



# Recognition

## 4-H Council Handbook Tip Sheet

Recognition of individuals and groups participating in the 4-H Program is an important aspect of overall Program Planning.

Recognition and feedback allow participants to know when their work is completed in a way that meets standards and/or surpasses the minimum level of achievement. Recognition is most appreciated when it is appropriate, meaningful, and timely.

Rewards can be categorized as either intrinsic or extrinsic.

- Intrinsic rewards are those that a person gives himself/herself.
  - Examples include, "I did a better job this year than I did last year," or "I feel really special because I helped my grandparents this weekend." It is extremely important that people learn to give self-praise that is appropriate, relevant, and based on feelings of personal self-worth.
- Extrinsic rewards come from someone else.
  - These rewards include such things as compliments, certificates, or a word of congratulations from another source. Extrinsic rewards are important to help a person know that others recognize his or her achievements and success in work and learning.

Whenever possible, 4-H should offer both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. The 4-H Youth Development Council and salaried staff should establish guidelines for appropriate and timely recognition of all youth and adults who participate in the 4-H Youth Development Program. The recognition needs to be equitable and should encourage people to do excellent work and try hard to achieve.

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Below are questions that should be considered when designing a 4-H recognition program:

- Is the award system appropriate for the age and developmental stage of the individuals? For example, children in grades K-2 should not be compared to their peers and should not compete for ribbons of different colors.
- Are there awards for members, volunteers, and sponsors?
- Are there equitable awards for participation in various projects and activities?
- Are there criteria for selecting award recipients?
- Are various levels of recognition available to encourage growth and continued participation in 4-H?
- Are the potential recipients knowledgeable of the different awards for which they can strive?
- Is there a budget for award recognition? Is it equitable and allocated to all areas of 4-H Youth Development Program achievement?
- Does the awards system promote achievement in after-school programs, school enrichment, project club work, and one-day workshops?
- Do the awards serve multiple purposes; i.e. promotion, education, and retention?
- Are in-county and out-of-county educational opportunities made available to many youth, or are they held back as awards for a select few?

Additional suggestions for recognition are available on the State 4-H Website:

- 139 Ways to Say Thank You: <https://extension.purdue.edu/4h/Pages/sayingThankYou.aspx>
- National Volunteer Week: <https://extension.purdue.edu/4h/Pages/volunteerWeek.aspx>

*To learn more about Recognition, please visit the 4-H Youth Development Council Functions section of the Indiana 4-H Youth Development Council Handbook, within #1, Program Planning. (<http://bit.ly/ProgRec>).*