

# Kids Korner

## It's Not Whether You Win Or Lose

LEESPORT (Berks Co.) — Many children who participate in youth sports — and their parents — have become obsessed with winning at almost any cost. This attitude can interfere with what sports programs for kids should be all about, warns Sue Giachero, Penn State Cooperative Extension family living agent in Berks County. "Go to any sporting event involving 6- to 12-year-olds and you're guaranteed to see an out-of-control parent or coach," says Giachero. At this age, the focus should be on teaching skills and having fun, rather than cut-throat competition.

Kids at those ages are trying to get a sense of mastery, Giachero explains. They're learning specific sports skills. They're also learning important life skills, such as backing somebody up, accepting responsibility and leadership.

"A win-at-all costs atmosphere also results in less commitment to values such as honesty and fair play," she adds. Sixty percent of the boys and girls involved in sports programs drop out by age 12, Giachero said.

When 12-year-olds were surveyed about the reasons they dropped out, they listed in order of frequency: loss of interest, takes too much time, poor coaching and too much pressure.

Giachero suggests some guidelines to keep in mind when shopping for — or creating — a quality sports program for kids.

- Fair and equitable policies that kids help create. These policies should be age-appropriate and applied consistently. No players should get away with anything simply because they have the best ability.

- Orientation for staff, coaches, parents and youth. Everyone should know up front what's expected of them, including expectations about conduct, fairness and honesty.

- Emotional control. Adults should be expected to set positive examples. Help for kids to learn from their experiences. "Adults should spend time after a game talking about what the players did well and what could use improvement," Sue Giachero says. "Coaches should make use of 'teachable moments,' where something significant has just happened — such as a nasty foul or an accidental collision — to stop the game and ask the players to think about how they could have behaved differently."

- Conduct follow-up activities. A post-season meeting can be scheduled to celebrate successes and plan for future changes and improvement. Maximize the social side of sports by promoting interactions among team members and between teams.

Above all, Giachero says, sports programs should be fun. "Watch kids play on their own," she says. "If one team's 'killing' the other, they yell 'Switch!' to

divide up the talent. If someone makes a silly mistake, they yell 'Do-over!'"

Kids play sports for the action and excitement," she said. "Games shouldn't be organized to determine a winner but to promote a close and exciting game — even if it means modifying the rules."

Finally, everyone should participate, regardless of skill level. "Less than one percent of kids go on to play professionally," Giachero says. "Why focus on that small number and miss a great opportunity for the other 99 percent?"

Penn State Cooperative Extension has developed a series of free booklets, "Coaches Making Youth Sports a Positive Experience," and "Parents Making Youth Sports a Positive Experience."

Single and multiple copies are available free of charge for Pennsylvania residents from county Penn State Cooperative Extension offices. Out-of-state residents can contact the College of Agricultural Sciences Publications Distribution Center or call (814) 865-6713.

For more information about these publications and other educational programs about youth development offered by Berks County Cooperative Extension office, call Giachero at (610) 378-1327.

## Pluralism Checklist

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — Pluralism is a condition in which minority groups participate fully in dominant society, while maintaining the cultural differences that make them unique. A pluralistic attitude means diverse groups share the responsibility and joy of leadership, while enjoying their right to maintain their cultural heritage. It implies mutual respect.

Do you maintain a pluralistic attitude in your everyday life? Here is a checklist to help you evaluate where you stand in your pluralistic practices:

1. I use language that does not stereotype, generalize or disrespect others.

2. I have sought out more information to enhance my own awareness and understanding of racism and prejudice by talking with others, reading or listening.

3. I do things with the point of view of others in mind.

4. I have re-evaluated my use of terms or phrases that may be perceived by others as degrading and hurtful.

5. I find out facts rather than acting on assumptions.

6. I have made a personal decision to take a positive stand on diversity.

7. I involve everyone when gathering information, resolving problems and making decisions.

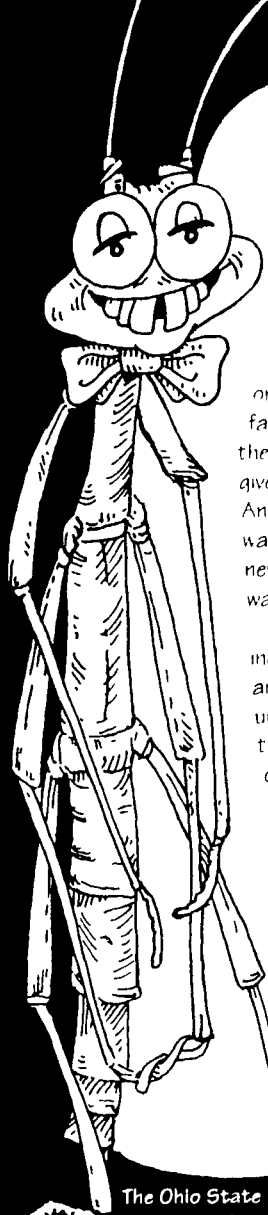
8. I value the options of others and respect cultural values other than my own.

9. I tactfully call another's attention to their biased, prejudiced or stereotypical language or behavior.

10. I give the others the opportunity to teach me what I don't know or understand about their culture.

If you answered yes to most of these statements, you are well on your way to promoting a positive, pluralistic attitude that builds understanding and mutual respect among people.

## Smart Stuff with Twig Walkingstick



Dear Twig: My uncle, a farmer, is getting some Dexter cattle. Why?

Well, it might be because Dexter cattle are small, smart, hardy and easy to handle

Or it might be that your uncle's name is Dexter and he lives near Dexter, Iowa, and he wants to name his farm "Dexter's Dexters of Dexter"

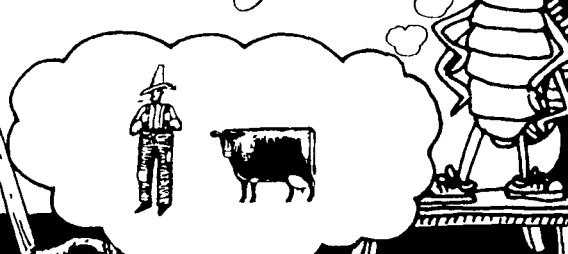
I'm guessing it's the first one

Dexter cattle — colored black, dun or red and originally from Ireland — are especially good for small farms. They need less room than larger breeds. And they're 'multi purpose'. You can milk them, the cows give up to 3 gallons a day. You can raise them for beef. And you can train them as oxen to pull plows and wagons. They're good for beginners — people who are new to keeping cattle — and for farmers who don't want or need a bigger breed.

How small are Dexters? A typical bull is 38-44 inches tall and weighs less than 1,000 pounds. Cows are 36-42 inches tall — only waist high to a six-foot uncle — and weigh less than 750 pounds. Compare that to a Hereford bull at 72 inches, 3,000 pounds, or a Holstein cow at 58 inches, 1,500 pounds!

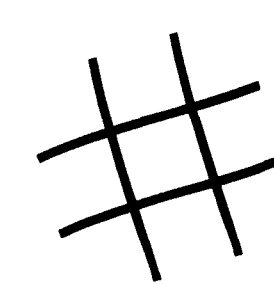
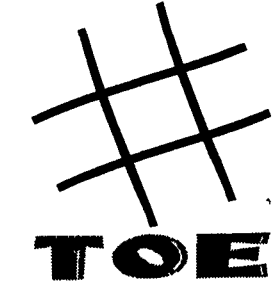
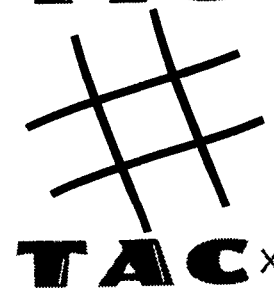
Dexters are another example of the genetic diversity we see in our world — in livestock crops, and wild plants and animals.

Twig

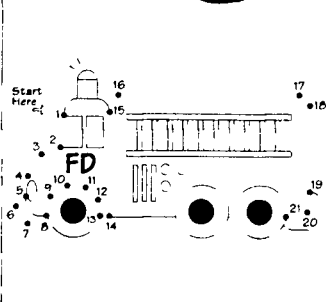


The Ohio State University, College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences

## TIC



## CONNECT the DOTS



## FIRST PETS

There has been a wide variety of families in the White House, but what about the pets that have lived there?

Today, "Socks," the Clintons' cat, is the only pet that lives in the White House. Socks is the first cat to live there since Amy Carter's cat, "Misty Malarky Ying Yang."



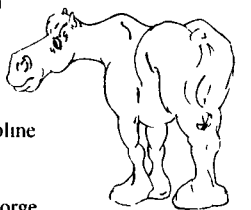
President Lyndon Johnson had three dogs—two beagles named "Him" and "Her" along with "Yuki." Yuki and the president used to sing in the Oval Office.

Russell Harrison, President Benjamin Harrison's son, had a pet goat named Old Whiskers. The president had to chase him down Pennsylvania Avenue one day when he ran away pulling a wagon full of Harrison's grandchildren.

Zachary Taylor pastured his old army horse, Whitey, on the White House lawn. When people visited the White House, they took home horse hairs as souvenirs.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt's dog was named Fala. The dog was a gift from the president's cousin, and usually wherever the president went, the dog went too.

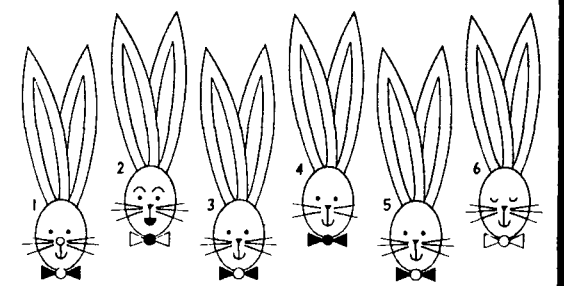
Caroline Kennedy, daughter of John F. Kennedy, had a pony named Macaroni. A gift from Lyndon Johnson, Macaroni was allowed to roam the White House grounds and received fan mail. Caroline also had a dog named Pushinka.



"Millie" was President and Mrs. George Bush's dog. Millie had two big things happen in her life while President Bush was in office. She wrote a book, and she had puppies.

Just as pets may play a big role in your life, they do in presidents' lives, too!

## FIND THE TWINS



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