

# it all begins with us

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With 1,850 youth in 4-H Clubs, another 3,700 in our 4-H school program, and 900 in our summer Environmental Awareness Program, plus 3 program coordinators, “key leaders,” and 10 county 4-H developmental committees, we *have* to manage our time.

One way we do it is to organize and develop productive meetings that run no more than 1 to 1½ hours. As a result, our committees function at a higher level of efficiency. An agenda is also needed if short meetings are to run smoothly.

## **Meetings’ Schedule**

We’ve established two 4-H committee meeting nights each month. The first Thursday evening of each month 5 committees meet for 1 to 1½ hours. On the third Monday evening of each month, the rest of the committees meet for 1 to 1½ hours. The reason for only two meeting nights a month is simple; we can get more people involved because they travel together. We even conserve gas. This spreads around the 4-H adult leadership instead of involving only a few on committees. Many new leaders have *gotten* involved in committee work because our time management practices enable the leaders to spend more time at home with their families.

## **Volunteers Choose**

A direct effort is being made to teach 4-H leaders to refrain from doing all the 4-H work themselves. We urge them to take only those tasks that really interest them. It’s our belief that if people volunteer their time for one or two special tasks or assignments, they’ll be more satisfied with their accomplishments and will continue to be volunteers.

## **Staff Practices**

Time management practices are used with the staff, too. Each week the youth team schedules a staff meeting on Tuesday morning for 1 to 1½ hours. During this time the overall program is reviewed and updated. Each program coordinator spends an hour with the youth agent on a regularly scheduled appointment time. For example: one program coordinator meets with us on Wednesday from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m., another from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, etc. This gives us the opportunity to deal directly with problems affecting individual coordinators.

The Adams County 4-H Youth Team believes that if we’re to expand and develop innovative programs, we must practice good time management with ourselves, our staff, and our volunteers.

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