



# 4-H Youth Behavioral Expectations & Code of Conduct



This Behavioral Expectations & Code of Conduct must be signed by the youth participant each year. This form will be kept on file at the designated Extension Office.

A goal of the West Virginia University Extension Service 4-H Youth Development Program is to provide opportunities for youth and adults to develop character. The 4-H program supports the CHARACTER COUNTS!SM six pillars of character: **Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship.** To assure that the WVUES 4-H Youth Development Program provides positive environments for all individuals to learn and grow, participants agree to abide by the following behavior expectations.

**I will be trustworthy.** I will be worthy of trust, honor, and confidence. I will be a model of integrity by doing the right thing even when the cost is high. I will be honest in all my activities. I will keep my commitments by attending all sessions of the planned event. If I am not feeling well or have a schedule conflict, I will inform my chaperone or the person in charge. I will be in the assigned area (e.g. club meeting room, building, dorm) at all times. The WVUES 4-H Youth Development Program does not permit dishonesty by lying, cheating, deception, or omission.

**I will be respectful.** I will show respect, courtesy, and consideration to everyone, including myself, other program participants, and those in authority. I will act and speak respectfully. I will treat program areas, lodging areas, and transportation vehicles with respect. I will not use vulgar or abusive language or cause physical harm. I will appreciate diversity in skill, gender, ethnicity, and ability. The WVUES Youth Development Program does not tolerate statements or acts of discrimination or prejudice.

**I will be responsible.** I will be responsible, accountable, and self-disciplined in the pursuit of excellence. I will live up to high expectations so I can be proud of my work and conduct. I will be on time to all program events. I will be accountable by accepting responsibility for my choices and actions. I will abide by the established program curfew. I will be responsible for any damage, theft, or misconduct in which I participate.

**I will be fair.** I will be just, fair, and open. I will participate in events fairly by following the rules, not taking advantage of others and not asking for special exceptions.

**I will be caring.** I will be caring in my relationships with others. I will be kind and show compassion for others. I will treat others the way I want to be treated. I will show appreciation for the efforts of others. I will help members in my group to have a good experience by striving to include all participants.

**I will be a good citizen.** I will be a contributing and law-abiding citizen. I will be respectful to the environment and contribute to the greater good. I will not use any illegal substances such as tobacco, alcohol, and drugs.

Jefferson County 4-H youth active in or attending club activities, Tri County 4-H Camps, Jefferson County Fair, county, regional, state, and national 4-H programs, activities, events, shows, and contests sponsored or co-sponsored for youth by the WVUES 4-H Youth Development Program are required to conduct themselves according to the WVUES 4-H Youth Development Program Behavioral Expectations and the rules and regulations of the specific activity.

## The following are not permitted:

- Possession, consumption, or distribution of alcohol
- Possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs
- Sexual activity
- Boys in girls' rooms and girls in boys' rooms or lodging areas
- Cheating or misrepresenting project work
- Theft, destruction, or abuse of property
- Violation of an established curfew
- Unauthorized absence from program site
- Physical, verbal, emotional, or mental abuse of others
- Possession or use of a weapon (This does not refer to the equipment used in authorized shooting sports programs.)
- Possession or use of a harmful object with the intent to hurt or intimidate others
- Other conduct deemed inappropriate for the youth development program by an event chair, a designated WVU Extension agent, faculty, or staff member; or a 4-H volunteer leader

## If the code is violated, the following steps may be taken:

- The adult chaperone for the youth (Extension Agent or 4-H Adult Volunteer) involved in the violation will be made aware of the situation.
- The parent(s)/guardian(s) may be called and arrangements made for transportation home at their expense.
- The 4-H'er(s)/participant(s) may be barred from participating in 4-H.
- When a violation occurs at a competitive event, the 4-H Youth may be disqualified from the contest and be ineligible for an award(s).
- Competition in later contests may also be barred. This will be determined by the event chair; a designated WVU Extension Agent, faculty, or staff member; or a 4-H adult volunteer.
- If any laws are violated, the case may be referred to the police.

## Use of the WVUES 4-H Youth Development Program Code of Conduct:

- To be used for all 4-H program activities and events conducted at the club, county, regional, state, or national level of 4-H programming or are co-sponsored by WVU Extension Service for 4-H youth and adult volunteer participants.
- To be used in conjunction with the rules or guidelines for a specific program, county, or area. It should not be used alone, since it is designed to strengthen local or event specific rules.
- To be used in those instances when you usually use a set of rules or guidelines. The length of a Program or event is not a determining factor. It may be used for day camps, fairs, day trips, and any 4-H meeting or contest.
- To be used in conjunction with other operative codes or rules. Must be sent or given to youths and their parent(s)/guardian(s) before a program or event.

My parent(s)/guardian(s) and I have read and discussed the 4-H Youth Development Program Behavioral Expectations & Code of Conduct. I am aware that my actions and decisions affect me and others and may result in the loss of privileges during 4-H programs and activities and future programs and activities. We agree that I will conduct myself in accordance with the Behavioral Expectations and the Code of Conduct. I agree to accept the appropriate and logical consequences of my actions.

CHARACTER COUNTS!SM is a service mark of the CHARACTER COUNTS Coalition, a project of the Josephson Institute of Ethics.

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