# Explorers Guidebook

## UConn 4-H Explorers Policy Page 2

## 4-H Explorers SHALL Page 3

## 4-H Explorers SHALL NOT Page 3

## Starting up a 4-H Explorers Club ￼ Page 4

## Incorporating an Explorers subgroup Page 4

## Becoming a 4-H Explorers Leader Page 5

## Brief Overview of Training Page 5

## UConn 4-H Explorers Curriculum Page 6

# **UConn Policy on the 4-H Explorers Program**

The UConn 4-H Explorers is a unique membership category that is age appropriate for youth 5 and 6 years old (as of Jan. 1 of the program year). These programs require more adult supervision, and the focus is on cooperative learning rather than competition. The UConn 4-H Explorers program follows a set of program guidelines based on developmental appropriateness.

It is neither the intent nor the objective of the UConn 4-H Explorers program to duplicate 4-H member experiences that are designed for older youth, nor to create a “mini-4-H” club. While the UConn 4-H Explorers is a component of the overall UConn 4-H Youth development Program, and UConn 4-H Explorers members are recognized as full-fledged members, they are considered and enrolled as a special membership category regarding activities and policy. UConn 4-H Explorers do not take on projects: Explorers programs are activity based and not project focused. As the name implies, UConn 4- H Explorers engage in hands-on activities that introduce the entire scope of 4-H programs. They do not have any one specific project area that covers a year of meetings. 4-H Explorers experience the broad spectrum of topics offered by 4-H. Leaders are trained in the policy, curriculum, and developmental stages of 4-H Explorers.

The focus of recognition for UConn 4-H Explorers is participation. Explorers may receive participation ribbons, certificates, or other appropriate 4-H recognition which encourages continued involvement. It is a non-competitive program. There is no judging or evaluation, either individually or in a group effort. Special comment forms can be used instead of judging forms, for positive feedback. There is a specific UConn 4-H Explorers Activity Summary, which can be filled out individually or as a club, instead of 4-H Activity and Project Records.

# UConn 4-H Explorers

## 4-H Explorers SHALL:

* Be at least 5 years old as of January 1 of the 4-H year.
* Be enrolled in UConn 4-H as Explorers, and their chosen project area is by default ‘UConn Explorers’.
* Learn to get along with others.
* Explore a variety of interests through hands-on activities.
* Build self-confidence through healthy experiences.
* Have their own program activities, and do not just ‘join in’ with older youth.
* Receive participation recognition.
* Fill out the UConn 4-H Explorers Activity Summary. An adult may assist in filling out the form and it can be done as a group record or individual.
* 4-H Explorers may participate in county/state events including 4-H Fairs), where specific Explorers program activities have been put in place.
* Have Leaders who attended a UConn 4-H Explorers training and are approved UConn 4-H Volunteers.

## 4-H Explorers SHALL NOT:

* Have on-going projects of any kind (including animals, large or small)
* Participate as competitive exhibitors
* Submit verification forms, as they do not have any on-going projects
* Do not hold any offices or leadership roles in their club
* Hold voting privileges
* Receive any placing ribbons or awards (including Danish)
* Focus on a single project area

# Starting up an Independent 4-H Explorers Club

The strongest program delivery for 4-H Explorers is where all participants are of Explorer age (5 and 6 years old), meeting as small groups of children with a trained Leader. These groups explore a wide variety of subject matter through short-term activities.

If developmentally appropriate, 7-year-olds may participate as a 4-H Explorer.

UConn 4-H Explorers can enroll as independent members. The parents must contact their county 4-H office for training and curriculum.

# Incorporating a 4-H Explorers sub-group into an Existing Club

When incorporating 4-H Explorers into a multi-age club, there is a separate sub-group for Explorer members led by a designated, trained 4-H Explorers Leader. They can meet at the same date/time/location, but preferably with a separate room or area to utilize Explorer materials and resources. 4-H teens may serve as Junior Leaders but only under the direct supervision of the trained Explorers Leader.

A club can choose to not include 4-H Explorers in their club.

# Becoming a UConn 4-H Explorers Leader

## Contact your county 4-H Office to notify them of your intent and set up your training.

* Become an approved UConn 4-H Volunteer: first by submitting the volunteer application.
* Complete steps 1-3 of the UConn 4-H on-line training.
* Complete UConn background checks and training as required.
* Attend a UConn 4-H Explorers Leaders Training (offered on a county level or on-line).
* Agree to follow the UConn policy and guidelines for the 4-H Explorers program.
* Use the recommended 4-H curriculum.

# Explorers Leader Training

## Topics covered in the training include:

* Steps to Getting Started
* 4-H Ages and Stages
* Experiential Learning
* Planning and Implementing for Success
* Positive Learning and Group Management
* Curriculum Review
* Activity Summary Review

# 4-H Explorers Curriculum

## Below is a list of curriculums for use with the UConn 4-H Explorers.

* Clover Adventures: A Leader’s Resource Guide. University of Maryland, Frederick County 4-H Youth Development curriculum
* The Big Book of 4-H Cloverbud Activities, Ohio State University
* UConn 4-H Explorers at the Fair
* UConn 4-H Explorers Activity Summary

The Primary Club Leader, upon attending the UConn training, will receive copies of the curriculum.

The University of Connecticut complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination, equal opportunity and affirmative action, including the provision of reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. Extension program participants with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations to address limitations resulting from a disability. For more information, please contact the UConn Extension Civil Rights Liaison at [extensioncivilrights@uconn.edu](mailto:extensioncivilrights@uconn.edu).