

## RULES FOR 4-H MEETING CONDUCT

It is helpful if each club establishes rules for conduct at its meetings. This can be done when the club is first established or at the beginning of each year, using lessons learned from the previous year's meetings. Each club has to establish the rules for the way members will behave which relates best to it.

This activity could be done by the entire club as a Business Meeting activity, or a committee could draft a set of rules to recommend for adoption by the entire club. The rules considered should follow parliamentary procedure, allow for accessibility, and yet be specific in terms of what kinds of behavior will or will not be allowed.

Some examples of rules which could be a part of a "Code of Conduct" are as follows:

- Once the Presidents call the meeting to order, all persons must remain in their seats unless they have asked for and been given permission to move by the President.
- There will be no talking among members, leaders, or guest during a meeting except as a part of the discussion at hand and when recognized by the President.
- Members must act in an honest and trustworthy manner whether handling money or completing records.
- Adults will be recognized to speak only after members have been given a chance.
- Members who become unruly during a meeting will be asked to leave by the President. They may wait in another area nearby or call a parent/guardian to come and get them.
- There will be no running in the 4-H meeting hall.
- No use of cell phones or electronic devices during meeting time.

A "Code of Conduct" may be very general or very specific. It must be enforceable (if someone is snapping gum--it may bother someone but may be difficult to stop unless no gum chewing is allowed during the meeting) and it must be enforced (if a person is chewing gum when they aren't supposed to be, they must be asked nicely to throw it away in the trash).

Be careful not to make requirements for membership or participation which may go against accessibility--no boys allowed in sewing club, must have a parent attend meeting with youngster.

A "Code of Conduct" should not be too strict and controlling of its members. 4- H is a fun organization and its hands-on activities need to allow behavior suited to them. If courtesy, caring, and consideration for others is kept in mind then meetings and activities can run smoothly and each member can get the most out of the experience.