



# Exploring 4-H at Home

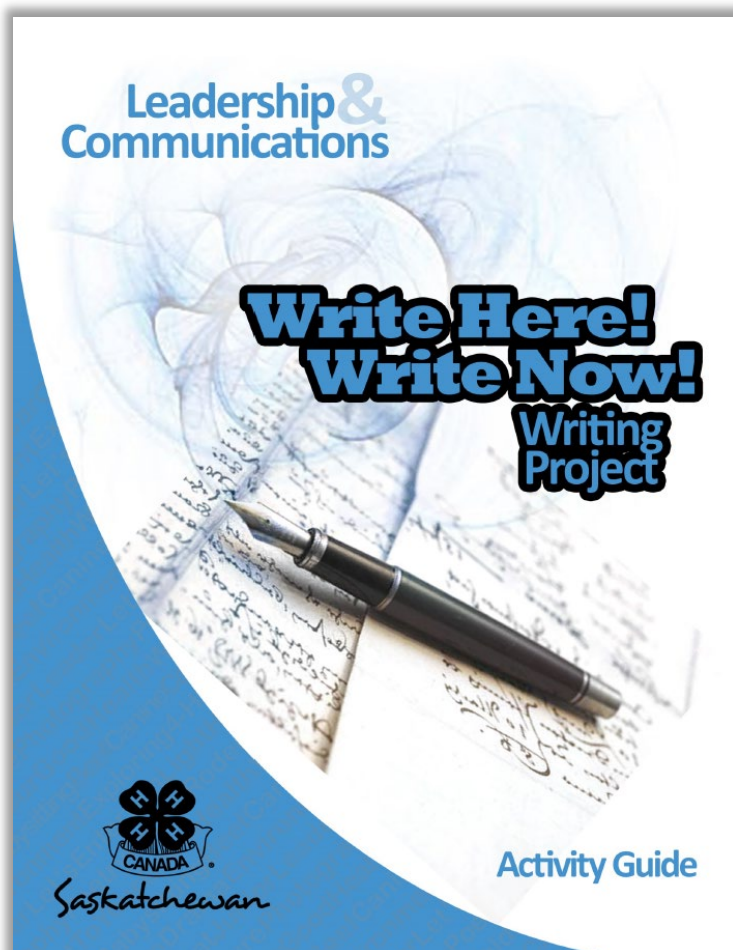


Community Engagement  
and Communications

**Pillar:** Community Engagement and Communications

**Project:** Writing Skills: A to Z

**Activity:** Press Releases or Media Invitations



## What is News?

If a member of your club wins a scholarship or a trip, that's news. If a member of your club wins a public speaking competition, that's news. If your club is planning a fundraising event, that also is news.

Anything your club or district does can be news! These types of news have a place in your local newspaper, on your local television and radio stations, during your school announcements and on your community bulletin boards. You can also send in articles to the 4-H Bits & Pieces newsletter at [communications@4-h.sk.ca](mailto:communications@4-h.sk.ca)

## Media Invitations and Press Releases

When you are hosting an event, you may want to have reporters at it. When you are inviting the press to an event, you will use a Media Invitation. This covers the five Ws (Who, What, When, Where and Why) and invited the media to come to the event.

The Media Invitation can be sent to your local radio and TV stations, as well as local newspapers. Keep in mind of the location of your event and media outlets you are sending the invitation to – if they are more than an hour away, chances are they will not be able to attend the event. Some tips for writing a Media Invitation are:

- Make it timely! For example, if sending it to a weekly newspaper, make sure to send the invitation a week before the event takes place
- Make it visual. If you are inviting the press to your event, they will want photos or video, so make sure it is dynamic
- Schedule a best time for them to come

If they do not show up to your event, do not be offended – sometimes they have a lot going on and a limited number of reporters working!

After an event is held, you can send out a Press Release. This is a small write-up of the event, which the reporter could potentially put directly into the newspaper. Some tips for writing a press release are:

- Remember to put in the five Ws
- The release should be written the same as a news story – with a lead, body and snap
  - Beginning: - get the editor's attention. Present the basic details of the event and answer as many of the five Ws as you can in this first paragraph.
  - Body: answer the remaining five Ws, the "How" and any other details. The body should be no more than two to three paragraphs long.
  - End: no more than one paragraph. Final statements.
- Make your writing active. The active voice is strong, direct and clear, using fewer words than a passive voice.
  - Active voice: Bits & Pieces published our news article.
  - Passive voice: Our report was published in the Bits & Pieces.
- Be brief - Newspapers are limited to a word count, so be brief while maintaining accuracy
- Be clear - Avoid uncommon words and slang
- Be positive and specific
- Use a standard font - Preferably Calibri, as this is the 4-H Canada font
- Use wide margins and proper spacing
- End the release with a -30- in the middle of the column, followed by contact information

## Doing an interview

You may be asked to participate in a news interview. Remember this doesn't have to be a nerve-wracking experience! The main point to remember is you are representing the 4-H Saskatchewan organization, so be professional and be prepared. Here are some tips to help you through the interview process:

- Prepare - Your preparation time may be short, but even a few minutes will help
- Develop your key messages - write them on paper to help clarify them in your head
- Anticipate difficult questions and plan your answers
- Consult a Staff Coordinator when necessary
- State your key message regarding the event or program by answering the five "w" questions
  - Who
  - What
  - Where
  - When
  - Why
  - How
- Keep the conversation on topic and end on a positive note
- Avoid jargon - If a 4-H "buzz word" must be used, explain it. For example, "Cloverbud"
- Stick to the facts - As a spokesperson of Saskatchewan 4-H, do not include any personal opinions in an interview or presentation
- Dress appropriately
- Be aware of your body language and the messages it sends - Relax and aim for an interested and helpful appearance
- Don't guess
  - If you don't know the answer to a question, tell the reporter or audience that you will get the information and then contact them promptly.
  - If the interview/presentation is live, refer them to the Provincial Office website or phone number for more information ([www.4-h.sk.ca](http://www.4-h.sk.ca) or 306-933-7727)
- In the case of a media interview:
  - Use, and be aware, of silence – a good interviewer will sometimes leave a small pause between questions to give you the opportunity to expand. You do not have to fill this gap if you don't have anything else to say
  - Avoid "off the record" comments or unguarded comments before, during or after the interview. Anything you say in the reporter's presence can be printed or broadcasted
  - Never say "no comment." If there is a reason you can't speak to the subject, explain that
- Keep answers short - 15 to 20 seconds is ideal

Before/after you do a media interview or public presentation, notify the 4-H Saskatchewan Communications person, so they know an interview has been done and can find the article or be prepared for follow up questions from the interviewer.

On issues which may be controversial or be of concern to the overall organization, please contact 4-H Saskatchewan Communications person prior to giving an interview or presentation.

# PRESS RELEASE

March 29, 2017



**CANADA**  
4-H Saskatchewan

## 4-H Saskatchewan Centennial Gala and AGM a huge success

*Saskatoon, Sask.* - It was a weekend to catch up with old friends and make new ones while celebrating 100 years of 4-H in Saskatchewan.

4-H Saskatchewan just finished an exciting weekend of celebrations with its Centennial Gala and Annual General Meeting. AGM was held on March 25-26 at the Saskatoon Inn, with the Centennial Gala taking place on Saturday evening. Close to 200 members from across the province were in attendance for the meeting, with more than 500 people attending the Gala evening.

In addition to getting down to business, there were also many exciting activities, including a dance for the 4-H members, a walk through history display and special speakers. The highlight for many was keynote speaker Temple Grandin, a world-renowned autism spokesperson, consultant to the livestock industry on animal behaviour and a distinguished 4-H alumni.

During the business meeting, 4-H leaders and members discussed resolutions and the future of 4-H, as well as voting in some new board of directors. Congratulations to Glenn Gress of the Browning 4-H Beef Club for being elected president of the 4-H Saskatchewan Board of Directors.

Gress has been involved in the Browning 4-H Beef Club for 14 years and has served as coach for his club's 4-H curling team, where they have advanced to Provincials several times. Glenn has extensive knowledge about the beef industry and is also an excellent horseman and certified horse clinician. Gress has a thorough understanding of boards and policies, as he has served on several boards within his community.

4-H Saskatchewan also thanks Past President Cindy Cooper of West Bend for her guidance as president for the past 4-H year. She has been a leader for 17 years and enjoys teaching others about the 4-H program. Cooper helped create the new strategic plan and direction for 4-H entering its 100<sup>th</sup> year.

4-H Saskatchewan would like to thank its Provincial Event Sponsors, including Redhead Equipment, Mosaic, Farm Credit Canada and Viterra, for their support making events such as the Centennial Gala and AGM a success. The support of sponsors, such of these, will help 4-H continue for the next 100 years.

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There is a collection of photos, so if you would like some for your article or more information, please contact:

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# MEDIA INVITATION

November 21, 2017



**CANADA**  
4-H Saskatchewan

## 4-H Saskatchewan Hosting Final 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

*Regina, Sask.*- 4-H Saskatchewan is holding its final Centennial Celebration on November 25 at Agribition. Come celebrate a century of building the leaders of tomorrow, while reminiscing about the past!

There will be presentations from our current clubs on the hour, as well as a place to connect with old 4-H friends. Check out displays from past to present, including the walk through history, showcasing historical items and information from the last 100 years.

There will also be door prizes, a photo booth, guest book, fun zone for youth and more! Come by at 5:30 p.m. for a closing program, which will end with sealing the 4-H Saskatchewan Time Capsule!

### **Join us!**

**Date:** November 25, 2017

**Time:** 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

**Venue:** Meeting Room #3  
The Queensbury at Agribition  
Regina, SK

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For more information, please contact:

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