



## Update from the Arizona 4-H Program Director

Having the opportunity to contribute to youth's growth and development is highly rewarding. It also comes with great responsibility for the caring adults and the organizational system that facilitates this process. All of us affiliated with the 4-H program must be committed to creating safe environments for youth to explore their interests. As Liz Sparks and Josh Moore talk about in their feature article, the reduction of risk can allow for youth to explore opportunities because they can be physically (and emotionally) safe. In addition to managing large scale risks that can cause harm to youth, volunteers, 4-H name and emblem and the University safety also means that it is okay to fail in

educational process. Creating an environment where it is safe to fail means that good risk management has been implemented -AND- that the caring adults of the 4-H program are framing the club program as a growth community. A growth community expects that failure be processed (e.g. What can be done better next time? How can you manage your emotions?). Encouraging youth to support each other through the learning process helps support a youth pro-social environment. A club that is safe and supportive is what we are all striving for, this is where positive youth development occurs.

I hope you all have a Happy Thanksgiving shared with your family and friends!

## Reducing Risk and Raising Success

By **Elizabeth Sparks**, Assistant 4-H Agent, Pima, and **Joshua Moore**, Assistant 4-H Agent, Pima

A physically safe environment is essential to a successful 4-H program. Positive Youth Development can thrive by incorporating risk management and reduction practices into 4-H Program Planning. The Do --> Reflect --> Apply --> Repeat method that has helped generations of 4-H members to learn valuable life skills requires a safe space for youth to try out a project and then either succeed or fail with the guidance of a caring adult (Norman, 2016.) Although this framework is time-tested, there is potential for risk unless we intentionally develop our programs to manage risk.

Positive Youth Development concepts guide 4-H and teach us that positive long-term outcomes do not magically appear; they are the result of a long-term, intentional, and carefully planned interactions with youth. Those interactions include direct interventions that help youth make changes in attitudes, behaviors, and actions. In Weikarts Pyramid of Program Quality, a safe environment is essential for a supportive environment, positive interactions, and for increased youth engagement (Smith, 2012.)

The National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee has summarized useful steps in managing risk. The rationale behind the program is that Education is the foundation upon which a healthy dose of Recreation is built, with an end goal of competition. However, for 4-H Shooting Sports Programs to exist, risk must be properly managed at all levels. The National 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor training emphasizes The Four Steps of Risk Management model. The first step is to identify risk, then analyze low- versus high-risk situations, then evaluate risk, and then finally plan for ways to manage the risk. Risk Management treatments include avoiding, retaining, reducing, or sharing the risk.

Working with young people involves taking risks no matter what the activity. Learning how to monitor, manage and adapt the risk to create safe environments for youth to thrive is the essential role of a 4-H volunteer or staff member. 4-H staff and volunteers don't have to be risk-averse, we need to learn to use these strategies to manage the risk.

**Avoid.** To avoid the risk means we simply do not do the activity. If there is a severe weather condition, you might reschedule a project or program to avoid an incident, for example

**Retain.** When we retain risk that means we are willing to do the activity because it presents a low risk of injury. While there could be some injury, it isn't likely to be a major injury. For example, just because a 4-H camper might skin their knee running in the grass doesn't mean we won't play tag games at camp. This is a risk we will retain, the risk is low and if an injury does happen it usually not severe.

**Reduce.** When we reduce risk, this means we take precautions and enlist strategies to lessen the injury. An example of this is wearing helmets while riding horses; while it doesn't take the risk away altogether, it certainly reduces it.

**Share.** When we share the responsibility of risk, we recognize that the risk is essential and we need help managing the potential outcomes. An example of this is taking out additional insurance for camps, when we take out additional insurance, we are sharing the risk of that camp with another entity.

**Transfer.** When we transfer risk, that means that we partner with some other entity and shift the responsibility for risk to them. An example would be when we take youth to a rock-climbing gym. The gym assumes the risk and thus we have transferred responsibility.

When working with young people, the legal standard to which we should guide our actions is if it was "reasonable or prudent." In other words, did we exercise proper care or concern in a given situation. Did we handle the situation in a "reasonable" manner? Are we able to say that we did our best in managing risk and yet an accident still occurred, if the answer is yes, then we can say we were "reasonable and prudent". If the answer is no, then we could be found negligent, or guilty of not taking proper care in a given situation. It is our responsibility to make sure we do our best in providing a safe environment for youth to thrive.

Because 4-H focuses on the "learn by doing" motto, we cannot avoid all risks. In order to develop a high-quality youth development program, we must utilize risk management principles to create a safe environment where youth can thrive, find their spark, and help create a better world. Every club/project/event should have a plan that identifies potential risks and plans on how to manage these situations in order to reduce risky outcomes. Plans should include emergency services management, communication plans, volunteer event organization, and collection of medical information and emergency contact info for youth. When sharing risk is a reasonable response, use American Income Life Supplemental Insurance for 4-H Club/Project/Events. Finally, be sure that all 4-H events include planning with the staff in your County 4-H Office and always be sure to inform your 4-H office representative of incidents that occur during an official 4-H Event.

### References.

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## Celebrate End of the Year Giving with AmazonSmile



The end of October means the start of the holidays, and with that comes the beginning of the shopping season. Starting this year, 4-H has partnered with AmazonSmile to help raise money to fund state level trips, programs and scholarships to keep Arizona

4-Hers engaged and learning. For every purchase you make through Amazon, select Arizona 4-H Youth Foundation as your charity of choice, and Amazon will donate 3% of the total purchase out of their pocket to the Youth Foundation. Cyber Monday will be on December 2nd, so take advantage of AmazonSmile to not only get deals on gifts for the holiday season, but also to help out state programs. Our partnership with Amazon will continue after this month, but help celebrate End of the Year Giving with the gift that gives twice.

[Just click on AmazonSmile and choose "Arizona 4-H Youth Foundation" to help support state programs today.](#)

## 4-H Billboard Scavenger Hunt

As part of this year's theme "[Inspire Kids to Do](#)," Arizona has participated in the "4-H Grows Out of Home" ad promotion, which included putting up advertisements on billboards and bus stops across the state. Help draw attention to the program by trying to find the billboard or ad closest to you and taking a photo with both you and the advertisement together for the chance to have that photo posted on 4-H state social media. Any 4-H youth or member who sends in a submission will have the chance to be highlighted and recognized, and will help expand the scope of "4-H Grows Out of Home." Send your submissions to [scottap25@email.arizona.edu](mailto:scottap25@email.arizona.edu), or click [here](#).



## Creating a Pro-Social Environment

The building of a pro-social learning environment is integral to 4-H youth into a successful 4-H'er for life. A pro-social environment cultivates respect and cooperation between youths and with their larger community, and better connects them with the world around them. To help create an environment that encourages dedication and respect to one another, 4-H educators can:

- Establish clear guidelines and institute positive discipline such as encouraging youths to take responsibility for their actions.
- Act as a role model; demonstrate the characteristics you want to see in your youths and encourage by example.
- Have youths interact positively and constructively in groups and with community members; help make 4-H'ers feel part that their smaller groups are part of a greater whole.

For more examples and a further look into what pro-social environments look like, check out the [ASCD page on promoting pro-social behavior](#), as well as [Very Well Mind](#).

## November is...

Start of End of the Year Giving: Go to the 4-H Home Page to find the [many ways to give this year](#), or direct 4-H families to [AmazonSmile](#).



National Healthy Lifestyle Month: Get your own [Healthy Lifestyle Guide](#), or [browse Wilton for easy to follow cooking activities](#).

National Novel Writing Month: Get a prompt and [write a short story](#) for a chance to win, or [find a topic that inspires you](#).

## Upcoming Events

- Save the Date: November 9th and 10th, [Shooting Sports Volunteer Training](#), Pima County Regional Shooting Sports Range, Tucson, AZ
- December 2nd: Cyber Monday
- December 3rd: [Giving Tuesday](#)
- December 10th: DEADLINE to enter [Arizona National Livestock Skill-a-Thon](#) and [Arizona Creed Contest](#)
- December 28th: DEADLINE to enter [Livestock Judging for Arizona National Livestock Show](#)
- December 28th: [Arizona National Livestock Skill-a-Thon](#)
- December 30th: [Livestock Judging for Arizona National Livestock Show](#) and [Arizona Creed Contest](#)
- January 11th, [Statewide Market Lamb and Meat Goat Rookie Camp](#), Waddell, AZ
- February 12th, [Southeastern Arizona Farm and Ranch Trade Show](#)
- March 28th-April 2nd, [National 4-H Conference](#), Washington DC

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