

## 2010-11 PFT Success Report

**Title: Interpersonal Communications**

**PFT: Youth Development**

### **The Situation:**

Nationally, employers report that more and more high school graduates lack the skills needed for work. Ninety-one percent of people surveyed by K-State in 2007 reported that it was very or somewhat important to help youth ages 10-19 years old “master positive life skills”, which include communication, decision-making, goal-setting and leadership.

Anecdotally, 4-Hers are known for the excellence of their communication skills. However, there is little concrete data available about 4-Hers’ skills in Kansas. Without evaluations that have been tested for reliability, it is very difficult or impossible to measure skills increases or to gather information to help improve communications programming.

There also is not much consistency in the quality or quantity of communications training offered in Kansas’ Extension youth programs. A variety of resources and techniques are used to train 4-H members, resulting in uneven skills from club to club and county to county.

A more standardized set of training resources and evaluations are needed so that 4-Hers gain an important life skill and so that more outcome information is available for stakeholders.

### **What We Did:**

The Youth Development PFT members chose to focus on identifying training resources and evaluations instruments for interpersonal communications and providing them to each of the PFT members. They also decided to share information about the resources with others who are not members of the YDPFT, but who are involved in youth development work.

The training resources include 4-H Communication Fact Sheet Series, National 4-H “Communications Express Yourself” curriculum and Michigan State University’s “Communications Toolkit”. Short and

medium term evaluation instruments from the University of Kentucky Extension and Youth Life Skills Evaluation Project were modified for Kansas 4-H use. The short term evaluation, which is adaptable for local needs, is designed to be scored and compiled by local staff. The medium term evaluation will be given at the local level, but scored and analyzed by Kansas 4-H state staff members.

### **Outcomes:**

Forty two Youth Development PFT members received copies of each of the training resources, plus short and medium term outcome evaluations during two hours of “how to” training at the 2011 KSRE Annual Conference.

One hundred and forty Extension staff received information about how to find and use interpersonal communication training resources and evaluations at the three Kansas 4-H Updates in December 2011

The short and medium-term evaluation instruments are now ready to be used across Kansas in 2012. Local staff members are currently making plans to evaluate 4-H members at appropriate 4-H events on their interpersonal communication skill levels.

There were no evaluations that were administered in 2011, so no additional outcomes are available.

### **Success Story:**

None, at present.

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