



The Prairie Professional

A Newsletter for KAE4-HA Members

October 2007

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Beth Hecht

OPPORTUNITIES

I use to be able to tell you what year it was that something happened. Whether it was a new program, a rule change, the year our office moved, etc. Now I have to guess or, if I really need to know, I have to pull out my old calendars. (And no I don't have it on a palm.) Sure, I could blame it on age. But I really think time is speeding up. Remember as a kid, the summers were longer. The 2008 calendar my secretary lined me up with is already filling up. But then again, what kind of Extension Agent wouldn't have a full calendar?

As I began writing the trips, the meetings, and the various events in my 2008 calendar, I reflected on just how many opportunities this Association has offered me. National meetings are full of innovative ideas and time to bond with co-workers. PILD and JCEP conferences have opened my eyes to the power of Extension and how politics are a part of the job, like it or not. And then I remember how I felt when asked to run as your state president. It took a lot of thinking but I stepped out and took on the opportunity. Now looking back it's not so intimidating; however, at the time stepping into the unknown felt very much a bit risky.

Isn't that what 4-H is about? Whether it's a young 4-H member presenting their first talk in front of their peers or a seasoned 4-H agent improvising her way through a state report at a regional breakfast meeting, it's about taking risks. Both your personal and professional development are all about stepping out of your comfort zone and being willing to grow.

I thank you for believing in me and providing me a "safe" place to grow professionally. Having been there saying "I'm not into that" or "I don't have the time" or even "I wouldn't know what to do", I challenge each of you to step up and step out. Be active in our association. Take on new leadership roles and see how you too will grow. Just as 4-H provides a safe place for our youth to develop into productive, contributing members of society so does our association. Embrace the opportunities!



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YOU PERMIT WHAT YOU PROMOTE

During the State Fair, I had a great conversation with Tom Little, 4- H Rabbit Show Superintendent. Amongst other things that Tom does, he also is a high school sports referee/umpire and has done that for at least 20 years. As we were visiting about sportsmanship of athletes, parents and coaches, he shared with me a most profound statement. This statement is actually a policy in the Kansas High School Activities Association:

“You permit what you promote”

In light of all the situations and challenges that extension agents and specialists encounter, I believe that this statement should be a guiding premise for our words, actions and deeds as we follow policies and guidelines. It could be shared with 4-H leaders to help them guide in their leadership roles, with teens who serve as mentors to the younger members, with the Extension Board to guide them in sound decision making, with the PDC to guide them in creating positive youth development programs, with the 4-H Council to guide them in designing extraordinary learning experiences.

The question "is what I am permitting what I really want to promote?" is one that I will ask of myself numerous times during each day. How about you?

Submitted by Pat McNally

RECRUITMENT AND RESOURCE IDEAS

Office Business Card



Geary County 4-H
119 E. 9th Street
Junction City, KS 66441
(785) 238-4161

Fun Postcard



To learn more about the 4-H program in Geary County contact:

Geary County Extension
119 E. 9th St, PO Box 28
Junction City, KS 66441
785-238-4161
gkopfer@ksu.edu

Record Books

Another thing to do this time of year is to look through record books for good quotations that can be used for recruitment or impact reports. Keep these in a file and just keep adding to it every year.

Submitted by Ginger Kopfer

PROJECT COMPLETION AND EVALUATION

Things tend to taper off until there is a "flurry of activity" just prior to fair exhibit and judging days. The following are some suggestions for parents and project leaders to assist youth in doing a better job of completing project work and of evaluating their own experiences.

Parents:

- Help members set up a timeline for project work to be done based on their goals. Write these dates on the family calendar and check progress periodically.
- Set aside time weekly or monthly for the family to work together on project work. Include time to update project planning sheets and "My 4-H Activities" record.
- Assist members in securing the resources that they need to have to work on their projects. Having the supplies on hand gives members a chance to work on projects when they have a few minutes of leisure time.
- Designate a special drawer, chest or tub that completed project work can be stored in safely until fair time. Members then will have a variety of items to choose from for their fair exhibit.
- Set aside time closer to the fair entry date to review all of the work completed in each project. Use this time to allow the member to carefully critique each item and determine which item they would like to select to represent their work in the project area for the year. This is an excellent opportunity to help young people practice the life skill of decision-making.

Project Leaders:

- Establish a regular schedule of project group experiences where members may gather to work together on their project. This schedule could be once a month for six months, four Saturdays in a row, or three times a week during the month of June. The important thing is that members and adults gather to learn and have fun together.
- Vary the activities that occur at project meetings. Talks and demos might be presented at one meeting, a field trip to secure resources for project work might be another, and finally two or three meetings might be spent actually working on specific components of a project item.
- Allocate time at project meetings to update planning sheets, answer questions, have members report on progress made, and help them think about what comes next.
- Try to maintain contact with parents of members. Answer their questions and encourage them to work with their members at home on their projects. Parents might be invited to attend one or more of project meetings.
- Discuss the concept of "project completion." This is acceptable progress toward goals set at the beginning of the year. As a project leader, you will need to be flexible and take into consideration the age and ability of the child as well as the amount of parental support and resources available. This is where we can help young people learn the life skill of responsibility.





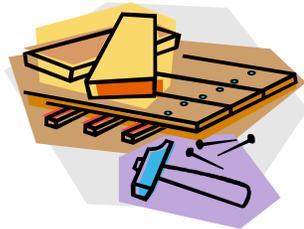
- Allocate time for members to bring their project work to a meeting. Have each member review and evaluate his or her work. Review the planning sheets and the goals they set earlier. Give recognition for the work that has been accomplished. Youth, like most adults have unfinished work or tasks, but they will probably be willing to discuss what they have accomplished
- Celebrate the accomplishment of learning by doing through the members' project work. Involve members, parents and junior leaders in the recognition activity. There are recognition items for "progress toward goals" available through the local Extension office. Talk to the 4-H youth staff there about how to take advantage of such resources.
- Young people, parents, and project leaders all need to work together to see that 4-H project work occurs, that learning by doing takes place, and that everyone has fun while developing the life skills of decision-making, communication, and responsibility.

Written by Sheri Seibold, Extension Educator, Youth Development, University of Illinois Extension, Matteson Center

Submitted by Jodi Besthorn

BUILDING A 4-H CLUB

Any adult who has worked with a child knows that it is often easier to do things yourself. Adults also know that life-experience is the best teacher. That's why *Learn by Doing* is the 4-H motto. With a knowledge of the characteristics of the age group with whom you'll be working, your position as a 4-H leader will be much less frustrating and far more rewarding. Concentrating your efforts in some key areas builds a 4-H club that best meets the needs of its members.



4-H'ers are Involved in Club Program Planning

- Adults actively advise youth in program planning and discovering their individual interests.
- The club's annual program is set for meetings and responsibilities assigned.

Curriculum

- Club meetings have a variety of learning activities (guest speakers, youth demonstrations, group planning and recreation).
- In addition to the regular meetings, 4-H'ers work together in small project groups which provide learning experiences.
- The total family is involved in club activities.
- The club plan incorporates experiences for members to do community service projects, field trips, etc.
- Club members participate in county 4-H events, activities and programs.

Leadership

- 4-H'ers teach and conduct activities, give presentations, etc.
- Each youth has leadership responsibility (lead pledges, help younger 4-H'ers, work on committees, etc.).

Adult Leadership

- Leaders use incentives and recognition to get 4-H'ers involved.
- Leaders perform their roles in an advisor/counselor mode.
- 4-H'ers and adult volunteers are equally responsible for discipline and rule-setting.

Organization

- 4-H club officers function as a team and are trained to perform their duties.
- Basic parliamentary procedure is used in meetings.
- Committees are established to complete club tasks (program plans, parties, community service projects, etc.).

Written by Dale Leidheiser, Colorado State University

Submitted by Jodi Besthorn

RECIPES FOR YOU TO ENJOY

Pico de gallo (Salsa Mexicana) -Fresh salsa

(from Mexico the Beautiful Cookbook)



Tomatoes (3 ripe -finely chopped)
Onions (½ cup / 12g finely chopped)
Cilantro (½ cup / 20g finely chopped)
Hot Peppers (optional, 4-6 finely chopped)
Cabbage (optional, ½ cup grated)
Salt to taste (~ 2 teaspoons)
Lime Juice (2 teaspoons)

Combine, stir well, and eat. It's best to prepare 1 hour in advance so the flavors have a chance to blend.

Potato Empanadas - potato turnovers

Use with *masa harina* tortillas



Filling

Potatoes (3 lbs. quartered)
Chicken bullion (2 cubes)
Cilantro (one bunch, finely chopped)
Onion (one medium, finely chopped)
Oil
Water

Mix cilantro, onion and a little bit of oil. Add to potatoes. Cook in a covered skillet with a little bit of water added for steam and to prevent sticking for ~ 25 minutes until tender.

Submitted by Beth Drescher

The next two articles were submitted by Jodi Besthorn





Meeting the Needs of Youth: Tips for 4-H Leaders

4-H leaders can support the positive and successful development of all youth. Youth Development research emphasizes the importance of meeting four basic human needs: belonging, mastery, independence and generosity. It's clear that youth whose needs are met in positive ways are likely to grow into good citizens and contributing members of their families and communities.

Four Needs of Youth

1. Need to Belong

Youth need to know they are cared about by others and feel a sense of connection to others in the group. 4-H gives youth the opportunity to feel physically and emotionally safe while actively participating in a group. This represents the **HEART** of 4-H. Here's how you can help.

- Help group members to get to know each other through introductions, group games, mixers, and small group activities.
- Create opportunities for members to interact with each other through their 4-H project work and group tasks.
- Develop traditions to welcome new members and celebrate individuals.
- Find ways to involve family and community members in as many activities as possible.

2. The Need to Master

Youth need to feel and believe they are capable and experience success at solving problems and meeting challenges to develop their self-confidence. By exploring 4-H projects and activities, youth master skills to make positive career and life choices. This represents the **HEALTH** of 4-H. Here's how you can help.

- Help youth find resources to explore their 4-H projects and activities.
- Provide project learning experiences.
- Model and teach that failure or frustration is not a disgrace but a part of the learning experience.
- Be fair and consistent when enforcing rules and giving feedback.

3. The Need to be Independent

Youth need to know that they are able to influence people and events through decision-making and action. By exercising independence through 4-H leadership opportunities, youth mature in self-discipline and responsibility and learn to better understand themselves. This represents the **HEAD** of 4-H. Here's how you can help:

- Give youth opportunities to lead simple tasks and then progress to more difficult ones.
- Recruit, train and support young people who are ready for more responsibility.
- Avoid jumping in to help unless you are really needed, encourage young people to overcome obstacles on their own.

- Encourage, motivate and praise members who complete leadership roles.

4. The Need to Be Generous

Youth need to feel their lives have meaning and purpose. By exploring 4-H community service and citizenship activities, youth can connect to communities and learn to give back to others. This represents the **HANDS** of 4-H. Here's how you can help.

- Have your group adopt a specific service project that fits their interests and abilities and meets a community need
- Arrange tours of local sites and opportunities to get involved.
- Encourage youth to consider the feelings of others.
- Set up mentoring opportunities where youth learn from others.

The 4-H Environment

4-H is designed to support the positive and successful development of all youth. 4-H leaders are essential partners in creating a positive environment by focusing on the strengths of youth and providing positive ways for youth to meet their four basic needs

1. Caring Relationships (Belonging)

All youth need a caring, supportive relationship in their lives. You can be that someone by showing interest in, actively listening to, and fostering the gifts of 4-H youth

2. Constructive learning Experiences (Mastery)

Youth rely on the joy they receive from interests, hobbies and group participating to balance disappointments in other parts of their lives (Werner and Smith, 1992). 4-H offers opportunities to take on new challenges and learn new skills. Help youth complete the Experiential Learning Process by experiencing, sharing what happened, processing what was important, generalizing the experience to the real world and applying what was learned in another situation.

3. Leadership Opportunities (Independence)

Creating opportunities for youth to develop skills and confidence for leadership and self-discipline is a cornerstone of 4-H. Help young people recognize the connection between independence and responsibility. Independence does mean greater power and influence but it is linked with responsibility for decisions made and actions taken.

4. Service to Communities (Generosity)

The 4-H Pledge focuses on the importance of larger service and recognizing a responsibility for the welfare of others. Help young people focus on developing concern for others and taking action to demonstrate that concern. Service forges bonds between youth and the community, and doing something valued by others raises feelings of self-worth and competence.

Authored by Cathann Kress and Brenda Ranum, Iowa 4-H Youth Development Specialists; Nancy Neil and Barbara Piehl, Minnesota Extension Educators; Linda Kustka, Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development Specialist; and Steve Wagoner, Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development Agent.

References

- Brendtro, L., Brokenleg, M., Van Bockern, S. (1990). Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our Hope for the Future. Bloomington, IN, National Education Service.
- Werner, B. and Smith, R. (1992). Overcoming the Odds: High Risk Children from Birth to Adulthood. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Hendrick, Patricia A. (1996). Targeting Life Skills Model. Iowa State University Extension.

What Type of Fans Are in Your Club?

Your fans (guardians and families) are just as unique as your club members are. Do not assume all parents/families are alike, or will take an active role in their child's 4-H experience. Understanding and recognizing parental differences can assist you in selecting the best approach to increasing positive parental involvement.

Help every fan be their player's best cheerleader - uplifting, inspiring, caring.

There are five general types of parenting styles. No individual will fit perfectly into a single style, but will exhibit the general characteristics of one.

Parenting Styles

- **Balanced** - Enjoy sharing the 4-H experience with their child. Their 4-H goal is learning and growing together through the 4-H experience. They seek information to make their child's 4-H experience the best it can be! Feed as much information as possible their way.
- **Overprotective** - Shelter and guard their child to protect them from failure and problems. They choose to do the 4-H work for their child shielding their child from disappointments. Encourage parents to step back and let their child experience all 4-H has to offer. Build parental trust by having an older/experienced 4-H member mentor their child. Guide the member towards leadership roles and beyond club activities. Ask the parent to give leadership to an activity focusing their attention on club benefits not just on their child. >
- **Over Strict** - Set unrealistic standards, excessively critical finding faults rather than attributes. Help guardians to experience the 4-H program at the child's level. Ask them to teach or demonstrate a project skill with a group of children.
- **Unconcerned** - Provide little support or encouragement. Frequently communicate with these parents to share what their child and the club are doing. Invite them to attend a meeting to recognize their member's accomplishments or to see their member in action (demonstrating, leading, or teaching).
- **Take Over** - Assumes member's responsibility and lives out their 4-H goals through their child. Teach this guardian the true meaning of 4-H. Focus attention on non-competitive aspects of the program. Seek their assistance with activities that give back. community service, fundraising, and social activities and then recognize them for their help!

Why Are Some Guardians More Active 4-H Fan Participants?

For many parents, their involvement begins with someone asking. Sometimes that is their own child, but more often their 4-H club involvement starts when you ask them. Don't underestimate these simple words "Could you please help by.?"