



# 4-H Ontario Code of Conduct

As a positive youth development organization, it is our goal to provide safe, fun and inclusive experiential learning opportunities for youth. 4-H Ontario has outlined the following expectations in a general code of conduct by which all those participating in 4-H programming must abide. This code applies to: youth at 4-H activities, parents/guardians of 4-H youth, 4-H volunteers, 4-H staff, and any other adults participating in the 4-H program.

## **As a part of this positive youth development program I will:**

1. Always put the health, safety and best interests of youth first.
2. Be respectful and courteous. Use appropriate language that is polite, non-judgmental and kind. Act as a positive role model for those around me by leading by example. This includes good sportsmanship.
3. Respect other people's privacy and boundaries as well as the facilities used for 4-H activities.
4. Make all reasonable efforts to be inclusive by welcoming others and taking into consideration others opinions.
5. Work cooperatively with youth, families, volunteers, staff and others. Encourage others to do the same. Make efforts to resolve any interpersonal conflict that may arise whether with youth, parents, volunteers, staff or other adults, demonstrating positive conflict resolution skills for youth.
6. Wear clothing that is neat, clean and acceptable in appearance, as appropriate for a 4-H event.
7. Handle funds and fundraising in an ethical manner. Funds must be expended for 4-H purposes and must not be kept in a personal bank account. Accurate records must be maintained.
8. Refrain from using drugs and/or alcohol during any 4-H event held for attendance by 4-H youth.
9. Treat animals humanely and provide appropriate care according to industry codes of practice.
10. Follow 4-H Ontario standards for the use of social media.
11. Respect any guidelines set by your club, local association, regional, provincial and national 4-H program.
12. Notify your local 4-H Association of any incident that causes concern. Report and document any suspicions and/or disclosure of abuse to the authorities.

## **As a part of this positive youth development program I will not:**

1. Use profanity, shout or display disrespectful conduct.
2. Harass, ridicule, discriminate against or attack others (this includes verbally, in writing or by the use of social media).
3. Threaten violence or harm anyone whether through sexual harassment, physical force, verbal abuse, mental abuse, neglect, bullying or other harmful experiences.
4. Touch anyone in an inappropriate way or engage in sexual behaviour.
5. Engage in any behaviour that negatively impacts the 4-H program and brand.

**To truly be an organization of leaders building leaders, each individual is expected to follow the code of conduct. It is the responsibility of all program participants to reinforce the code of conduct and intervene with leadership when necessary. Consequences for violating any part of this code is grounds for suspension or dismissal from the club/activity/or 4-H Ontario program. In case of dismissal, no portion of fees will be refundable. Volunteers who are dismissed are no longer considered "in good standing".**