A Welcoming Atmosphere

The 4-H programs focus their program quality at the point of contact which is the 4-H club. One of the most important qualities is a welcoming atmosphere, one where all the 4-H members are greeted as they arrive to the meeting; volunteers maintain a warm tone of voice and respectful language; and volunteers generally smile, use friendly gestures, and makes eye contact with the members. This is one of the simplest acts caring adults can do for members but is sometimes the most underestimated in importance. Simply saying hello and saying the members name can do a lot towards establishing a productive atmosphere and building a relationship with our members.

A welcoming atmosphere nurtures self-worth and acknowledges their presence has value to the group. It also makes the member feel known and recognized as individuals, like they are in the right place. When members feel like they are welcome, they connect in a positive way to the group. The welcoming atmosphere gives members a feeling of instant ownership of the club. The welcoming atmosphere also builds a rapport with members; creates a warm, respectful climate; and sets the tone for active engagement, productivity and accomplishment.

This is not only important in 4-H clubs but is also very valuable with any organization – youth or adult. People want to be a part of an organization or club that makes them feel a part of the group, knows their name and values their presence within the group.

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