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File:
Programs: Diversity

Increasing Diversity - A Positive Opportunity

Like the USA, Kansas is increasingly becoming a more diverse state. Diversity* is often expressed in terms of race, color, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, ancestry, disability, military status and veteran status. In Extension we often view diversity as counting the number of races and ethnic populations attending a program or activity. Diversity can be viewed in terms of the above list, but it is also about valuing thoughts, opinions and ideas that are different than your own, both personal and within the K-State community. We can learn and personally grow when we are exposed to different ideas and thoughts. KSRE has a responsibility to make efforts to improve its participant diversity as much as to provide an atmosphere where individual diversity is valued and respected.

Increased diversity enriches 4-H, agriculture, family and consumer sciences, and community development programs and our own and our participants' lives by providing opportunities to experience other cultures and to gain greater self understanding by looking at ourselves from other cultural perspectives. These opportunities can be both positive and negative. Good inter-cultural personal experiences can increase positive perceptions of other ethnic groups; and negative experiences can create or reinforce prejudices. However, good Extension programming contributes to positive inter-cultural personal experiences for ourselves and for our audiences.

Is your Extension program, activity, club or project group…….

- Making a conscious effort to bring multi-cultural understanding to your meetings and activities?
- Providing positive inter-cultural experiences?
- Free of ethnic jokes and slurs?
- Fostering an appreciation of ethnic and cultural diversity as a positive value?
- Free of negative patronizing and stereotyping manners of minority groups or developmentally disabled?
- Free of barriers to participation, enrollment and keeping members?
- Providing scholarships to aid low income, minority or developmentally disabled youth, when appropriate?
- Free of teaching methods or reward systems that single out particular groups?
- Free of any discriminatory practices?

Are participants, members, leaders and parents……

- Aware of their own feelings toward other races or ethnic groups and adults and youth with developmental disabilities?
- Sensitive to the needs of adults and youth from other races or ethnic groups and those with developmental disabilities?
- Aware of behaviors that suggest an unwillingness to work with minority youth and adults or people with disabilities?

For more information or if you have questions, contact Stacey Warner, Leader, Extension Operations, 121 Umberger Hall, KSU, Manhattan, KS 66506 - 785-532-5790, swarner@ksu.edu.

K-State, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.
K-State Research and Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

*Key Definitions for
Cultural Competencies for Extension Professionals

Diversity is often expressed in terms of race, color, ethnic or national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, ancestry, disability, military status and veteran status.

(Adapted from the Kansas State University Notice of Nondiscrimination, April 22, 2008).

Culture is a socially transmitted worldview learned and shared by a group that influences their values, beliefs, customs and behaviors and is reflected in their language, material culture, food and social institutions.

(Taken from *Navigating Difference*, Washington State University, 2009; and adapted from Andrews & Boyle 1999; Axelson, 1993; Burchum 2002; Leininger 1991, 1995; Mead 1955; Pauwels 1995; Purnell & Paulanka 1998; Salmond 2000; and Schriver 1995).

Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations. Competence, in particular, implies having the capacity to function effectively as an individual and an organization with the context of the cultural beliefs, behaviors, and needs presented by participants' communities.

(Taken from *Navigating Difference*, Washington State University, 2009; and adapted from Cross, Bazron, Dennis & Isaac 1989).

Culturally competent programs and services involve Extension programs and services that are respectful of and responsive to, the cultural need of partners.

(Taken from *Navigating Difference*, Washington State University, 2009; and adapted from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Minority Health 2001).

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