Action Plan:

Positive Youth Development (5 Cs)

2011-2012

Strategic Opportunities Addressed:

- Prepare People in Kansas to Thrive in a Global Society and All Aspects of Life

Situation:

Most Kansas youth are healthy, are connected to their families, schools and communities and are on the path to becoming contributing and caring adults. However, there are areas of concern. For example, 15% of Kansas children between 6 and 12th grades report binge drinking (5 or more alcoholic drinks) in one sitting, an increasing number of Kansas youth attempt suicide each year, nearly 10,000 military-connected youth in Kansas experience the transitions associated with multiple deployments, 16% of our children are overweight, 11% don't get enough exercise and growing numbers are not completing high school.

Nationally, employers report that more and more high school students lack the skills needed for work. Those skills include decision making, goal setting and leadership. It's troubling that only four in ten young people are really doing well, meaning they are in school, working, healthy and are connected to their community (Gambone, Connell and Klem, 2002). These concerns are echoed in Kansas where a 2007 K-State Research and Extension statewide survey of 2,065 people revealed that it was very or somewhat important to help youth ages 10-19 years old "avoid harmful behavior " (89%) and "master positive life skills" (91%).

It is vital that Kansas youth are equipped with the knowledge, skills and behaviors necessary to lead productive and contributing lives. The United States Administration for Children and Families agrees that a positive youth development approach is necessary when helping young people achieve their full potential. Organizations and communities that promote Positive Youth Development give youth opportunities to exercise leadership, build skills, establish healthy relationships and get involved. "The self-confidence, trust and practical knowledge that young people gain from positive opportunities in their communities help them grow into healthy, happy and self-sufficient adults, "(HHS/ACF, 2008).

Most experts agree that the goals of Positive Youth Development are the "5 Cs: Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character (development) and Caring." Introduced in 1990 by Rick Little of the Kellogg Foundation, built upon by Karen Pittman and expanded by Dr. Richard Lerner a well-known human development expert from Tufts University the 5 Cs serve as a guide for positive interactions with youth, as benchmarks for designing effective programs and for the long term results of positive youth development practices. The 5 Cs are now supported by the national "4-H Study of Positive Youth Development". A child or adolescent who develops each of the 5 Cs is considered to be thriving, and developmental scientists believe that these thriving youth develop a sixth "C" which is Contribution to self, family, community and civil society (Child Trends, 2008).

Public Value

When you support the K-State Research and Extension **Positive Youth Development Programs**, youth participants will learn and use skills for life long learning, sound decision-making, setting and completing goals, building healthy interpersonal relationships and leadership. These skills will lead to youth who are competent, confident, connected, caring, and of character.

Outcomes:

Short-Term:

Youth increase their awareness and knowledge of:

- Decision making and reasoning skills
- Goal setting skills
- Interpersonal communication skills
- Skills to build healthy relationships
- Leadership skills
- Team member skills

(Silliman, B. [2007] Critical Indicators of Youth Development Outcomes for 4-H National Mission Mandates)

Target Indicators:

COMPETENCE and CONFIDENCE

- Percentage of youth who increased their awareness and knowledge of setting and completing goals through a project, service, activity
- Percentage of youth who increased their awareness and knowledge of reasoning through a project , service, activity
- Percentage of youth who report satisfaction in their opportunities to learn and try new skills

CONNECTION

- Percentage of youth who increased their awareness and knowledge of how to improve their interpersonal communication skills
- Percentage of youth who report satisfaction in their membership with the club, team, group, faith community

CHARACTER and CARING

- Percentage of youth who increased their awareness and knowledge of skills necessary to be a contributing team member
- Percentage of youth who report satisfaction with service-learning or leadership opportunities

Evaluation Questions:

"What awareness and knowledge do youth gain as a result of preparing and presenting a speech or demonstration in 4-H?"

Medium-Term:

Youth use and act on their skills in:

- Setting and completing goals
- Teaching others
- Leading others
- Contributing as a team member
- Interpersonal communication
- Building healthy relationships
- Supporting the positive experiences and engagement of others, and

- Youth attribute their contributions to 4-H Youth Development and other KSRE youth programs.

(Silliman, B. [2007] Critical Indicators of Youth Development Outcomes for 4-H National Mission Mandates)

Target Indicators:

COMPETENCE and CONFIDENCE

- Percentage of youth participating in opportunities to demonstrate competence and confidence through camps, project groups, tournaments, competitions, academic achievements

CONNECTION

- Percentage of youth consistently participating in clubs, teams, groups
- Percentage of youth who consistently bring friends to participate in clubs, teams, groups
- Percentage of youth who self identify the learning experience as part of the 4-H Youth Development program and /or KSRE

CHARACTER and CARING

- Percentage of youth consistently participating in meaningful service-learning opportunities
- Percentage of youth leading meaningful service-learning opportunities

Evaluation Questions:
"What skills and behaviors do youth use as a result of participating in 4-H Youth Development programs?"

Long-Term:
All youth will grow up fully prepared for and fully engaged in life.

Target Indicators:

- **Competence –** Youth feel and believe they are capable and successful; that they have **Mastery.**
- **Confidence –**Youth know they influence the world around them (i.e., people and events); that they have **Independence.**
- **Connection -** Youth know that they are cared about by others; that they **Belong.**
- **Character and Caring -** Youth practice helping others; that they are **Generous.**

(Gray, M. [2007] Developing Consensus on Common Models and Standard Set of Indicators: FCS and 4-H. USDA/CSREES Administrative Officers Conference; *Kress*, C. [1995], 4-H Outcomes, National *4-H* Headquarters)

Evaluation Questions:
"What interpersonal communication abilities are attributed to participation in 4-H Youth Development by long-time participants or recent 4-H alumni?"

Outputs:

Outputs (delivery modes) to Achieve Positive Youth Outcomes:

- Project groups
- Clubs
- Camps
- Teams
- Activities and Events
- Long term continuous contact with a caring adult

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