



Colorado 4-H Guidelines for Social Media

Adapted from the University of California, 4-H Youth Development Program (2015)

Background: An alternative to having meetings in person is to use social media to gather and share information. Social media is a term used to label online technologies that allow users to develop and share their own content and interact with others. The 4-H Youth Development Program promotes the positive development of young people to enable them to thrive. Providing a safe environment free from physical and psychological harm is paramount in achieving these desired outcomes.

Social Media is starting to become a critical way in which we connect with our 4-H Families and Volunteers, increase our communication and promote education and positive youth development. The use of social media entails some risks and we can reduce these risks by following some basic guidelines and best practices. Additionally, following these guidelines helps ensure the 4-H Youth Development program provides a safe place for youth to develop their technology literacy, digital citizenship, identity and relationships.

Policies: Volunteers acting on the behalf of the Colorado 4-H Youth Development Program shall not:

1. Transmit, post or willingly receive correspondence, text, graphic, movies, sounds or other media which contains: profanity, advocacy of the use or possession of illegal substances or alcoholic beverages, advocacy of the illegal use or the illegal possession of weapons, or solicitation or the advocacy of sexual misconduct.
2. Harass or cyberbully others through the use of technology. Harassment by email, chats or otherwise shall not be tolerated.
3. Misrepresent or assist someone else in misrepresenting his or her true identity to others through technology. Those who represent the 4-H Youth Development Program through technology will do so under their own identity and will not claim to be or represent themselves as being someone else.
4. Seek to promote specific religious orientations or political opinions on behalf of the Colorado 4-H Program or Colorado State University (CSU). While members and adult volunteers retain the right to advocate their own religious beliefs and political opinions acting as individuals, they will not advocate them in the name of the 4-H or CSU.

What does acting on behalf of the 4-H Youth Development Program mean?

- When acting within the capacity of your role in 4-H.
- When acting in a capacity that gives the impression you are speaking for others in 4-H, CSU, or more than yourself.



- Any contents (text, photos, etc.) on a 4-H specific group; posted either from that “group” or an individual who posts information on that group’s page.

Guidelines for Social Media: These guidelines are not specific to the social media technology utilized. Examples of social media include blogs, social networking (e.g., Facebook, Myspace, and Twitter) or video and photograph sharing. Rules and guidelines of individual social media websites should be observed.

1. Purpose

- a. 4-H county, club, unit or project presence on a social media site must be used for educational, informational, and/or communication coordination purposes in furtherance or support of the 4-H mission and direction.

2. Administrator Access:

- a. An appointed 4-H adult volunteer must be added as an administrator.
- b. Upon request, Colorado 4-H staff must be added as an administrator.

3. Roles and Responsibilities:

- a. Notify the County Extension Office if your club, unit or project has or wishes to establish a social media site.
- b. All Colorado 4-H and CSU policies as well as these guidelines must be followed.
- c. It is recommended that 4-H youth and adults work in partnership in the development and maintenance of the site.
- d. The platform being used must be updated and monitored on a regular basis.
- e. Upon request of Colorado 4-H Staff, remove the site immediately.

4. Guidelines

- a. Photographs:
 - i. Do not use the names of the 4-H participants when posting photos.
 - ii. Tagging is not permitted.
 - iii. Do not post any photo that may embarrass a member (cyberbullying).
 - iv. Do not post any photo that may be taken as a suggestive behavior.
- b. Do not post copyrighted material.
- c. Follow all policies regarding the use of the 4-H Name and Emblem and be sure to use proper 4-H logo.

5. Consequences for Violating Policy or Guidelines

- a. Removal of the 4-H portion of the social media site.
- b. Access to the site restricted or blocked.
- c. Other consequences as deemed appropriate by Colorado 4-H Youth Development



Resources:

Colorado 4-H Youth Development Policies and Code of Conduct

<http://co4h.colostate.edu/about-us/4-h-policy-handbook/>

Colorado State University Protection of Minors

<https://extension.colostate.edu/docs/staffres/minors.pdf>

Colorado State University Social Media Policy

<http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy.aspx?id=497>

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