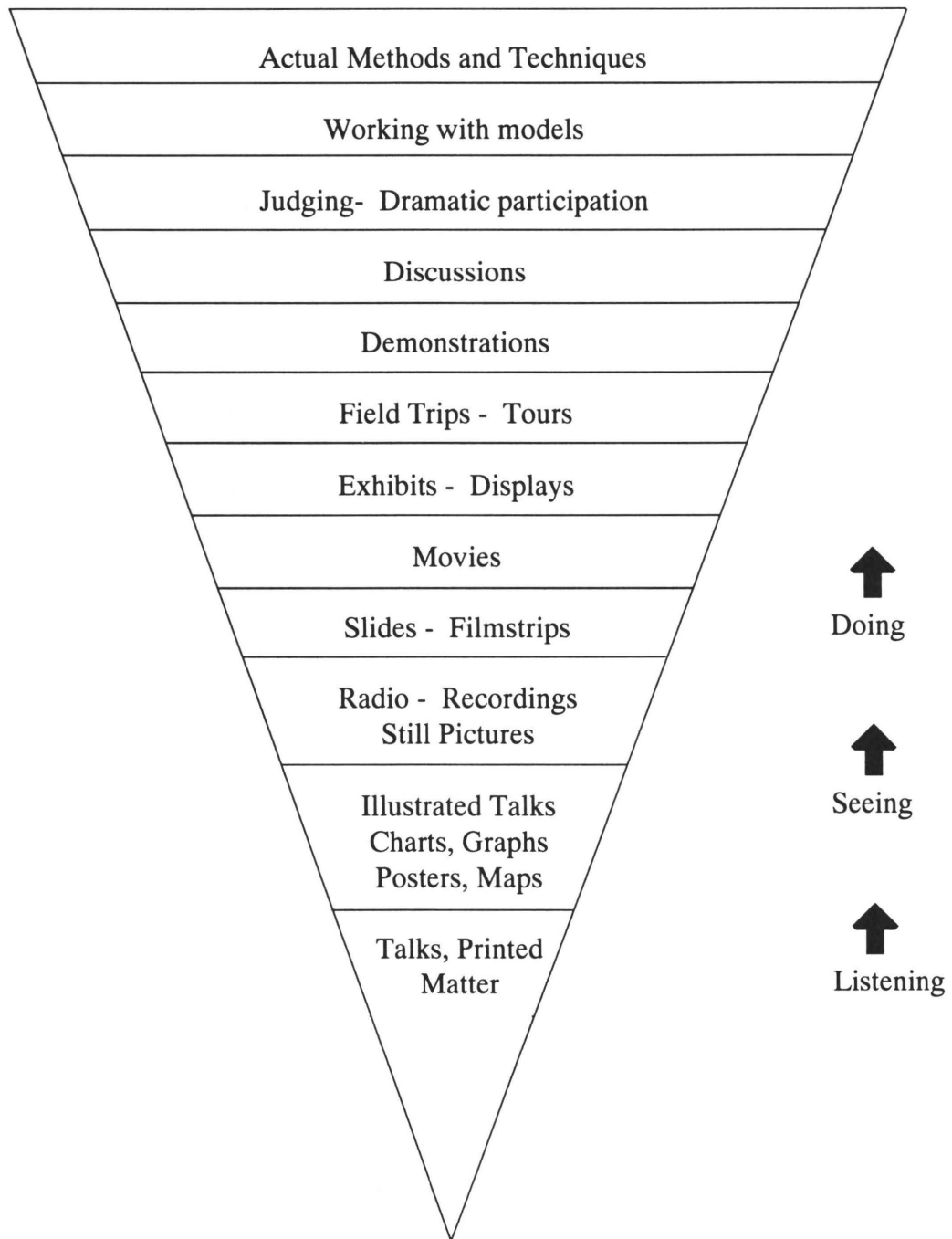


SAY...70%

DO...90%

Cone of Experience

Teaching Methods and Techniques



Effectiveness of Learning Increases as One Moves Up

Basic Needs

All young people have basic needs such as belonging, acceptance, security, achievement, independence and recognition. Parents and volunteers need to recognize and capitalize on the basic needs of children as they provide leadership, support and training through the 4-H program.

Belonging

"I'm in."

Acceptance

"What I do and say counts."

Security

"I feel safe."

Achievement

"I can do it."

Independence

"I can do it by myself."

Recognition

"Others recognize me."



Adults Influence Youth

Adults (parents and volunteers) always have tremendous influence on youth. That influence will be either positive or negative. The objective would always be to provide a positive environment and influence on youth as we provide leadership support and training through the 4-H youth development program.

Adults who influence youth will hopefully help them to:

Become responsible

Learn to share

Help others

Learn life skills

Appreciate friendship

Find out about self

*Set meaningful goals and
find ways to achieve them*

Learn things

Develop leadership skills

Take pride in what they are doing

Learn how to get along

Try new things

Accept recognition graciously

4-H Livestock Projects Should Teach Life Skills

It seems that far too often we place way too much emphasis on winning and losing at 4-H livestock shows.

Unfortunately, many times adults consider a 4-H livestock project a failure if their son or daughter does not win. There are many benefits that our youth are gaining from participation in livestock projects and shows.

Ideally 4-H livestock projects should be family affairs. If the right percentage of time and energy is spent by youngsters and parents together, these projects can help our young people learn the basic life skills and eventually help them develop into better citizens. If the percentage gets out of hand, we see a group of spoiled kids, whose parents are sore if they don't win, who are constantly criticizing the judge, and who try every trick possible to win.

Very few 4-H livestock projects are economically sound; however, neither is having children and paying for band lessons, taking them to summer recreation programs, buying them bicycles and paying for other youth activities. If a parent's goal is for a child to make money, investing in a savings account is less risky than investing in a 4-H livestock project. However, if a parent's goal is to invest in the future and to help their son or daughter develop as a person, learn responsibility, set goals, and gain some knowledge about livestock production, then 4-H livestock projects are a low-cost investment.

Let's keep these shows in proper perspective. They are not beef shows, swine shows, or sheep shows; they are kids shows. The animal is simply the ticket for the youngster to take part.

Through school, university extension and other educational units, we constantly hear of improved teaching tools to better equip our young people for life. The 4-H livestock projects are one of the oldest and greatest tools we have to teach our youth life skills.

Following are the 6 life skills which Virginia's 4-H program has identified as the reasons why 4-H programs are offered to Virginia's youth.



1. **Acquiring, analyzing, and using information:** for youth to learn how to gather, understand, and use livestock project information so that a project is successfully completed.
2. **Problem-solving and decision-making:** for youth to set goals and to identify the logical steps necessary to manage their livestock projects.
3. **Managing resources:** for youth to manage their time, financial, and other resources to meet their project goals.
4. **Understanding self:** Youth, through a livestock project, will build self-confidence, develop a positive attitude, and accept responsibility.
5. **Communicating and relating to others:** For youth to improve their listening, speaking, and writing skills so they can interact with others in a positive manner.
6. **Working with others:** for youth to work with others to accomplish and to accept group goals.

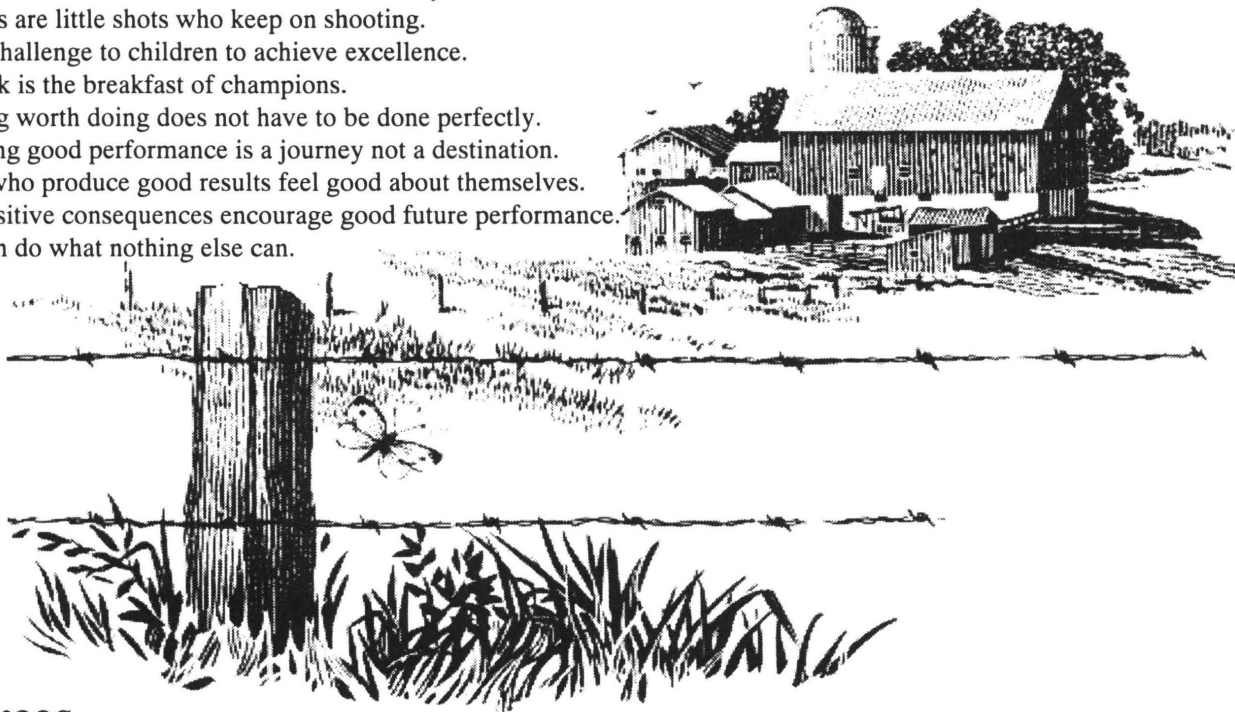
Ten Commandments for Parents of Youngsters Showing Livestock

Prepared by Dr. Clyde Lane, University of Tennessee

1. Thou shalt not feed, train, and care for the animal for thou art trying to teach the child responsibility.
2. Thou shalt forgive a child for making mistakes in the show ring for thou hath made mistakes too.
3. Thou shalt not get mad when thy child forgets items in the show box, for one day thou may forget the show box.
4. Thou shalt help the show management for they are doing a job that thou would not want to do.
5. Thou shalt see that thy child is on time for all show ring activities for thou should not want to wait on another.
6. Thou shalt be sure that thy child has the animals entered and the registration papers in order by the designated time.
7. Thou shalt teach thy child that winning a blue ribbon is a desirable goal but making friends along the way is a more worthy goal.
8. Thou shalt not complain about the judge, for it is his opinion that has been sought.
9. Thou shalt not forget that livestock projects are teaching projects, not necessarily money-making projects.
10. Thou shalt remember that the livestock project is a family project that shall be enjoyed and supported by the entire family.

A Few Thoughts for the Day

The best way for children to believe they are winners is for them to see themselves winning.
Catch them doing something right.
The only way to raise positive kids is to start by becoming a positive parent.
You are what you are and where you are because of what has gone into your mind.
We need to let our children know that we understand, that we're there, that we love and support them.
We fail our children if we say, "don't do as I do, but do as I say."
Total success is an attainable goal.
Motivation is something you do on a regular basis.
When we do more than we are paid to do, eventually we will be paid more for what we do.
It is never too late to do the right thing.
Rules are important, but example is best.
You never know when a moment and a few sincere words can have an impact on a life.
When we deal with our children, we must remember that they are children.
Unconditional love is loving a person without any prior conditions.
Successful parents raising positive kids need to "see" their kids as finished, competent, positive adults.
The disciplined person is the one who does what needs to be done when it needs to be done.
Real love demands you do what is best for your children and not always what is easiest for you.
Many of us spend half our time wishing for things we could have if we didn't spend half our time wishing.
Let children know by the way you treat them that you are glad they are who they are.
The more children like themselves the more they like to behave themselves.
Big shots are little shots who keep on shooting.
Issue a challenge to children to achieve excellence.
Feedback is the breakfast of champions.
Anything worth doing does not have to be done perfectly.
Achieving good performance is a journey not a destination.
People who produce good results feel good about themselves.
Only positive consequences encourage good future performance.
Love can do what nothing else can.



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