



# New Jersey 4-H *Head + Heart + Hands + Health* Leader Training Series



## Selecting a Name for Your 4-H Club

### Naming a Club is Challenging, Fun, and Must Follow Certain Guidelines

4-H strives to maintain and enhance a positive image of 4-H. The 4-H Name and Emblem is regulated under federal statute. National 4-H Headquarters (USDA), the Extension Director, and the State 4-H Office can authorize use of the 4-H name and emblem. A club must obtain a 4-H charter in order to use the name and emblem. Contact your county 4-H office for assistance with the charter application.

The first step in completing your club charter application is to select a name identifying your 4-H club. This name should reflect the individual character of the club while representing a positive image of 4-H to the community.

Each 4-H Club is a unique group of individuals who work together toward common goals. A club name should reflect the purpose(s) of the club, often relating to the specific project(s), or the geographic area where the members live, or the club meeting location. Allow all of the members to participate in selecting a name for the club.

#### The following are suggestions to help guide you:

- *Unique Identity.* "The Nimble Thimbles 4-H Club" may reflect a sewing club, as "Stable Mates" a horse club. "Johnson County 4-H Teen Council" and "Ocean Waves 4-H Club" reflect an area club.
- *Inclusive.* 4-H Youth Development programs are offered to all youth, grades K-13, on a grade appropriate basis, without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. All possible efforts will be made to include rather than exclude youth in events conducted by 4-H Youth Development Program.
- *Reflect Character and Integrity.* 4-H helps to develop positive character in club members. Naming a club after a questionable or a notorious figure would be inappropriate. 4-H should be a safe, positive and open environment for young people. Avoid any names that might be demeaning, offensive, or intimidating. "Billy the Kid 4-H", "4-H Gangsters", and the "Chain Gang" are examples of inappropriate names.
- *Stand the Test of Time.* Since the NJ State 4-H Office and National 4-H Headquarters will issue a permanent charter to your club, the name should be sufficiently adaptable to changing times. Cute and creative names are fine, but consider whether any potential club members might shy away from joining the club or be embarrassed by the name as the club members' age. "Mighty Sprouts 4-H Club" might be cute for a Cloverbud club but less appropriate as the club members enter their teen years. "The Bell Bottom Belles" is an example of a name limited to a fashion trend.
- *Comply with Copyright Regulations.* Just as 4-H is a protected name and emblem, so are many names of TV shows, singing groups, and popular products. Avoid using such popular names or titles, therefore avoiding copyright violation.



When selecting a club name, think about it carefully, be creative, and use a little common sense. Sometimes a club selects a name that is a duplicate of another club. When in doubt about acceptance of a name, contact the county 4-H office for “approval” or suggestions. Your county 4-H office sends your club charter application for final approval to the State 4-H Office, the designated authority.

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## References

National 4-H Headquarters website – [www.national4-hheadquarters.gov](http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov)

***For more information on New Jersey 4-H, please visit [www.nj4h.rutgers.edu](http://www.nj4h.rutgers.edu).***

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