

COTTONWOOD EXTENSION DISTRICT – Barton County office 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS HANDBOOK

Updated October 2017

4-H LIFE SKILLS

Representing those enduring qualities that help young people become confident, capable, caring and responsible citizens

- ★ a positive self-concept
 - ★ an inquiring mind
 - ★ a concern for the community
 - ★ healthy interpersonal relationships
 - ★ sound decision making
-



GENERAL OVERVIEW

The 4-H Shooting Sports Program teaches young people the safe and responsible use of guns and the fundamentals of shooting air rifles and small bore rifles.

The 4-H Shooting Sports Program uses the skills and disciplines of shooting to assist young people and their leaders to attain knowledge and develop essential life skills. In learning the rules of various firearms, members will learn safety, science and technology, youth development and interpersonal communication skills. Learning to handle firearms safely enables youth to develop important decision-making skills, an inquiring mind, and cultivate their knowledge of wildlife and natural resources.

Appealing to youth and volunteers from a wide range of urban and rural backgrounds, the curriculum uses a multi-disciplinary approach involving natural resources, wildlife, outdoor recreation and health.

OUR MISSION

Provide a safe and comfortable atmosphere for youth to learn the safe handling of firearms while learning basic marksmanship skills with the opportunity to advance. The 4-H shooting sports project is a cooperative program between Cottonwood Extension District and the 4-H Youth Development office at K-State Research and Extension. Through 4-H projects and programs, youth learn life skills, citizenship, communication, decision-making techniques, leadership, interpersonal relationships as well as community and global awareness. 4-H shooting sports enables youth to develop characteristics helping them become self-directing, productive, and contributing members of society.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The primary purpose of the shooting sports program is to provide a quality program serving all youth who wish to participate. The Cottonwood Extension District – Barton County shooting sports program must offer participation for everyone from special needs participants to experienced youth. The offerings must be diverse enough to allow participation in a fun and safe, non-pressured environment and to allow advanced members the opportunity to develop their maximum potential in accordance with State and National 4-H guidelines.

COTTONWOOD EXTENSION DISTRICT SHOOTING SPORTS PROGRAM

The Cottonwood Extension District shooting sports program is organized and operated by volunteers on behalf of the county extension offices. It is considered a county 4-H project group. Countywide practices are run by certified coordinators and instructors along with volunteers in the following disciplines:

- air rifle
- small bore rifle
- Small bore rifle is available on a limited basis with the permission of the instructor.
- archery

Each discipline is designed to teach safety, proper handling of equipment and marksmanship. Shooters will also have opportunities for competition, if they choose to take their skills that far. Whether or not they choose to participate in matches, they will be given instruction to improve their skills. Practices are run on 4-H approved ranges/areas and each discipline will have an appointed leader to run practices. Each discipline will hold enough sessions so youth can easily fulfill requirements. Each shooter and their family are considered a vital part of the program.

The 4-H Rifle program is a building block program that starts from simple concepts and progresses to more difficult concepts. That transition starts over every October when the 4-H year begins.

The 4-H Rifle program follows this program by starting shooters in the air rifle program and then allows them to progress to the small bore program. Therefore, air rifle is the **REQUIRED** prerequisite for small bore.

What this does is, it takes care of the introduction to firearms safety, shooting positions, etc. and the youth demonstrating those skills during air rifle so that when it comes to the small bore program, a general review of the safety and Kiowa Gun Club rules takes place the 1st night of practice so that we can get on the range and start shooting.

OBJECTIVES AND GOALS

Our Goal: The goal of our program is to provide an avenue for the development of responsible, safe, and competitive shooters that display sportsmanship and a positive attitude when representing themselves, their families, and our group both now and in the future.

- Help area youth learn life skills through safe and enjoyable participation
- Offer a variety of disciplines offered at the State level
- Maintain a shooter to coach ratio that is safe and manageable

Our program is under the direction of the Cottonwood Extension District Agent Berny Unruh and her office is located in the Great Bend office. We follow the rules and direction set by the State 4-H Youth Development shooting sports faculty advisor.

The current certified coordinators are Mat Wharton and Kate Wary.

AGE LIMITS

4-H Age for each discipline is determined by youth's age before January 1st of current 4-H year.

Archery – 8 years and older

Air Rifle - 8 years and older

Small Bore Rifle – 12 years old with 1 yr. air rifle prerequisite, then advance by permission of instructor

ENROLLMENT/PAPERWORK

The 4-H shooting sports program has experienced great growth. In order to offer this program, we must have certified instructors who have completed the state level training program. We also must maintain a safety ratio of number of shooters to instructors at all times.

All members must have a standard, current 4-H participation/code of conduct form on file at the Extension office AND with the coach for their discipline. This is filled out in the ks4-Honline website when you enroll.

Until this paperwork is on file, the participant cannot handle rifles.

EQUIPMENT

Basic equipment is provided for air rifle. If youth wish to purchase their own equipment, the 4-H coordinators will provide the information necessary for the purchase and/or place the order. The equipment is shared by all youth. For small bore rifle, participants will need to supply their own rifle and ammunition and it must be approved by the instructors.

See archery page for equipment information.

NON CERTIFIED SHOOTING SPORTS VOLUNTEERS

Adult Participation: We ask that 4-Hers be accompanied by at least one parent or guardian during class time. All parents or guardians are asked to help set up and clean up for practices. Our families have made this an outstanding program over the years.

As part of the shooting sports program, you are a member of 4-H and have agreed to abide by the 4-H Code of Conduct by your signature on the Kansas 4-H participation form.

DRESS CODE

Dressing appropriately for the sport helps your performance. Would you wear ski boots to play basketball? The sport of shooting works the same way.

- You need to be comfortable in order to shoot well.
- Instructors need to be able to see how to adjust your position.
- There are clothing restrictions for formal target events.

Your clothing needs to allow you to move freely, protect your skin from the ground and shooting equipment and not be offensive or distracting to other competitors and/or spectators. The recommended outfit for 4-H shooting sports is blue jeans/sweat pants, t-shirts and sweatshirts and athletic shoes.

Jackets, boots and caps might be appropriate for shotgun or trips to an outside range. Tank tops, midriff tops, tight pants, extremely baggy pants and shorts are inappropriate and not functional for shooting. Boots (or over the ankle shoes) are not allowed in sporter rifle competition or in our classes. Be sure the slogans and graphics on your shirts and jackets are appropriate.

Don't forget personal hygiene. Be clean and neat. Air rifle competitions are held inside during the winter months with a lot of people in a fairly small area. If you've been slopping through the barnyard or working up a sweat playing basketball, take a shower and put on clean clothes before you come to class. Your friends will thank you.

Don't forget, not only are we representing Cottonwood Extension District 4-H Rifle and Archery but also 4-H and all shooting sports in general.

Archery will shoot inside during the winter and warm clothing must be worn!

COMPETITION

There is opportunity for matches in each discipline at the local, regional, state and national levels. Each discipline will have a qualifying score and age requirement in order to go to any match. There is an entry fee for each match which each member is responsible for. We will send one registration form from our group for each match in which we have shooters attending. This form must be signed by the leader and the coordinator or Extension agent. This verifies to the host match that the shooters are qualified to participate.

Our Team: First and foremost, it should be reiterated that ALL of our shooters are on our team. Whether their score is used to determine one of our team scores in a match or not, all of the kids participating in the program are on the team and contribute to the team.

At any given match, the individual shooters that are chosen to represent our team will be determined by the following factors: Practice Scores, Match Scores, Attendance, Attitude, Dedication, Potential to Perform, Age, Improvement/Progression, and Team Dynamic. Obviously, many of these factors are subjective and will be determined by the coaches. However, in the end, the decision of the coaches/instructors is final.

Some disciplines have attendance requirements for team selection. Specific rules will be shared at practices during individual disciplines.

Shooters selected for the team will be notified by the date of the match.

A complete list of state match rules can be found at www.kansas4-h.org under the Shooting Sports Home Page.

FUNDING/FEE SCHEDULE

Fees: \$20 flat rate for winter shooting sports (air rifle)
\$10 flat rate for spring summer shooting sports (small bore rifle)
\$20 flat fee for Archery

Payment will be collected by the instructor/coaches at the first session. Checks should be made payable to "Barton County 4-H Shooting Sports". Please put in the memo section if it is for air rifle or small bore.

Members may also purchase a t-shirt/sweatshirt at the beginning of the season. Information will be given at practice.

To continue to provide equipment for all youth to use during the year, we may have concession stands at local matches or other functions related to shooting sports. All shooting sports members are asked to help and work at these events. Funds are used to assist all disciplines.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

At times there will be a need to cancel practices due to inclement weather. Coaches will send an email, phone calls or Facebook (“Barton County 4-H Rifle” group) for announcements. When in doubt, call the coach before getting out.

COUNTY FAIR

There is opportunity to exhibit at the Barton County Fair. Exhibiting is a fun and educational way for youth to showcase their project work to judges and to the public after their participation throughout the year at practices and various matches. Ideas include a notebook of their progress (not eligible for state fair competition), a tri-fold educational display or a promotional poster (eligible for state fair exhibit) for shooting sports. The instructors can suggest ideas when it is nearer to fair time in July. For more information, check the current Barton County Fair Book. For state fair guidelines, consult the state 4-H web site at

www.kansas.4-h.org

RESOURCES

Kansas 4-H Shooting Sports website: www.kansas4-h.org Click on “projects” on the left hand side, then scroll down to shooting sports home page.

This website includes state match rules, county matches, match results, and other shooting sports information.

HEALTHY COMPETITION

“To have fun” is the number 1 reason youth are involved in youth programs or activities! The Youth Sports Institute surveyed youth and found that the top 3 reasons youth drop out of youth activities and sports were:

- It was no longer fun
- There was too much pressure
- There was too much emphasis on winning

Competition is part of our lives and is important that youth develop positive attitudes about competition. Yet it is often the actions and attitudes of the significant adults in the youth’s life that determine their positive or negative reaction to competition. Understanding the youth perspective is the first step for adults to develop a positive environment. Adults need to understand the youth’s motivation and provide support rather than pushing their expectation upon the child. Younger members may be motivated more by being involved with friends, pleasing parents, and looking for competency.

Suggestions for parents to promote healthy competition:

- Praise the positive aspects throughout the process, not just the competitive part.
- Focus on the youth’s development of skills, abilities, and personal goals.
- Check your personal expectations or needs at the door.
- Don’t live out your own life’s dreams through your child’s participation.
- Support your child.
- Be a positive role model. Enjoy the event and activity in a socially appropriate manner.
- Provide the opportunity for your child to process their feelings and experiences after a competitive event. This can help resolve any sense of failure.
- Positive expectations and ethical standards encourage and support appropriate behavior.

Healthy competition can be a rewarding experience if the child is developmentally ready.

Sportsmanship and Conduct

What match rules say: “Kansas 4-H Code of Conduct” will be followed (see Kansas 4-H Participation Form). One warning will be given. A second occurrence of an infraction will result in automatic disqualification.”

Coaches’ Interpretation: If you get a behavior warning, you’re out of the match. We are representing Cottonwood Extension District 4-H, and we expect the upmost sportsmanship, kindness, and class to be represented by our Barton County shooters, parents and leaders.

Note from Coaches: We firmly believe the shooters that qualify to shoot in matches proved they are completely capable of independently executing their shooting during the match without involvement from parents. Please respect your shooter and coaches by allowing your son or daughter the independence to enjoy the match they worked hard to qualify for without negative interference (such as pressure, coaching, or negative reactions to your shooter’s performance). What our shooters need at this point is positive parental support and for their parents to be proud and enjoy watching them at what they enjoy doing. We coaches who have kids shooting will be upholding ourselves to this same standard as coach/parents!

AIR RIFLE

Goal: Youth will learn the fundamentals of rifle marksmanship, rules, and safety guidelines.

Objectives:

- Understand the fundamentals of safety
- Recognize and identify the parts of air rifles and their function
- Understand and practice proper sight alignment
- Practice trigger control
- Know and obey range commands
- Understand basic shooting procedures
- Have fun!

Time frame for practices and matches: Held during the months of November through April

Age: 8 years old and older before January 1st of current year

Required: New participants > Attend the first 6 weeks of practice.
Returning participants > Attend at least 6 practices before you will be able to compete in matches. It is also recommended that you and/or a parent attend the very 1st practice of the season.

Location: 157 SW 40 Ave, Great Bend, KS

Dates/Time: Tuesday evenings and sometimes Thursday evenings, 7:00-8:30 PM. The range needs to be hot/live at 7:00 PM so arrive a little early to get equipment set up and get instructions.

Fee: See fund/fee schedule section

Equipment: Air rifles are provided for the shooters and youth will share equipment. If youth wish to purchase their own gun and other equipment, the instructor will provide the information necessary for the purchase and/or place the order.

Lead Instructor: John Reh - cell phone (620)786-0052, Email: reh@hbcomm.net

Coaches: Leland Miller, Scott Smith, Jeff Clark, Steve Schultz, Brian Rowan, Jim Kohman, Frank Ochs

Match Qualification

To be eligible for state match competition, members must shoot a score of 400 at any state qualifying match.

ARCHERY

Goal: Youth will learn the fundamentals of archery marksmanship, rules, and safety guidelines.

Objectives:

- Understand the fundamentals of safety
- Recognize and identify the parts of bows and arrows and their function
- Determine eye dominance
- Understand and practice proper sight alignment
- Know and obey range commands
- Understand basic shooting procedures
- Have fun!

Time frame for practices and matches: Training will begin in February thru April. No meetings in June and first two weeks of July. Practices will be held after the county fair for an invitational qualifying match will be held at the end of July in Barton County. Practices for those who qualify for state will be held in August and September.

Age: 8 years old and older before January 1st of current year

Required: Complete shooters education for archery. **Attendance at 4 practices/trainings is required before being allowed in a competition.** Coaches must sign off on the registration forms for any competition.

Location: Barton County 4-H Grounds (601 N. 281 Highway) between Hoisington and Great Bend.

Dates/Time: Sunday group will meet 4:00 – 5:30 pm.
Tuesday group will meet 7 – 8:30 pm.
Changes will be announced on Facebook in “Barton County 4-H members” group

Fee: \$20 fee for the year – Checks made payable to Barton County 4-H Archery

Equipment: Recurve bows, arrows, arms guards and finger tabs are provided for the shooters. If youth wish to purchase their own bow and arrows and other equipment, the archery instructors can provide the information to help in making the purchase.

Instructors: Dennis Trapp – 785-445-8107 email: trapp1944@ruraltel.net
Roger McPherson – 620-282-1386
Dustin Wyant - 620-617-6212 email: dustinwyant@cox.net

SMALL BORE RIFLE

Goal: Youth will learn the fundamentals of rifle marksmanship, rules, and safety guidelines.

Objectives:

- Understand the fundamentals of safety
- Recognize and identify the parts of air rifles and their function
- Understand and practice proper sight alignment
- Practice trigger control
- Know and obey range commands
- Understand basic shooting procedures
- Have fun!

Time frame for practices and matches: Held during the months of June through mid-October

Age: 12 years old and older before January 1st of current year

Required: New participants > Attend the first 6 weeks of air rifle practice.
Returning participants > Attend at least 6 air rifle practices before you will be able to participate in the small bore program. You will also need to attend at least 3 small bore practices before you can participate in matches. It is also recommended that you and/or a parent attend the very 1st practice of the air rifle season.

Location: Kiowa Gun Club

Dates/Time: Wednesday evenings from 7:00 PM to dark.

Fee: See fund/fee schedule section

Equipment: Youth must provide their own small bore rifle and ammunition and they must be approved by the coaches. The program does have ammunition that can be purchased.

Lead Instructor: John Reh - cell phone (620)786-0052, Email: reh@hbcomm.net

Coaches: Scott Smith, Jeff Clark, Steve Schultz, Brian Rowan, Leland Miller, Jim Kohman, Frank Ochs

Other Notes: Because of the summertime heat that may be encountered at practice times, shorts, within reason, will be allowed, AT PRACTICE ONLY.

Match Qualification

To be eligible for state match competition, members must shoot a score of 175 at any state qualifying match.

PARENT'S PAGE

The Only Six Words Parents Need to Say to their Kids about Sports - or any Performance
By Brad M. Griffin, Fuller Youth Institute

I'll be honest: I kind of hate a lot about kid's sports. It's one area where Kara and I hold different opinions. I'm the wet blanket in the office about everything from little league to major sporting events.

Mainly I get concerned about the ways our culture obsesses about kid's performance. All kinds of parental anxiety and dysfunction plays out on the sidelines and in the bleachers and you only need to walk to your local park to catch a glimpse for yourself. Sports have such potential to build character, perseverance and skill. Sometimes they succeed and other times, coaches, parents and mobs of hot-or-cold fans burn our or puff up kids in quite damaging ways.

All that aside, my son's getting ready to play T-ball this spring. I say getting ready, because after sign-ups we were informed that "spring training" would begin immediately this week. I didn't sign up for that. They want kids there four nights a week, pre-season, to build skills prior to being placed on teams.

Did I mention this was just at my local neighborhood park league, not "competitive" T-ball?

In the midst of considering my own response to this, I stumbled across this great article by student leadership development expert, Tim Elmore. In it he discusses research on what parents can say both before and after the game to encourage their kids, without making everything about performance (either positively or negatively). Elmore suggests:

Based on psychological research, the three healthiest statements moms and dads can make as kids perform are:

Before the competition:

Have fun
Play hard
I love you

After the competition:

Did you have fun?
I'm proud of you
I love you

It gets even better. Researchers Bruce Brown and Rob Miller asked college athletes what their parents said that made them feel great and brought them joy when they played sports. Want to know the six words they most want to hear their parents say?

"I love to watch you play"

That's it. Nothing aggrandizing like "you're an all-star" and nothing discouraging like "here are a couple of things I noticed you can work on." Just "I love to watch you play".

As I gear up for T-ball, band concerts gymnastics practice and everything else I'll be watching my kids do this years, I'm internalizing these six words. I'm sure I'll say other things, some that are helpful and some that aren't.

But I want my kids to hear that doing what they do and learning about who God created them to be, is a joy to watch as it unfolds.

YOU NEED TO BRING:

A good attitude

A desire to learn

The willingness to practice safe handling of equipment at all times

The ability to have fun

RULES OF GUN SAFETY

Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction

Keep the action open & exposed and the safety on unless shooting

Keep your finger out of the trigger guard until ready to fire

RANGE RULES

Shooters and Parents must sign in and out upon arrival and departure

Eye protection must be worn at all times

Anyone can call a "Cease Fire"

Electronic devices are not permitted on the firing line

Cell phones must be turned off or on vibrate

No food or drinks on the firing line

Respect the facilities and other's property

Wash your hands when you leave the range

Shooting Sports Athletes' pledge

As a 4-H Competitor,

- I will do my best to live up to the high ideals of ethics and sportsmanship.
- I will compete honorably, fulfilling my charge to be trustworthy and honest.
- I will treat all people, including the coaches and match personnel, with respect.
- I will be gracious in victory and accept defeat with dignity.
- I will remember that to compete is a privilege, not a right.
- I will live up to the high standards of fair play. I will be open-minded, always willing to listen and learn.
- I will demonstrate concern for my teammates and for my fellow competitors. I will not engage in reckless behavior that might cause injury to myself or others.
- I will honor, observe and enforce the rules.
- I will represent my club, community and state with honor, on and off the field.
- I will represent the 4-H program positively at all times.

Coaches' Shooting Sports Pledge

- We will respect the competitors, staff and property of our host community and state.
- We will set a good example as mentors and role models for our team members and their families.
- We will conduct ourselves in a professional and ethical manner.
- We will strive to encourage the life skills embodied in the shooting sports program and to aid in the development of our team members through adherence to those principles.
- We will respect the dignity of every participant.

I, _____ have read and understand the Cottonwood Extension District - Barton Co. 4-H Shooting Sports Handbook.

Signature _____

Date _____

I, _____, the parent/guardian of _____, have read and understand the Cottonwood Extension District - Barton County 4-H Shooting Sports Handbook.

Signature _____

Date _____