

# Code of Conduct and Behavior Expectations

The South Dakota 4-H Program expects youth members and participants to behave in an acceptable manner at all events and activities in accordance with the South Dakota 4-H Behavioral Expectations and the Code of Conduct Policy.

**Behavioral Expectations:** The South Dakota 4-H Program is designed to provide youth of all ages with a positive environment in which to learn and grow. It also provides opportunities for children and youth to build positive traits of character. The SD 4-H Program supports the CHARACTER COUNTS! program and the six pillars of character: Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship. To assure that all youth have equal access to positive learning environments, SD 4-H members, staff, and volunteers agree to abide by these expectations of behavior:

- **I will be trustworthy.** I will be worthy of trust, honor, and confidence. I will be a good role model by doing the right thing at all times. I will be honest in all of my activities. I will be on time for all scheduled events and will attend all of the planned activities. If I am not feeling well or have a schedule conflict, I will inform my chaperone or a person in charge of the event before the activity starts. I will be in the assigned area (e.g., club meeting room, building, dorm, etc.) at all times. The South Dakota 4-H Program will not permit dishonesty such as lying or cheating.
- **I will be respectful.** I will show respect, courtesy, and consideration to everyone, including myself, other participants, and those in authority. I will act and speak respectfully. I will treat meeting rooms, lodging areas, personal property, and transportation vehicles with respect. I will follow all published dress code guidelines for the event and/or activity. I will respect the personal space and choices of other participants and will not participate in inappropriate displays of affection or physical contact. I will not use vulgar or abusive language, cause physical or emotional harm, or create a feeling of fear amongst other participants.
- **I will be responsible.** I will be responsible and accountable for my choices and my actions towards myself and other people. I will follow all rules and guidelines established for the activity or event. I will follow the verbal instructions issued by Extension staff, chaperones, and/or adult volunteers. I will abide by the established program curfew. I will be responsible for any damage, theft, or misconduct that I am involved in or cause.
- **I will be fair.** I will participate in events fairly by following the rules, not taking advantage of others, and not asking for special help or favors.
- **I will be caring.** I will be caring in my relationship 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 include all participants in activities and will try to help everyone be involved in the scheduled activities.
- **I will be a good citizen.** I will be a contributing and law-abiding citizen. I will be respectful to the environment. I will not use illegal substances such as tobacco, alcohol, or drugs or be involved in the use or possession of weapons or fireworks. If I am found to have any of these items with me or if I have taken any illegal substances, notification of law enforcement will be conducted by adult staff/volunteers.

**Code of Conduct Policy:** If I do not abide by the items named in the Behavioral Expectations, I will experience the following consequences in the order listed:

1. The loss of rights and privileges at the event.
2. Being dismissed from the event or activity. Notification of my parents/guardians will occur and I will be sent home at my own expense prior to the conclusion of the activity.
3. The possible forfeiture of future participation in statewide and out-of-state events as well as forfeiture of future awards and premiums at the county level for a period of time up to one year. If this step is considered, input and determination will be made by event staff, county staff, state staff, and the parents/guardians of the involved 4-H member(s).