

A 4-H AFTERSCHOOL RESOURCE GUIDE

Starting 4-H CLUBS in After-School Programs



18 U.S.C. 707

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Starting 4-H CLUBS in After-School Programs

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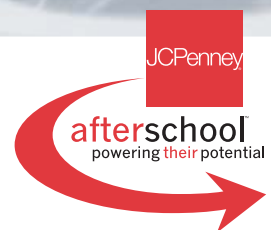




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What is 4-H?

4-H is the Cooperative Extension System's dynamic, nonformal, educational program for youth. The program partners the cooperative efforts of youth, volunteer leaders, state land-grant universities, state and local governments, 4-H foundations, and the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. 4-H is one of the largest youth organizations in the United States, with more than 6.8 million youth and almost 611,000 youth and adult volunteers. The name 4-H is summarized as the four-fold development of youth through the Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.

THE 4-H PLEDGE

HEAD *I pledge . . .
my Head
to clearer thinking*

HEART *my Heart
to greater loyalty*

HANDS *my Hands
to larger service*

HEALTH *and
my Health
to better living
for
my club
my community
my country
and
my world.*

This resource guide is designed to be used by Extension professionals who wish to start 4-H clubs in after-school programs. It represents some of the curricula, ideas, and information available throughout the Cooperative Extension System.

Chapters One, Three, and Four help sites get their local 4-H Afterschool clubs up and running. Chapter Two is used to train after-school program staff directly about the uniqueness and requirements of 4-H clubs. Chapter Two can be used in either a workshop format or in a one-on-one setting.

* Introduction based on work by Theresa Ferrari, Ohio State University.

The Issue of After-School Care

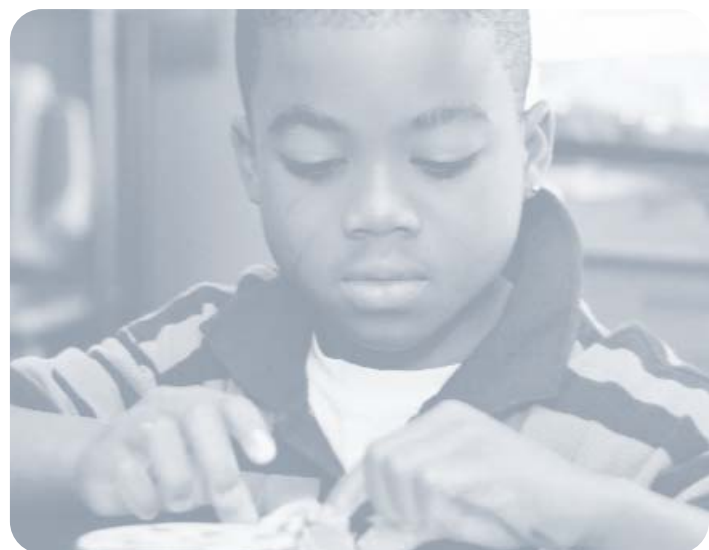
Care for school-age children is a concern for millions of American families, particularly those in which the single parent or both parents are employed. With nearly 40 million children between the ages of five and 14, the United States is experiencing a burgeoning need for out-of-school programs.^{1,2}

There is a growing awareness that where youth spend their time, what they do, and with whom they do it are important to their overall development.^{3,4} After-school hours represent either risk or opportunity. Youth who are unsupervised are much more likely to engage in activities that place them at risk.^{5,6} Programs in the out-of-school hours give youth safe, supervised places to spend time, along with chances to learn new skills, develop their interests, and spend meaningful time with peers and adults.

Participation in high quality after-school programs is linked with a lower incidence of problem behaviors, such as decreased academic failure, substance use, and delinquency.^{7,8,9,10,11,12} Furthermore, youth who attend these programs have demonstrated improved academic achievement (e.g., better school attendance and better grades) and improved social skills (e.g., positive relationships with adults, opportunity to make new friends, greater self-concept and self-esteem.)^{13,14,15}

However, it is also well documented that there are challenges in running effective after-school programs.^{16,17,18} Primary among these challenges are program quality, staff training, staff turnover, and consistent funding.

After-school
hours
represent
either risk or
opportunity.



A broad range of activities and organizations are described as after-school programs, creating ambiguous definitions.* After-school programs don't always share a common time period (i.e., immediately following the school day), since the term is used broadly to refer to any programs outside of school hours. Additionally, programming in after-school hours is not solely the domain of any one group. The after-school landscape is populated by a myriad of program types, program locations, and sponsoring organizations.

* Gootman, J. (2000). *After-school programs to promote child and adolescent development*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Science.

Why Should 4-H Be Involved in After-School Programs?



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Elementary and secondary school enrollment is at record levels in terms of numbers of students and is expected to increase every year through the early 2000s. The need for after-school programs will continue to increase.

The current situation represents a tremendous opportunity to align existing youth development programs available through Extension and 4-H with the need for after-school care, as well as an opportunity to create new program delivery models.

4-H has the resources to provide these after-school opportunities. Providing experiences for young people that address healthy development is the goal of 4-H. Extension helps youth develop into confident, capable, and contributing citizens.

It is probably not feasible for 4-H youth development professionals to meet all the after-school program needs for youth in their communities. However, many communities have existing programs that would benefit from Extension expertise and resources, and they would welcome opportunities to partner with Extension staff.

Although states such as California and North Carolina have a long history of Extension leadership in after-school programming, school-age care education was emphasized nationally when Extension programming expanded in 1991. Thirty school-age child care sites were funded as part the Youth-at-Risk Initiative, a federal budget initiative that supported efforts to help high-risk youth. Two additional national initiatives (Children, Youth, and Families at Risk [CYFAR] and Extension Cares...for America's Children and Youth) have been founded since then, devoting more Extension resources to after-school programs. Despite these efforts, 4-H is not widely known in the after-school arena.

What is 4-H Afterschool?

4-H Afterschool is designed to combine the resources of 4-H and the Cooperative Extension System with community-based organizations that provide after-school programs that address community needs.

The 4-H club operates within the structure of the community-based organization that sponsors the after-school program. This 4-H Afterschool club approach works best when the goals of the two organizations are compatible and there is a shared sense of ownership.

The implementation of the 4-H club component of the after-school program can take various forms. It may mean that 4-H is offered on a particular day of the week or that particular projects are offered. There may be a designated time for club meetings, where youth say the 4-H pledge, have officers, and make choices about activities to pursue. As well, the person responsible may be staff paid by Extension (e.g., program assistant), staff of the organization running the program (e.g., Boys and Girls Club), a volunteer (adult and/or youth),* or some combination.

Starting 4-H clubs is a familiar part of the 4-H professional's job. Establishing the club in the after-school program setting, however, may present some new challenges. Part of the challenge is that there are many providers of out-of-school programs, "a wider variety... than almost any other type of service."¹⁹ Despite common elements, there is considerable variation among existing programs.^{20, 21, 22, 23}

This means that the approach cannot be "one size fits all." Extension staff must be creative, flexible, and above all, able to listen when needs are expressed by sites. Despite these challenges, it's well worth the effort. County 4-H programs benefit by working with new partners and new audiences. After-school program staff benefit also from the partnership. Ultimately, of course, children in the programs reap the most positive outcomes.

Certain key elements need to be in place to ensure program consistency, including:

- 1 Communication between the local Extension office and the local 4-H club leadership is open and responsive.
- 2 Membership and leadership show diversity.
- 3 Leadership responsibilities are shared among adults, youth, and children.
- 4 In youth adult partnerships, individual interests, abilities, and assets are recognized, and strengths and weaknesses among and between members and leaders are balanced.
- 5 The club's leadership is willing and able to be flexible and adaptable to individual situations.
- 6 Rules contribute to positive youth development and focus on such fundamental issues as safety and mutual respect.
- 7 A healthy balance exists between cooperation and competition among its members.
- 8 An atmosphere that encourages the active participation of club members exists within and outside the club boundaries.
- 9 A clear understanding of the club's purposes, goals, and expectations is held by its members, parents, and volunteers.
- 10 An experiential learning model is used for educational programs.
- 11 Volunteer and member accomplishments and contributions are recognized.



* Any person who works with the 4-H club who is not paid by Cooperative Extension System funds is considered a volunteer. Thus, paid staff from other organizations are considered to be volunteers.

What Do We Hope To Accomplish?

4-H Afterschool seeks to increase the quality and quantity of after-school programs. To accomplish this, the focus is on improving the ability of program staff to offer high quality care, education, and developmental experiences for youth. Extension offers training materials and support to help establish 4-H clubs at after-school sites, to help program staff increase their ability to use positive youth development principles, and to help providers access quality 4-H program activities.

4-H IN AN AFTER-SCHOOL SETTING

Program Example

In 2001, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Columbus (BGCC) and Ohio 4-H Youth Development shared the cost of a graduate student intern to examine the feasibility of conducting 4-H clubs within the Boys and Girls Clubs setting. The intern served as an adviser for 4-H club meetings at two sites. The club met once a week during the school year and twice a week during the summer. There was a designated time and location for club meetings. Visitors to the Boys and Girls Club would recognize the pledge and the clover as familiar 4-H symbols. Through the 4-H club, BGCC has been able to offer their members more programming options and an opportunity to work on projects such as urban gardens and other areas in which they have had minimal exposure.

During 2002, this club-within-a-club model was carried out in three locations of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Columbus. The responsibility of leading the 4-H club was incorporated into the Education Coordinator's job description at these sites. The intern became the director at a BGCC site (based at a local elementary school), so her experience stayed within the organization.



How To Use This Resource Guide

The *Starting 4-H Clubs in After-School Programs* resource guide is designed to be used by Extension professionals to start 4-H clubs in after-school programs. It represents the curricula, ideas, and information available throughout the Cooperative Extension System. Chapters One, Three, and Four help sites get their local 4-H clubs up and running in after-school settings. Chapter Two is used to train after-school program staff directly about the uniqueness and requirements of 4-H clubs, and can be used either in a workshop format or in a one-on-one setting.

Extension professionals may wish to outreach 4-H to after-school sites using the club structure as the primary effort. In this case, this resource guide, in conjunction with local Cooperative Extension System administrative materials, will be all that's needed to start 4-H clubs in after-school settings.

After-school program staff may also need filler activities or just “something to do” with the children who attend their programs. A first interaction with these sites, then, would be in providing staff with the *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities*. This resource guide gives after-school program staff an idea of the activities and learning materials available through 4-H.

Requests may come from after-school staff for training to increase their capacity to provide quality care. In this case, *Guiding Growth: Training Staff for Working with Youth in After-School Programs* can be used to structure a training.

Other Materials in the 4-H Afterschool Series

There are two other resource guides in this series. *Guiding Growth: Training Staff for Working with Youth in After-School Programs* is used to train after-school program staff directly, helping them increase their capacities to provide quality care for children. *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities* is an excellent sampling of 4-H programming and activities. Each of these guides is intended to be used independently. They do contain some repetitive elements.

Chapter

1

You've decided to support
4-H clubs in after-school settings.
But where do you begin?

Action Steps*

As an Extension professional, you've decided to support 4-H clubs in after-school settings. But where do you begin? Oftentimes, you've already established informal liaisons with after-school sites through working with school programs, attending conferences, or other means. Or perhaps after-school sites have already called to request Extension help with programming. These are the best leads with which to begin.

But what happens if you don't have such contacts in place and need to start from scratch? Try these steps, or adapt them to a format you've used successfully with other programs:

1 Map your county for existing after-school programs. You can use the yellow pages, an Internet search, schools, departments of social services, YMCAs, churches, public housing communities, and other sources to identify local programs.

2 List prospects by name. This will give you an idea of the number of potential partners and sites.

It's important to remember that many after-school sites already have fully functional programs. 4-H can enhance the efforts of after-school sites to provide a positive, safe, fun, educational experience for youth in programs.

3 Send an introduction letter either by postal or e-mail (see Example A, page 12) to all sites (or, if they are numerous, select sites in areas you'd like to target). This mailing is your first contact. It introduces sites to 4-H and lets them know you'll be following up.

4 Telephone identified contacts and schedule appointments (see Example B, page 13). Of course, not all sites will be interested in pursuing your offer. Many, however, will.

5 Mail/e-mail confirmation letter to contact (see Example C, page 13). This lets sites know what to expect from your meeting.

PREPPING FOR YOUR MEETING

6 Review this resource guide.

7 Meet with scheduled contacts and:

- Present 4-H Afterschool, including how it is supported (see Job Descriptions, Example D, pages 14 and 15) and what the training needs are for sites starting a new 4-H club (Chapter Two outlines the training schedule for after-school program staff).
- Discuss how partnering with 4-H is beneficial to the after-school site (they receive program materials, assistance, and research-based programming). Explain how youth benefit as well from a club structure. (The frequency, duration, and intensity of interventions, in the form of club meetings, help youth develop positively.) (Also see Example E, page 16, for a 4-H Youth Development model.**)

Using Existing 4-H Resources

Let Extension staff, 4-H clubs, advisory committees, and stakeholders know the number of after-school programs that currently exist in your county/area. Identify the gaps in positive youth development experiences. Facilitate a discussion on how the county program might address these needs.

Discuss and explore with current 4-H clubs opportunities to do creative outreach in collaboration with schools and after-school programs to increase 4-H enrollment and address unmet needs. Include 4-H teens in discussions — such opportunities provide them with a chance to be civically engaged, and sharpen their leadership and critical thinking skills.

- If sites wish to start 4-H clubs, cover necessary program and administrative materials in this meeting (see Matrix A, page 17, and Example F, page 18). Optionally, you may decide to complete these materials at a more formal orientation session. The orientation session to cover these materials should take an hour or so.
- Schedule first training date and location. You may wish to train several after-school sites (with multiple staff/volunteers) with one master training.

* Special thanks to 4-H Cares: A Guide to 4-H Learning Opportunities, North Carolina Cooperative Extension, for providing materials to adapt for this chapter.

** Model created by Brenda Carpenter and Shari Haldeman, Tompkins County 4-H, New York.

Sample Introduction Letter/E-Mail

EXAMPLE A

To: County After-School Center Directors

<Add What is 4-H>

The 4-H program of the _____ Cooperative Extension System would like to work with after-school programs in _____ COUNTY _____. Our 4-H clubs have provided valuable, positive youth development experiences for more than 100 years. Participation in 4-H opens tremendous opportunities for youth involvement, leadership, and learning.

I have piloted 4-H clubs in some after-school sites and have found them to be positive experiences for the programs and the youth. In addition to the 4-H club experience, 4-H offers an extensive array of experiential (learn-by-doing) activities in hundreds of different subjects such as nutrition, computer technology, science, horticulture, character development, and others.

I share your goal of providing a quality after-school program and believe 4-H has educational materials and strategies that would enhance the learning opportunities for youth in your programs. As a part of the _____ UNIVERSITY _____ Extension Service, 4-H staff also are available to provide high quality training and staff development experiences for after-school staff. Within the next two weeks, I will be in touch with you to discuss how 4-H can enhance your program.

I look forward to working with you. If you have any questions, please call the 4-H office at _____.

Sincerely,

Your Name Here
Extension Professional, 4-H

Sample Telephone Contact

The following is a script. You don't have to read it verbatim, just use the main points to initiate a dialog about enhancing after-school programs. When you call, speak to the Director of the Center, and be sure to know this person by name.

Hello, my name is _____,
and I'm with the
UNIVERSITY/COUNTY _____

4-H program. Did you get the letter we mailed a short time ago? Is this a good time to talk about the 4-H program? 4-H is designed to provide positive youth development experiences to young people ages five to 19. What ages do you work with in your center (group)?

4-H is interested in establishing 4-H clubs in after-school settings. Because of your interest in youth development, I would like to schedule a meeting with you (and other members of your staff) to discuss our 4-H Afterschool Program. This national project is designed to combine the resources of 4-H with local after-school groups. Our meeting would allow us an opportunity to discuss how we could work together to provide quality learning opportunities for youth. When would be a good time for us to meet?

Thank you for your time and interest. I look forward to seeing you on _____.

EXAMPLE B

Sample Letter of Confirmation

Dear _____,

Thank you for the interest you expressed during our recent telephone conversation concerning the 4-H Afterschool Program. I look forward to our meeting on _____ at _____ to discuss the possibility of starting a 4-H club in your after-school program. We are interested in sharing 4-H curricula. Our meeting should last about an hour.

Sincerely,

Your Name Here
Extension Professional

EXAMPLE C

Who Does What?



JOB TITLE

Extension Professional, 4-H

DESCRIPTION

To contact and orient adults and youth to support 4-H programs.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1 Contact and present 4-H Afterschool Program to appropriate after-school providers.
- 2 Complete the 4-H Afterschool Program contract.
- 3 Facilitate the 4-H Afterschool Program orientation and training; help maintain the program.
- 4 Provide curricula and other resources to providers.
- 5 Complete appropriate record keeping and evaluation forms.
- 6 Provide information on other 4-H opportunities.
- 7 Submit information about the program to state and national data collections systems.

RESOURCES

- 1 *Starting 4-H Clubs in After-school Programs.*
- 2 *Guiding Growth: Training Staff for Working with Youth in After-School Programs.*
- 3 *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities.*

TENURE

For the duration of 4-H program involvement.

JOB TITLE

4-H Program Site Coordinator/After-School Staff

DESCRIPTION

The site coordinator, with assistance from the Extension 4-H professional, manages the 4-H program activities at their appropriate locations. Coordinators form effective teams of teacher/volunteers to deliver 4-H learning experiences. The site coordinator may be a salaried or volunteer member of the after-school center.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1 Complete enrollment cards for all youth participants and volunteers.
- 2 Communicate to the Extension 4-H professional any needs of the group (materials, resources, assistance, etc.).
- 3 Attend all orientation training sessions provided for the volunteers of the site.
- 4 Assist with various duties of the site as necessary.
- 5 Assist with identifying and securing necessary resources.
- 6 Recruit and train teachers and volunteers.
- 7 Encourage youth to participate in county, state, and national 4-H events.
- 8 Collect evaluation data.

TENURE

For the duration of the 4-H program at the site or at least one year.

EXAMPLE



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Who Does What?

JOB TITLE

4-H After-School Volunteer/Teacher

DESCRIPTION

Guide five- to 19-year-old youth through structured, learn-by-doing growth experiences.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1 Serve as a 4-H program volunteer and receive training as needed.
- 2 Review and plan age-appropriate growth experiences.
- 3 Guide youth during learn-by-doing growth experiences (subject matter projects, community service, committee work, etc.).

RESOURCES

- 1 *Starting 4-H Clubs in After-school Programs.*
- 2 *Guiding Growth: Training Staff for Working with Youth in After-School Programs.*
- 3 *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities.*
- 4 Other 4-H curricula (available through County Extension Office).

TENURE

A minimum of nine hours of orientation training and 20 hours of child contact is recommended, although this varies from state to state.

JOB TITLE

4-H After-School Teen Volunteer/Teacher

DESCRIPTION

Assist in guiding five- to 19-year-old youth through structured, learn-by-doing growth experiences; assist in preparing for other program activities.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1 Serve as a 4-H program teen volunteer and receive training as needed.
- 2 Work with adults to help review and plan age-appropriate growth experiences.

- 3 Assist in guiding youth during learn-by-doing growth experiences (subject matter projects, community service, committee work, etc.).

RESOURCES

- 1 *Starting 4-H Clubs in After-school Programs.*
- 2 *Guiding Growth: Training Staff for Working with Youth in After-School Programs.*
- 3 *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities.*
- 4 Other 4-H curricula (available through County Extension Office).

TENURE

A minimum of nine hours of orientation training and 20 hours of child contact is recommended, although this varies from state to state.

EXAMPLE



4-H Youth Development Model*

EMPOWERING YOUTH AND ADULTS

4-H creates opportunities for youth and adults to develop skills, practical knowledge, and wisdom through observing, doing, and living through experiences. Empowered youth make decisions to improve their lives. Empowered adults and volunteers create sustainable programs.

LIFE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

4-H helps build the skills and abilities that must be developed in order for youth and adults to reach their full potential.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING MODEL

Experiential learning, or learning by doing, is the most effective way of helping children learn; it actively engages learners, encourages them to think and reason things out for themselves, makes them work harder, and ultimately, helps them learn more.

* Model created by Brenda Carpenter and Shari Haldeman, Tompkins County 4-H, New York.

EXAMPLE

Administrative Materials for Orientation of New Sites

Your county should provide a packet of program materials necessary to register all new 4-H clubs. Plan to cover this information one-on-one with after-school program staff that are planning to start a 4-H club.

TYPE OF MATERIALS

PURPOSE

CRITERIA

Lists policies of sponsoring state; criteria for 4-H Afterschool clubs; quality indicators, explanation of 4-H colors, name, and emblem; slogan; motto; code of conduct; etc.

AUTHORIZATION OF CLUB

Letters from group requesting to become a 4-H Afterschool club; letter from Extension personnel granting permission.

4-H CHARTER

Certifies the charter of the club (www.national4-hheadquarters.gov).

ENROLLMENT AND OTHER FORMS

Forms and instructions for completion; membership age groups; eligibility; waivers for photos, parental permission, etc.

INSURANCE

Liability and accident insurance forms, waivers, etc.

SCREENING FORMS

For volunteer screening. The group you are working with also may have forms/procedures that they use. Be sure to coordinate efforts. Check with your state office to see if there are University policies about screening volunteers and liability.

FIDUCIARY FORMS/ TREASURER'S BOOKS

All financial reporting requirements related to club dues, fundraising, etc.

DATA AND EVALUATION FORMS

Evaluation and data collection forms, procedures, and expectations.

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

The county calendar and newsletter highlighting local activities available to all 4-H members.

OTHER AS NEEDED

Miscellaneous program materials.

MATRIX A

Sample Statement of Understanding

(TO BE CUSTOMIZED)

This understanding between 4-H and _____ establishes a program whereby youths will participate in at least _____ hours of 4-H educational programs annually. There is no maximum number of hours which may be devoted to 4-H programs. The program is scheduled to begin on _____. After-school providers and other personnel agree to attend scheduled training sessions. Through the acceptance of this program the 4-H organization will provide the curriculum, orientation training, and recognition. In return, after-school sites will help promote the 4-H program consistent with 4-H policies and educational philosophies. Sites agree that 4-H can market and promote the program and feature young people from the center, as opportunities arise. This understanding may be terminated upon initiation by either party.

4-H WILL PROVIDE:

- 1 4-H project curricula.
- 2 Ribbons and certificates for recognition.
- 3 Training on how to conduct a 4-H club meeting.
- 4 Assistance in setting up a 4-H club for after-school youth.
- 5 Letters to parents informing them of 4-H activities.
- 6 Opportunities for youth to participate in county, state, and national 4-H events and activities.

AFTER-SCHOOL SITE WILL PROVIDE:

- 1 Adults to supervise and help youth grow and learn within the 4-H program.
- 2 Time in which 4-H club meeting can be held.
- 3 Place for 4-H club meeting.
- 4 Communication with County 4-H office.
- 5 Educational supplies and resources.
- 6 Consistent opportunities to display 4-H materials (banners, posters, etc.).
- 7 Opportunities for data collection and evaluation.

After-school Director/Administrator signature, location of program

Your Name Here

EXTENSION STAFF SIGNATURE

DATE

EXAMPLE

Chapter

2

This chapter will help you train after-school program staff to start 4-H clubs at their sites. Before offering this training, you should have held an orientation session with each site (see Chapter One).

Plan to offer this section in a workshop format with multiple attendees. The total time needed for this training is about five hours. Alternatively, you can use this section (with some adaptation) to train program staff one-on-one.

Training Template

FORMAT FOR INTRODUCING AFTER-SCHOOL SITES TO 4-H CLUBS

ORIENTATION — CHAPTER ONE

One-on-one meeting(s).

TRAINING — CHAPTER TWO

Group or one-on-one training.



ACTIVITY	TOPICS/INSTRUCTIONS	MATERIALS NEEDED	TIME
GENERAL WELCOME	<p>Let everyone make nametags for themselves. Introduce trainer and ask participants to introduce themselves to the group. Review the day's agenda. Ask questions of participants such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why did you decide to start a 4-H club at your site? • What's your favorite thing about working with children? • What questions do you have about 4-H? 	Nametags; agenda (write it on a flipchart or chalkboard)	20 minutes
WELCOME TO 4-H!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is 4-H? • What is a 4-H club? • Goals of 4-H Afterschool • Overview of county 4-H activities • Recruitment • 4-H bylaws 	Chalk and chalkboard or flipchart and markers; photocopies of <i>Background Handout</i> , page 23 (optional — can be used as script); <i>4-H Bylaws Handout</i> , page 25. Optional: Photocopies of <i>Recruitment Handout</i> , page 24.	20 to 30 minutes
A TYPICAL MEETING	<p>A Typical Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pledges • Business • Project work • Recreation 	Photocopies of <i>4-H Pledge Handout</i> , page 28; photocopies of <i>Making 4-H Meetings Work for Younger Children Handout</i> , page 30; paper; markers; stickers; project table supplies (see under <i>What's Next? The Project Table</i> , page 27); refreshments; chalk and chalkboard or flipchart and markers. Optional: Photocopy 4-H Pledge Cards, page 29, for participants.	One hour



Training Template

SECTION	TOPICS	MATERIALS NEEDED	TIME
THE VIEW FROM CHILDHOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ages and stages of children Experiential model Life skills Sample activity 	Overhead projector; make overheads from pages 32 to 34 and 36 marked <i>Overhead 1</i> , <i>Overhead 2</i> , <i>Overhead 3</i> , and <i>Overhead 4</i> ; make photocopies of <i>Life Skills Handout</i> , page 35. Also, materials for sample activity (drum and drumsticks; plastic containers with lids that aren't clear; beans, pennies, paper clips, o-shaped cereal, popcorn kernels, and other small items to put inside the containers — you'll need one type of item for every two participants).	One to two hours
4-H PROJECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using 4-H project materials in 4-H Afterschool clubs 	Project resources from your state, including member's and leader's manuals; photocopies of <i>Project Theme Week Handout</i> , page 40.	40 minutes
INVOLVING PARENTS AND OTHER COMMUNITY MEMBERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging parents and other community resources Working with volunteers 	Chalk and chalkboard or flipchart and markers; flipchart and markers for a few different groups; photocopies of the <i>Involving Others — Volunteers Handout</i> , page 43.	About 40 to 50 minutes

Welcome to 4-H!

OBJECTIVES

To understand more about the 4-H organization.

TIME

20 to 30 minutes.

MATERIALS

Chalk and chalkboard or flipchart and markers; photocopies of *Background Handout*, page 23 (optional — can be used as script); and *4-H Bylaws Handout*, page 25. Optional: Photocopies of *Recruitment Handout*, page 24.

OVERVIEW

In this brief activity, you'll help answer the question "What is 4-H?"

START HERE

Write the word "4-H" on a flipchart. Ask participants to blurt out anything that comes to mind when they think of 4-H. Write their responses in circles or clouds and link them back to the word "4-H." Your Brain Blurt may look like the one on this page.

Point out 4-H is the most widely known program operated by the Cooperative Extension System. It has changed considerably since its inception in the early 1900s, but in some ways it is very much the same. The setting may change, but the goals are the same. Our focus is not on growing the best tomatoes, but the healthiest children. Distribute copies of the *Background Handout* or use as an outline/script to explain more about 4-H.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Explain that 4-H clubs operating in after-school settings are considered to be the same as other 4-H clubs. In other words, 4-H Afterschool clubs can participate in any activities, fairs, competitions, community service events, camps, or other activities open to the 4-H community as a whole. Review a typical calendar month with the group at this point, to show different opportunities available to them as a 4-H club.

You may optionally wish to cover some ideas about recruiting 4-H members from current after-school participants. Use the *Recruitment Handout*, page 24, to discuss ways sites can recruit children to join their 4-H clubs.

FINAL ACT

Use copies of *4-H Bylaws Handout* to introduce the structure of a 4-H club. Discuss the idea of clubs using bylaws, and answer any questions related to their use.



Background

WHAT IS 4-H?

4-H is the Cooperative Extension System's dynamic, nonformal, educational program for youth. Our program partners the cooperative efforts of youth, volunteer leaders, state land-grant universities, state and local governments, 4-H Foundations, and the Cooperative State Research Education and Extension Service (CSREES) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We are one of the largest youth organizations in the United States, with more than 6.8 million youth and almost 611,000 youth and adult volunteers working directly and indirectly with youth.

While 4-H's history is distinctly rural, programs are now found in urban areas as well, focusing on some distinctly non-agricultural topics such as character development, healthy choices, community activism, and other topics that continue to develop a child's ability to grow and develop positively.

Fast Fact

4-H was founded as a collection of clubs for boys and girls during the early 1900s.

Fast Fact

Leadership is shared between children and adults in 4-H. Young people learn from adults, and vice versa!

Fast Fact

4-Hers can dive into more than 110 program areas, including arts, recycling, biotechnology, and community service.

WHAT IS A 4-H CLUB?

A 4-H club is an organized group of five or more boys and girls ages five to 19 with officers, led in partnership with adult volunteers, with a planned program of club activities carried on throughout the year. You usually need to hold at least 12 meetings per year to qualify as a 4-H club (this varies from state to state). Each club also should participate in community outreach and project activities. Club meetings include conducting business by officers, educational programs, and group building or recreational activities, but vary greatly by site. Groups of very young children also can form 4-H clubs, although meetings are much less structured. All 4-H activities focus upon positive youth development.

GOALS OF 4-H AFTERSCHOOL

The goals of the program are to increase the ability of after-school program staff to offer high quality care, education, and developmental experiences for youth and to help increase the availability of after-school programs.

OVERVIEW OF COUNTY 4-H ACTIVITIES

<insert your local statistics, program opportunities, etc.>



Recruitment

IDEAS FOR RECRUITING 4-H MEMBERS AT AFTER-SCHOOL SITES*

- 1** Put up signs announcing a first meeting. Make it “mysterious” to get the children excited and curious.
- 2** At the meeting, use 4-H materials, including member manuals (available from your local 4-H professional). Children like getting a book of their own that they can write in.
- 3** Post a specific outline of upcoming activities (curriculum based... shhh!) and let children sign up. This “captures” children who are interested, and even some who aren’t!
- 4** Offer a Nutritious Snack Fair to families as parents arrive at the end of the day. The children in a 4-H cooking club can prepare the snacks.
- 5** Hand out a 4-H newsletter for parents to take home.
- 6** Find out a child’s specific interests, and match him/her with a club.
- 7** Send a note home to parents explaining that their child has expressed interest in joining 4-H, asking parents to contact after-school staff or the 4-H professional for more information.
- 8** Ask current 4-H club members to bring a friend to the next meeting.

Why do children join a 4-H club?

Why do children join a 4-H club? From a recent study:*

- 65 percent said it sounded like fun.
- 62 percent had friends who were in 4-H.
- 56 percent wanted to meet new friends.
- 49 percent were influenced by parents or caregivers to join.
- 29 percent wanted to learn new skills and do new activities.
- 7 percent joined because a teacher suggested they do so.

* Wingenbach, Gary J, Cheryl Nestor, Layle D. Lawrence, Stacy A. Gartin, Jean Woloshuk, and Patricia Mulkeen. “Marketing Strategies for Recruiting 4-H Members in West Virginia.” *Journal of Agricultural Education*, Vol 41 Issue 1 2000.

* Source of ideas: E-mail correspondence, Elise Nester, Ruth Ann Christian, Todd Branson, Jim Winkler, and other 4-H volunteers and professionals. January, 2003.

4-H Bylaws

PURPOSE OF BYLAWS

The purpose of bylaws is to help everyone understand 4-H standards and procedures. Bylaws describe when and where the club meets, who may join, the type of officers elected by the club, and the criteria to be used to keep a member in good standing. A copy of the club's bylaws is held at the Extension office. The bylaws also are sent to members, parents, and volunteers.

WHO WRITES THE BYLAWS?

4-H club members write and approve club bylaws. Everyone who is affected by them should have a say as they are developed.

Other bylaws can be added as necessary to clarify the functioning of the club.

Example

BYLAWS OF THE EAGER EGRETS 4-H CLUB

ARTICLE 1 — NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Eager Egrets 4-H Club.

ARTICLE 2 — PURPOSE

The purpose of this 4-H club is to support the development of its members through club meetings, project work, demonstrations, fairs, and other activities.

ARTICLE 3 — POLICIES

The club will meet regularly at least 12 times each year, preferably twice a month, to conduct business. Any major decision of the club must be voted upon by 2/3 of the membership.

ARTICLE 4 — MEMBERSHIP

Without regard to race, color, sex, disability, religion, age, or national origin, any youth ages five to 19 as of January 1 of the current year may become a member of this club. To become a member, a person must attend six meetings, complete an enrollment form with parent/guardian signatures, agree to abide by the 4-H Code of Conduct, and know the 4-H pledge.

ARTICLE 5 — OFFICERS, ELECTIONS, AND DUTIES

The elected officers of this club shall be president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Officers shall be elected each year in July.

A Typical Meeting

OBJECTIVES

To understand how to run a model 4-H meeting for older youth. To know there are many variations to a typical meeting.

TIME

One hour.

MATERIALS

Photocopies of *4-H Pledge Handout*, page 28; photocopies of *Making 4-H Meetings Work for Younger Children Handout*, page 30; paper; markers; stickers; project table supplies (see under *What's Next? The Project Table*); refreshments; chalk and chalkboard or flipchart and markers. Optional: Photocopy 4-H Pledge Cards, page 29, for participants.

OVERVIEW

In this activity, you'll engage after-school staff to simulate a typical 4-H meeting for older youth. Be sure to set up your project table(s) before you begin (see *The Project Table*, page 27). Also have refreshments ready in a separate area.

START HERE

Explain to participants that they'll simulate a typical 4-H meeting. You'll act as president. This new 4-H club is being founded at Kids Rule! Center, a small after-school program in a large city in Pennsylvania. Explain that participants can adopt the ages and attitudes of either a girl or boy aged eight to 19, but that they should stick with this character throughout the meeting. Alternately, some may choose to be an adult or teen volunteer who helps the participants.

Distribute copies of the *4-H Pledge Handout*, paper, and markers. Then read (or improvise) the script found on this page.

Script to Read

Hello, and welcome to this first meeting of our new 4-H club! I'm excited to see everyone here! Let's start the meeting by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Everyone recites this pledge.

Okay, now let's say the 4-H Pledge.

Everyone recites the pledge. Point out what each part means.

Okay, it's time for roll call.

Call out the names of participants

Great! I now call this meeting to order. We will conduct the business for the first few minutes.

Normally, at this point, we would read the minutes from the last meeting. The minutes tell us what happened last time. But since this is our first meeting, there was no last time! In the future, we'll also read a Treasurer's Report, to see how much money our club has, and any Committee Reports, in case some people are working on something special. At our next meeting, we'll elect people to serve as president, treasurer, secretary, and vice-president, but I'll run our meeting today.

So our one order of business today is to come up with a name for our 4-H club! So pick a partner and start writing down some names you like for our club. Here's a couple I've thought of:

- Kid's Rule! 4-H Club
- Active Aardvarks 4-H Club

So I KNOW you can come up with some more. Work with your neighbor, then write your three best ideas up here on the board (or flipchart).



A Typical Meeting

WHAT'S NEXT?

After everyone has written their best ideas down, give everyone three stickers to vote for their favorite name. The name with the most votes wins. In case of a tie, flip a coin or re-vote. Explain that the business part of the meeting is now concluded. Formally adjourn the group and ask them to move to the project table. Explain that the project table has activities that the group has expressed interest in, and that the 4-Hers should decide how to best get things done. Adult and teen volunteers, however, are available to help.

THE PROJECT TABLE

The project table should contain something to keep the “4-Hers” engaged and productive. You may wish to have more than one project table. Here are some ideas:

- 1 Designing and drawing anti-tobacco posters for the school (need posterboard, markers, and other supplies such as glitter, glue, etc.).
- 2 Writing and recording a series of Public Service Announcements to be broadcast on radio about wearing seat belts (can be done in small group — you’ll need paper, pens, and tape recorders).
- 3 Pot annual flowers to use to decorate the retirement home across town (need small plants, garden tools, soil, and pots; pots also can be decorated with acrylic paint, if desired).
- 4 Also see *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities* for more project ideas.

The project

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productive.

SOCIAL TIME!

After participants have finished, let them share projects with each other. Next, explain it’s time for a little more fun! Serve refreshments and have a Welcome to 4-H! Party. Write the words “four h clover ” on the chalkboard (or flipchart), and ask people to come up with different words by mixing the letters around (such as love, hour, flour, foul, hover, cover, hurl, etc.). (Or, play a game such as tag, relay races, or charades.) Let people mingle and get to know each other better!

FINAL ACT

After socializing is done, pull the group back together and ask them to be adults again. Summarize the points for making meetings work with 4-H youth (write these on a flipchart/board or read them):

- 1 Start and stop on time. Meetings should be one to two hours long.
- 2 Set behavior standards. Young people need to know what is expected of them. Set and agree upon behavioral expectations right away. Encourage everyone to practice good citizenship and respect for others at meetings.
- 3 Let officers (youth) fulfill their responsibilities. Help by providing guidance.
- 4 The president calls the meeting to order and is in charge. Other officers and committee chairpersons do their own work.
- 5 Encourage the use of parliamentary procedure. This helps keep the democratic process of decision making orderly.

6 Communicate upcoming events, dates, and responsibilities.

7 Be sure young people make the decisions — not adults!

8 Encourage youth to help plan meetings with variety. This template usually works: one-fourth business, one-half education, and one-fourth recreation.

9 Keep things moving and encourage participation.

Next, distribute the *Making 4-H Meetings Work for Younger Children Handout* to participants and discuss the major points. Initiate a discussion about how meetings may differ for younger children versus older ones. (Generally, typical meetings occur with nine to 19 year olds, but children younger than nine benefit from a less structured routine that still emphasizes social interaction, decision making, and learning.)

The 4-H Pledge

The 4-H Pledge, first adopted in 1927, summarizes 4-H as the four-fold development of youth through the Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.

HEAD *I pledge ...*
my Head
to clearer thinking
HEART *my Heart*
to greater loyalty
HANDS *my Hands*
to larger service
HEALTH *and*
my Health
to better living
for
my club
my community
my country
and
my world.



18 U.S.C. 707

The **HEAD** represents

- 1 Thinking, planning, and reasoning.
- 2 Gaining new and valuable knowledge.
- 3 Understanding the whys.

The **HEART** represents

- 1 Being concerned about the welfare of others.
- 2 Accepting the responsibilities of citizenship.
- 3 Determining the values and attitudes by which to live.
- 4 Learning how to live and work with others.
- 5 Developing positive attitudes.

The **HANDS** represent

- 1 Learning new skills
- 2 Improving skills already known.
- 3 Being useful, helpful, and skillful.
- 4 Developing respect for work and pride in accomplishment.

The **HEALTH** represents

- 1 Practicing healthful living.
- 2 Enjoying life.
- 3 Using leisure time wisely.
- 4 Protecting the well being of self and others.

Post a pledge banner at your meeting site.

At the end of the first meeting, give everyone a card with the 4-H pledge to take home (see page 29), along with a 4-H pencil or other 4-H item.

The 4-H Pledge

PLEDGE CARDS



I Pledge...

My Head
to clearer thinking

My Heart
to greater loyalty

My Hands
to larger service and

My Health
to better living

For my Club,
my Community,
my Country, and
my World.



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Making 4-H Meetings Work for Younger Children*

The 4-H member meeting is a major tool after-school staff can use to help children develop and learn. It provides children with the opportunity to build friends, exchange ideas, enhance life skills, and explore new concepts and areas of interest. Here are some tips for making the meetings work for younger children:

1

One hour is a good time span for meetings.

2

Allow time at the beginning to greet everyone and let everyone actively participate.

3

Remember members may have short attention spans. They especially will need shorter projects and learning experiences.

4

If you want to explore a leadership structure, consider making members a club officer for the day.

5

Include refreshments and play time in each meeting.

6

Let members take responsibility for themselves. They should clean up and put away clutter.

SUGGESTED
TIME FRAME FOR
MEETINGS THAT
INCLUDE PROJECTS
OR LEARNING
ACTIVITIES:

5 minutes

Opening and Overview

30 minutes

Learning Activity

5 minutes

Clean up

10 minutes

Snack Time

10 minutes

Recreation

* Adapted from the *Primary Member Leader's Guide*. University of California Cooperative Extension.

The View from Childhood

OBJECTIVES

To enhance understanding of pre-adolescent and adolescent characteristics and behavior.

TIME

One to two hours overall, including *Good Vibrations: The Science of Sound* activity

MATERIALS

Overhead projector; make overheads using *Overhead 1, Overhead 2, Overhead 3, and Overhead 4*, pages 32 to 34 and 36; make photocopies of *Life Skills Handout*, page 35. Will also need materials from the sample activity, *Good Vibrations: The Science of Sound*, pages 37 and 38.

OVERVIEW

In this activity, you'll teach after-school program staff the basics of 4-H educational theory and introduce them to some activities. For more in-depth training of youth development principles, see *Guiding Growth: Training Staff for Working with Youth in After-School Programs*. For additional activities, see *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities*.

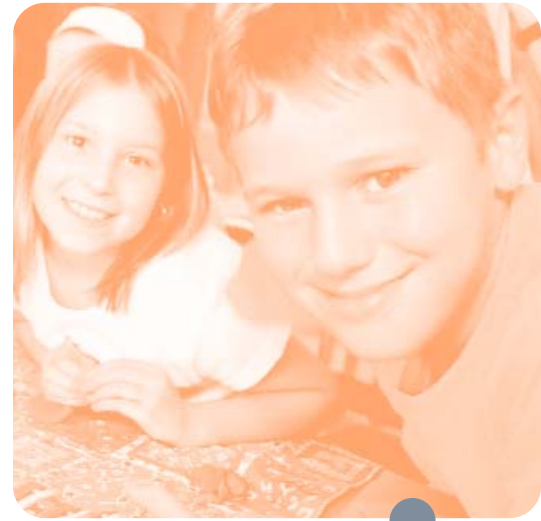
START HERE

Explain to participants that one of the guiding principles of 4-H is the development of the child. While mastery of content and gaining skills are important, it is critical that we first understand the different ages and stages of a child's world to optimize our educational efforts.

Use *Overheads 1, 2, and 3* to explain the different ages and stages of child development. As an extension, ask participants to give examples from their experience working with youth of each age group, especially in story format. Alternately, you can ask a small team to come up and pretend they are the age group represented on the overhead dealing with this dilemma:

The team must work together to take care of a hamster. The group includes two boys, two girls, and one adult.

The team can role play using the characteristics of each age group (you can use different teams to represent the different ages from each overhead).



Explain that understanding how different ages work, play, and learn is critical to helping them develop into productive and happy adults, and is core to 4-H programming.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Distribute the *Life Skills Handout* and review the Life Skills Model with the group. Explain that life skills are the abilities that must be acquired to fully realize one's potential as an adult. All 4-H programming focuses on life skills as a way to go beyond teaching content. For example, children learning about vegetable gardens also acquire life skills of working with others, communicating with others, self-motivation, responsibility, discipline, decision making, and other skills.

Next, explain that for children and teens to fully understand a new concept, several steps must happen. This is called experiential learning. Using *Overhead 4*, explain experiential learning.

FINAL ACT

Teach *Good Vibrations: The Science of Sound* (pages 37 and 38) as a sample activity. Be sure to demonstrate the concepts of experiential learning and life skills.

Characteristics of Youth

GRADES K–3

CHARACTERISTICS

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMMING

Physical

Growing slowly, just learning to master physical skills. Can control large muscles better than small muscles.

Projects and meal times are messy. Activities that encourage use of large muscles, such as running, playing games, etc. are good.

Social

Learning how to be friends; may have many friends. Fighting occurs but doesn't last long. Towards the end of this phase, boys and girls separate.

Small group activities let this group practice their social skills, but still allow for individual attention. Role-playing helps children gain empathy. Encourage children to participate in mixed-gender activities.

Emotional

Are self centered. Seek approval from adults, and go out of their way to avoid punishment. Are sensitive to criticism; don't like to fail.

Be positive! Plan activities where everyone can experience some success. Foster cooperation, not competition.

Intellectual

Are concrete thinkers — base thinking in reality. Can't multi-task well. Are more interested in doing things than getting a good result at the end.

Plan lots of activities that take a short time to finish. Focus on the process rather than the final product. Allow for exploration and inquiry.

Characteristics of Youth

GRADES 4 – 8

CHARACTERISTICS

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMMING

Physical

Moving all the time; can't sit still. Beginning of adolescence is marked by a growth spurt, with females maturing before males.

Provide active learning experiences.
Avoid competitions between boys and girls.

Social

Joining clubs becomes popular. Don't always understand other viewpoints, but like to try to make others happy. Strive to please adults with successful project completion, rather than gaining satisfaction from completing the project itself.

Use group learning as much as possible, with same-sex members. Encourage older mentors to work with your group.

Emotional

Have a weak sense of their individual identity. May become moody. Justice and equality become important issues. Need to feel as if they are part of something very important.

Don't compare youth to each other. Help them identify their own strengths. Emphasize progress made from previous performances.

Intellectual

Until about age 11, think concretely (black/white), but begin to understand new ideas if related to previous experiences. Begin to think abstractly. Become immersed in subjects that interest them. Often reject solutions offered by adults in favor of finding their own solutions.

Use simple, short directions and brief learning experiences. Offer a wide range of activities to ensure many experience success.

Characteristics of Youth HIGH SCHOOL

CHARACTERISTICS

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMMING

Physical

Physical changes are usually accepted, but boys may still be growing quickly. Most females reach maximum height by age 14 and most males by age 16.

Be willing to answer questions about physical changes. Avoid comments that criticize or compare body shapes/sizes.

Social

Self centered, but capable of feeling empathy. Are able to maintain relationships with many diverse people. Acceptance by members of the opposite sex is important. Want to belong to clubs yet be recognized as unique within those organizations. Spend more time working and going to school; less time in club and group activities.

Let teens plan their own programs. Establish a climate that is conducive to peer support. Emphasize personal development whenever possible.

Emotional

Searching for their identity, and usually find it around age 16. Want to be autonomous from parents. May have trouble with compromise; and may have unsettled emotions. Strive to earn responsibility and the respect of others.

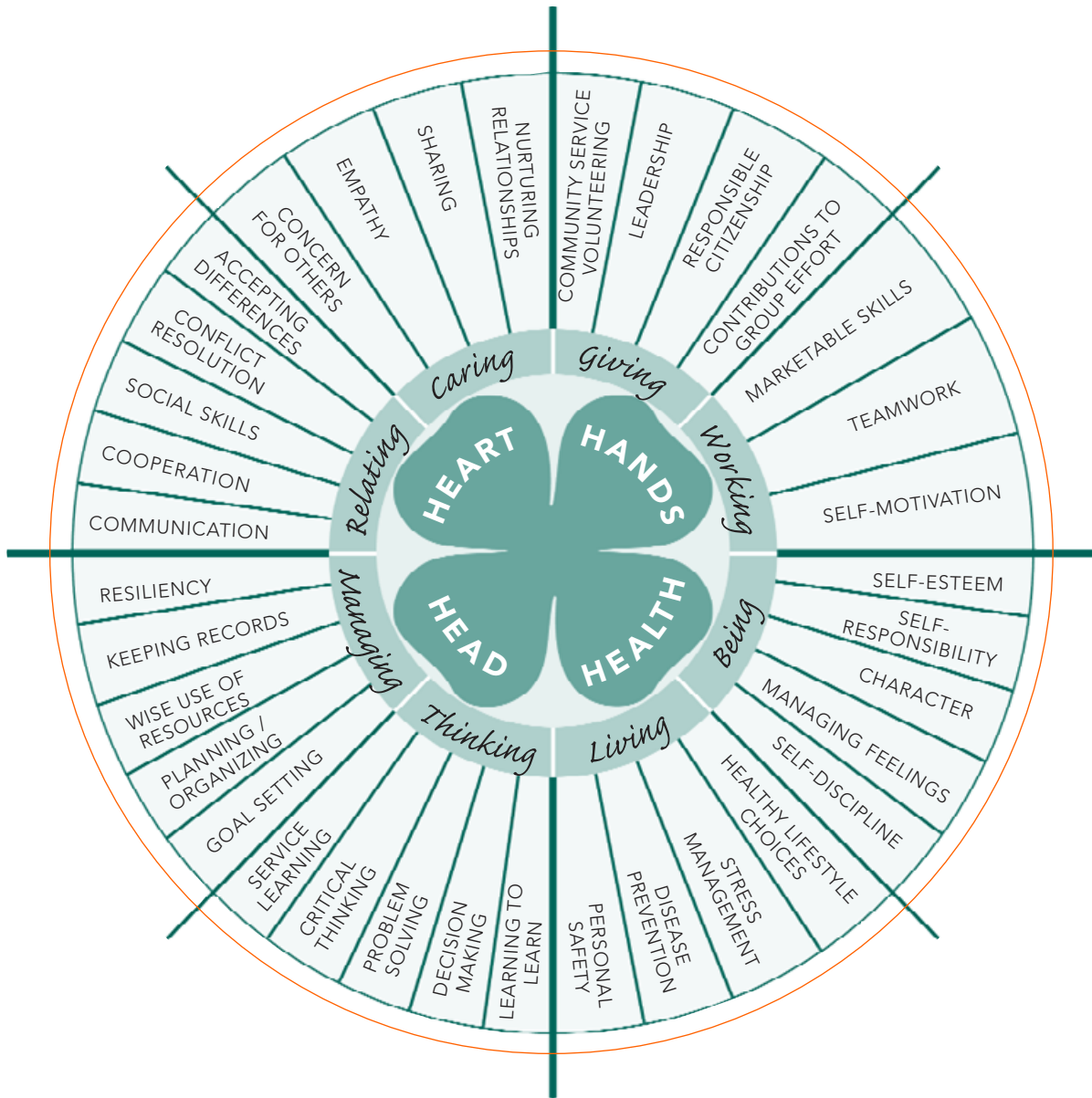
Let teens assume responsibility; expect them to follow through. Help them explore their identity, values, and beliefs. Help them develop individual skills. Encourage them to work with older teens and adults.

Intellectual

Gain cognitive and study skills. Are mastering abstract thinking. Emphasis is on exploring and preparing for future careers and roles. Like to set their own goals based on their own needs, and may reject goals imposed by others.

Give them real-life problems to figure out. Let them make decisions and evaluate the outcomes. Encourage service learning. Plan field trips to businesses or colleges.

Life Skills Model



SOURCE: Hendricks, Patricia A. *Targeting Life Skills Model: Incorporating developmentally appropriate learning opportunities to assess impact of life skill development* (Rev. ed.). Iowa State University. 4H-137A.

Experiential Learning Model

DO

Describe the activity you'll have participants do. Encourage them to think about what they might see or what might happen. Then, let participants experience the activity; perform or do it.

SHARE

Ask questions about the activity and the experience after they've completed it. Participants describe the results and their reactions.

PROCESS

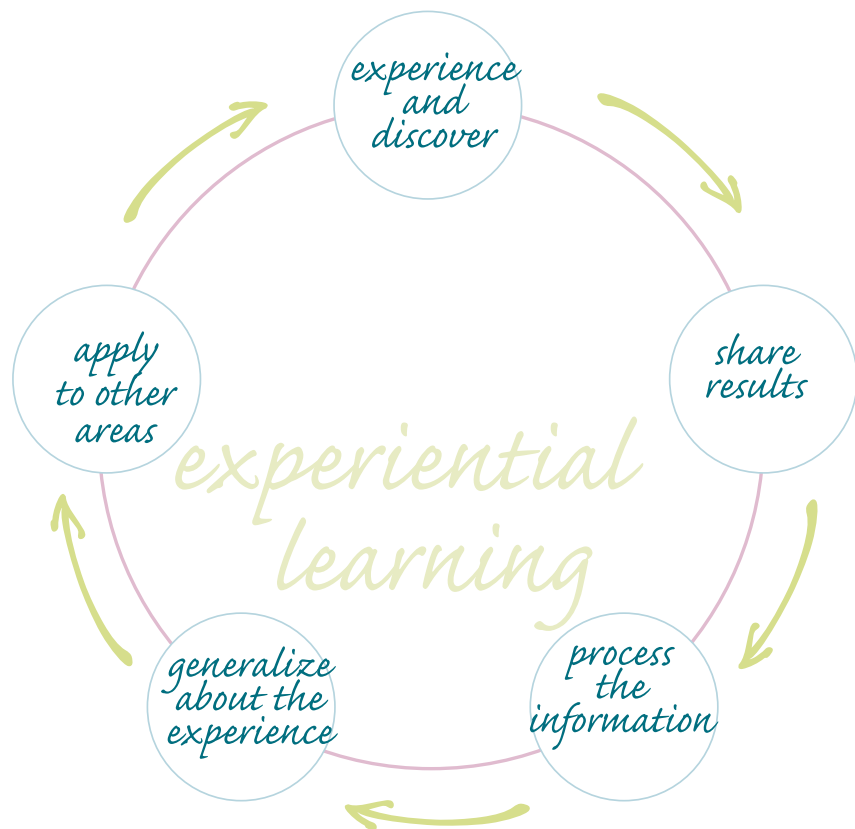
Ask questions about something that was important about the experience. Participants analyze the experience and reflect upon the results.

GENERALIZE

Now apply the results back to real world examples. Ask questions to help participants connect the subject matter to life skills and the bigger world.

APPLY

Help participants apply what they learned to their own lives, to give them opportunities to practice these new skills or use the new information.



Sample Activity

GOOD VIBRATIONS*

THE SCIENCE OF SOUND

LIFE SKILLS

Critical Thinking, Learning to Learn.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

To understand how sounds travel and are heard. To gain an appreciation for how sounds enrich our lives.

AGE

Five to 12.

TIME

30 minutes.

SETTING

Indoors or outdoors.

MATERIALS

Drum and drumsticks; plastic containers with lids that aren't clear; beans, pennies, paper clips, o-shaped cereal, popcorn kernels, and other small items to put inside the containers (you'll need one type of item for every two participants).

OVERVIEW

In this activity, you'll teach participants how to use a typical 4-H experiential learning-based, hands-on activity. *Good Vibrations: The Science of Sound* helps youth understand the process of problem solving. NOTE: This activity (adapted) also can be found in *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities*.

In this activity, participants get a chance to explore their sense of hearing. Before you begin, prepare "shaking containers" by placing beans, pennies, paper clips, cereal, popcorn kernels, or other small items into containers that aren't clear. You'll want to prepare two of each — two containers with paper clips, two containers with beans, etc.

START HERE

Explain to participants that *Good Vibrations: The Science of Sound* is designed to emphasize the life skill of critical thinking. Ask participants to pay particular attention to the experiential learning process, to see how it is applied in this activity.

Ask participants to assume the roles of youth ages five to 12. Note that the group will be beginning with the first step in the experiential learning process: *experiencing the activity*. Before they do this, however, note that you'll be providing some content background.

Explain that sound is vibration moving through a substance such as air, water, or other material. Our ears collect the vibrations and pass them down the ear canal to the eardrum. The eardrum vibrates like the head of a drum. (Use a drum to simulate this vibration — ask for volunteers to help make the noise.)

Continue your explanation by pointing out that other small bones in the ear continue the vibrations until they reach the inner ear, where they are changed to signals that are sent to the brain.

* Adapted from *4-H Cloverbud Series II Curriculum*, Ohio State University.

Sample Activity

GOOD VIBRATIONS

THE SCIENCE OF SOUND

WHAT'S NEXT?

Help participants explore the wonderful world of sound. Give each person a container. Tell them to shake it up but not open it. Listen carefully to the sound it makes. Now, instruct participants to go around the room and find the person with the match — the same items in the container that they have. They may only use their sense of hearing to find the match.

After everyone has found a match, ask them to open canisters and see if they are correct. Those who aren't correct should find their match, and carefully compare the sounds made. This is the experiential process of *sharing results*.

Next, explain to participants that they'll be using a series of questions to move through the next experiential steps, namely, processing, generalizing, and applying.

FINAL ACT

Ask participants these *processing* questions:

- 1 What kind of sounds did you hear?
- 2 How did you know who had the same items in their container?
- 3 Why did the different items in the containers make different sounds?

Ask some *generalizing* questions:

- 4 What other things could be put into the containers to make sound?
- 5 What things could you put in the containers that would not make sound?

Help children *apply* what they've learned. Explain that we get important information by hearing. Ask: When are some times when listening carefully is important? Are there ever times when listening isn't important?

More to Do

Why not at eardrum band? Assemble everyone and ask them to shake their canisters in beat to a simple tune, such as This Old Man or Row, Row, Row Your Boat. Accompany them on a piano (or other instrument) or play a tape/CD of music.

4-H Projects

OBJECTIVES

To help participants understand the different projects available within the 4-H system.

TIME

40 minutes.

MATERIALS

Project resources from your state, including member's and leader's manuals; photocopies of *Project Theme Week Handout*, page 40.

OVERVIEW

In this activity, participants are introduced to 4-H projects. Set up a table with project resources before you begin.

START HERE

Explain that a strong component of 4-H work is focused on projects. This project-based learning helps increase many life skills of members, and also builds content knowledge in specific areas. For example, children enrolled in the aerospace project learn scientific principles such as thrust and lift, engage their creative abilities in building and painting rockets, and develop problem-solving skills when their rockets don't perform as anticipated.

Share some of the project curricula available for youth with participants. Give them time to explore these resources on their own.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Explain that there are several scenarios for using project-based materials in 4-H clubs, including:

- 1 Each child can choose the project that interests him or her. If you have the resources/volunteers to support this approach, it can be quite successful, since children will truly match their interests to their efforts.
- 2 A club may choose to do one or two projects as a group(s). You will need fewer volunteers and other resources to support this approach.
- 3 Volunteer teachers or club leaders can use project books to plan theme weeks (or months). Many of the ideas in the books could be used to teach the entire group about such subjects as computers, self-esteem, future workplaces, etc.



Divide the group into teams of two or three each. Ask them to choose a project book and plan a theme week based upon the book. Distribute copies of the *Project Theme Week Handout* to help them plan. Give teams some time to plan and be creative.

FINAL ACT

Give teams an opportunity to share their plans. Answer any questions that have arisen about 4-H project work.

Project Theme Week

PROJECT RESOURCE
(book name)

THEME FOR WEEK

LEARNING AND OTHER
OUTCOMES

LIST ACTIVITIES TO BE
TAUGHT/EXPLORED FROM
MATERIALS

LIST DAYS/TIMES
OFFERED

WHAT WILL BE DONE
WITH PRODUCTS?

LIST PRODUCTS
THAT WOULD BE MADE
(for example, posters, dog
collars, tree surveys, etc.)

HOW WE'LL INVOLVE
PARENTS

HOW WE'LL INVOLVE
OTHER COMMUNITY
MEMBERS OR RESOURCES

SPECIAL EVENTS
PLANNED?

SPECIAL SNACKS
PLANNED?

OTHER IDEAS?

Involving Parents and Other Community Members

OBJECTIVES

To help participants learn how to best utilize parents and other community members to build a strong programs.

TIME

About 40 to 50 minutes.

MATERIALS

Chalk and chalkboard or flipchart and markers; photocopies of the *Involving Others — Volunteers Handout*, page 43; flipchart and markers for a few different groups.

OVERVIEW

In this activity, participants will think through how best to involve parents and other community members in their 4-H Afterschool club.

START HERE

Explain that parents and other community members can help make 4-H Afterschool programs strong. Parents in particular want to know what their children are doing in 4-H and at the after-school site, and children need their parents to be involved with all aspects of their lives. Community members can support the 4-H Afterschool program as volunteers, or may bring other resources into the setting.

Urge participants to build support from parents and families from the very beginning. The best way to do this is to (explain or list):

- 1 Ask for their consent when the child first joins the 4-H club.
- 2 Give parents a description of the program and discuss how they can support the program.
- 3 Provide opportunities to discuss the 4-H Afterschool program with parents.
- 4 Urge parents to attend club meetings whenever possible.
- 5 Encourage parents to participate when something is planned for the club that matches their interests or abilities. They may wish to teach a craft or host a field trip, for example.



Explain that there are challenges to keeping parents involved, mostly due to the lack of time in homes where all adults are working. Still, it's important for parents to have some involvement in 4-H Afterschool activities. Brainstorm some ideas for helping parents stay more connected with the 4-H Afterschool club. Some ideas might include:

- 1 Special invitations to 4-H events. Children can design and make these.
- 2 Hosting a special Parents' Day.
- 3 Giving recognition to parental helpers.
- 4 Providing information on how parents and caregivers can reinforce program goals at home.
- 5 Providing regular correspondence about program activities.

Involving Parents and Other Community Members

WHAT'S NEXT?

Recruiting, maintaining, and motivating volunteers from outside the paid staff are important tasks at a 4-H Afterschool club site. These tasks must be well planned and thoughtfully managed. Pass out the *Involving Others — Volunteers Handout*.

Explain that there are numerous other community resources. Ask participants to break into groups of about four each. Give each group a flipchart and markers. Ask them to:

- 1 Identify community resources.
- 2 Identify a role for these resources.
- 3 Figure out the best approach to gain participation in the 4-H Afterschool club.

FINAL ACT

Let each group share their community resource strategies. Share these examples, if you wish:

- 1 Your local Fire Department is a community resource. Firefighters can act as speakers and teach children about fire safety. Children can travel to the fire station on a field trip and learn about fire safety. A phone call to the local fire station is probably all that is needed to engage these resources—most have education programs or participate in community outreach.
- 2 Senior citizens can come in to offer a StoryTime to younger children, reading from favorite books. Volunteers can be solicited through local senior citizen agencies or from grandparents of children attending the after-school site.

4-H and other organizations rigorously screen volunteers in their programs. Be sure to cover your local 4-H Volunteer Screening Program with the after-school sites.



Involving Others – Volunteers

Work with Extension personnel to identify resources within the 4-H community that can help your newly formed 4-H Afterschool club.

How best to entice volunteers to join 4-H? Try these tips:

1 Provide a reason to participate. Appeal to what really interests each individual.

2 Give recognition.

Encouragement and recognition motivate people.

3 Clearly define and communicate your goals. Maintain a clear sense of direction so people will “get” what the club is about quickly.

4 Conduct meetings that stimulate and are clearly focused. Nothing is more discouraging than a poorly organized, rambling, unproductive meeting.

5 Listen. Everyone wants to be heard. The biggest cause of group apathy is the failure of leaders to really listen.

6 Reduce risks of participation. Good communication can help identify risks such as volunteers who are made to feel insecure by participation, feel as if they have too much responsibility, etc.

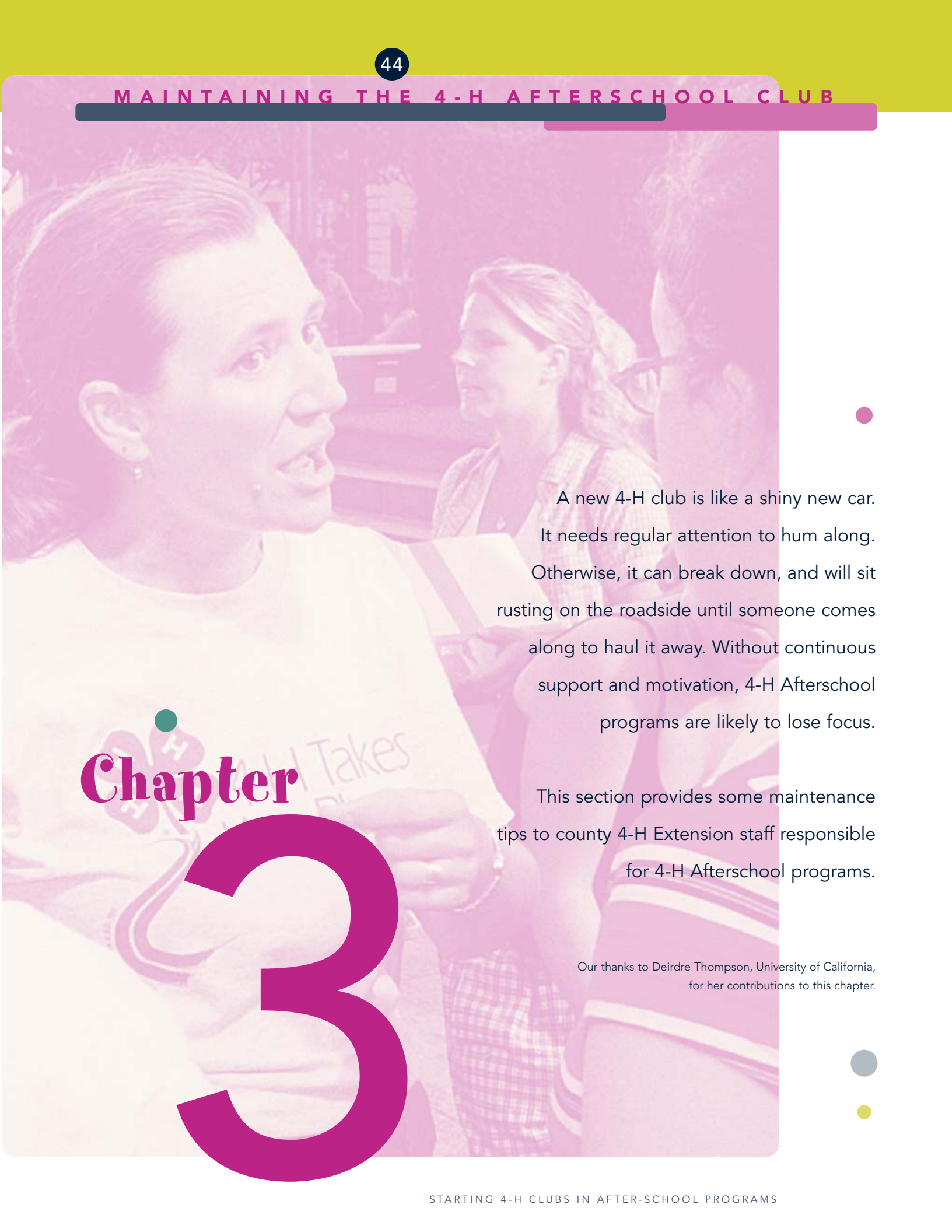
7 Encourage teens as volunteers. Offer class credits, an opportunity to participate in service learning, or chances to meet other teens and work with children as part of the program.

There are two types of volunteers: Ongoing and one-time.

Ongoing volunteers may include club leaders, teen helpers, and others. One-time volunteers may agree to host the 4-H Afterschool club at their workplace or may teach a class on fishing. Many parents will willingly take on the role of one-time volunteer.

What Motivates Volunteers?

- 1** An opportunity to help their families.
- 2** An opportunity to learn new skills.
- 3** An opportunity to help the community.
- 4** An opportunity to meet and get to know people in the community.
- 5** An opportunity to develop leadership skills.
- 6** An opportunity for community recognition.
- 7** An opportunity to use personal skills and knowledge.
- 8** An opportunity to learn more about community efforts and activities.



Chapter 3

A new 4-H club is like a shiny new car. It needs regular attention to hum along. Otherwise, it can break down, and will sit rusting on the roadside until someone comes along to haul it away. Without continuous support and motivation, 4-H Afterschool programs are likely to lose focus.

This section provides some maintenance tips to county 4-H Extension staff responsible for 4-H Afterschool programs.

Our thanks to Deirdre Thompson, University of California, for her contributions to this chapter.

Engaging Afterschool Staff with Your County 4-H Program

FOLLOW-UP CONTACTS

There are some key communication check-ins that you should plan with Afterschool club sites. Sites that don't receive feedback and support are likely to become disinterested or quit within a short time.

Here is a sample plan for maintaining good connections with Afterschool clubs:

- 1 Check in by phone once a month.
- 2 Design, write, and send a monthly newsletter targeted specifically at the successes and challenges of offering 4-H after school.
- 3 Stay in touch by e-mail, if the sites have such access — sometimes informal notes go a long way toward keeping minor problems minor.
- 4 Drop by (unscheduled) the sites a few times each year.
- 5 Organize new volunteer and after-school staff meetings and get together, so that different sites get a chance to meet and explore what works best.
- 6 Plan two evaluations each year (six months and annual).
- 7 Help program staff manage volunteers from outside their organizations by offering training opportunities (either on a local, regional, or national scale).

8 Check in to ensure that sites are providing needed records, such as roster sheets, reports, enrollment data, etc. (You should set up the process for collecting these materials in your initial orientation meetings with sites.)

9 Invite key after-school executives/administrators to become a member of your county Extension Advisory Committee.

10 Consider developing a web site for any after-school collaboration in your area, giving all participants an equal billing.

ONGOING TRAINING

It's beneficial for after-school program staff to attend any 4-H trainings you offer. These include training on how to enhance the quality and setting of after-school care programs and curricula/activities options. See the companion guides, *Guiding Growth: Training Staff for Working with Youth in After-School Programs* and *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities* for more information. Additionally, offer after-school program staff the opportunity to attend any trainings or workshops you may be offering to other 4-H leaders and volunteers.



Engaging Afterschool Staff with Your County 4-H Program

RECOGNITION*

There are three main groups that may need to be recognized as part of your 4-H Afterschool club programs. They include youth participants, volunteer partners, and after-school staff.

Recognizing the accomplishments of youth in 4-H Afterschool clubs can occur in many ways. These may include:

- 1 Certificates (also awarded for participation)
- 2 Ribbons
- 3 Scholarships (camps, youth meetings, etc.)
- 4 Trips
- 5 Plaques and trophies
- 6 Membership cards
- 7 Other benefits (such as movie passes, etc.)

Ultimately, one of the major outcomes for participants is a sense of mastery and an increase in self esteem. While some people need outward signs for recognition, others thrive in the sense they've done a job well — some youth like to be publicly recognized; others prefer individual, private “pats on the back.” Each 4-H Afterschool club should offer recognition that is most meaningful to its members.

Volunteers, also, should be recognized for participation and their achievements. Extension personnel should work with after-school sites to design volunteer events and recognition that are most meaningful to the individuals at their locations.

You'll also have a chance to plan recognition for partnering after-school sites. This recognition may take the form of highlighting the program in 4-H materials, or you may wish to individually recognize after-school staff for their efforts. Again, plan recognition that is meaningful to after-school program staff.

Encourage sites to follow the National 4-H Recognition Model:

- 1 Recognize children for participation. This acknowledges their involvement in the first step of working toward a goal and helps build a positive self-image.
- 2 Recognize children for progress toward their personal goals. This helps youth gain experience in setting goals and realistically assessing their abilities.
- 3 Recognize children for achieving standards of excellence. These predetermined targets give youth something to aim for in their learning experiences.
- 4 Recognize children through peer competition. This can be a strong motivation for some children. It is not appropriate for children under age eight.
- 5 Recognize children for cooperating.



* Adapted from *Rising to the Occasion: A 4-H Leader's Guide*. National 4-H Council, 1997. Publication WFP031.

Engaging Afterschool Staff with Your County 4-H Program

ONGOING CURRICULUM SUPPORT

One of the best ways to help after-school program staff is by offering trainings that showcase 4-H curricula. *Extraordinary Learning Opportunities: A Sampler of 4-H Afterschool Activities* in this series is meant to be used directly by after-school volunteers/staff to offer program options to 4-H members, both within and outside of a club setting. You also can use this resource guide to design trainings for after-school program staff, giving them an opportunity to experience the material in a supportive group setting.

4-H and the Extension system offers a wide range of curricula that after-school program staff will find useful. Especially important to the club experience are the Member's Manuals, which individuals use to learn more about specific projects. You can make after-school sites aware of what is offered by states and nationally. You can suggest some excellent places to start, such as with any primary curricula (for younger children). Or draw up a list of recommended state/national curricula, depending on the interests/focus of your local 4-H Afterschool clubs.

MARKETING MATERIALS AND PUBLICITY

County programs have probably employed many different approaches to marketing and publicity over the years. 4-H Afterschool projects should be included in your efforts to outreach all 4-H programs. Additionally, you may wish to put special emphasis on marketing and publicizing 4-H Afterschool programs. Here are some ideas:

- 1 Appoint a publicity committee, with both older youth and adult representatives, to generate and implement publicity ideas.
- 2 Hold high-profile special events to publicize 4-H Afterschool, such as Fun Days for non-4-H members, ice cream socials, etc.
- 3 Write public service announcements (PSAs) or newspaper articles to talk about 4-H Afterschool.

- 4 Have a 4-H Afterschool enrollment drive.

- 5 Provide impact information to key decision makers and stakeholders.

Counties should work closely with after-school staff to plan marketing and publicity efforts for the clubs.

EVALUATION

The Cooperative Extension System will collect some data for state and national purposes, including demographic and quantitative information.

Additionally, you may work with sites to collect data that will help them improve the 4-H club experience. Surveys are available from North Carolina Cooperative Extension (www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fourh/clubs/Index/survey1.htm) and other states to collect this formative data. The Extension Cares Initiative also has extension evaluation resources.

Plan to work with individual sites to determine the goals of the evaluation, and then help them design instruments that will yield meaningful data that can be used to improve programs and learning opportunities.

You can find additional sources of curricula, marketing materials, and information about evaluation at the 4-H Afterschool website.

Go to www.4hafterschool.org.



Chapter

4

Now that you have completed the section of the resource guide regarding working with local after-school staff to start 4-H clubs, you can explore other options for improving after-school programs. The overall goals of 4-H Afterschool are to increase the ability of after-school program staff to offer high quality care, education, and developmental experiences for youth and to help increase the availability of after-school programs. By starting clubs and training after-school staff, you are working toward these goals. If you want to expand your work, you'll need to explore ways to involve the community.

Written by Rosa Andrews and Eddie Locklear,
North Carolina State University.

Community Outreach

As a 4-H professional, you are in a unique position to share information about children's experiences after school from a local, state, and national perspective. You understand the risks for children left unsupervised. You can educate about the need for quality after-school experiences for youth in their community, and what the research says about their impact on children's development.*

BUILDING COUNTY-LEVEL SUPPORT FOR 4-H WORK AND AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

There are many ways to get other people involved with after-school work. Parents, policymakers, educators, and the general public support high quality, structured after-school programs for young people. This section offers a few suggestions on how Cooperative Extension professionals can mobilize this interest into action to support 4-H Afterschool.

A county-level after-school committee is one way to provide this support. The goals of the committee might include:

- 1 Finding financial and human resources to donate to after-school programs.
- 2 Conducting needs assessments to determine the demand for additional programs or to figure out training and programming needs of after-school staff.
- 3 Conducting a marketing campaign to increase awareness of the need for programs.
- 4 Helping link the academic needs of youth to their after-school activities.
- 5 Locating volunteers and mentors to work with children in programs.
- 6 Working with public officials to find additional ways to support programs.

This is only a beginning list of ways a committee can help support after-school work. Take this list and add your ideas as you continue to support this important work.

SCHOOLS

In most after-school programs there is a need for a closer working relationship between school staff and after-school staff. If you have successful linkages with schools, perhaps you can work with program staff to help them develop linkages with schools. With additional emphasis

being placed on academic achievement, after-school staff must determine ways to support youths' academic needs. Furthermore, the public perceives that structured after-school programs must support the academic needs of youth. Therefore, after-school staff can use support in building linkages with school teachers to connect a child's work in school with after-school activities.

FEDERAL, STATE, AND COUNTY RESOURCES

All Cooperative Extension staff (not just 4-H professionals) have expertise and educational materials that can improve the quality of after-school programs. As the 4-H representative, you can serve a valuable role in linking the many resources of Cooperative Extension to after-school programs.

You are
in a unique
position
to share
information
about
children's
experiences
after school.

* There are a number of web-based alliances. The National School Age Care Alliance (www.nsaca.org), for example, along with other organizations, can provide information.

Community Outreach

VOLUNTEERS

Another important role 4-H can serve is helping to identify and train volunteers to work in after-school programs. The strength of 4-H as a premier youth development program in America is the more than 600,000 volunteers who support 4-H nationwide. Educating current volunteers about 4-H's involvement with after-school programs in the county is important. One challenge faced by some Extension professionals is helping community-based 4-H volunteers recognize after-school staff as 4-H volunteers. Integrating after-school staff in all structured 4-H volunteer training, recognition, and other activities will contribute to breaking down this misconception of who can be a 4-H volunteer.

Many parents have an interest in taking an active role in their child's activities during after-school hours. With a little encouragement and training from 4-H staff, they can become a rich source of volunteers to the programs.

The ideas shared in this section are only a few ways Cooperative Extension professionals can help improve the quality of local after-school programs.

Community-based or school-based 4-H volunteers also may be interested in offering educational programs to after-school youth. Master volunteers can be trained to teach afterschool staff or engage more 4-H volunteers in after-school programs.

State and National Efforts

In addition to getting involved with after-school programs in your county, there also are many state and national initiatives to support after-school programs. This section provides a brief overview of several national groups and organizations that support the improvement of the quality and availability of after-school programs. To learn more, check out the web sites or contact your state or National 4-H offices.

EXTENSION CARES INITIATIVE

During the 1980s, the School-Age Care Program Development Model, developed by Cooperative Extension professionals, outlined several approaches Extension professionals could use to support after-school programs. As this model was implemented across the country, there was a need to expand training and technical assistance support to Extension professionals involved with after-school work. In 1999, the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) established the Cooperative Extension Cares Initiative (ECI). The Management Team of the initiative focused on developing training and technical support materials, locating appropriate curricula, and creating web sites to support after-school work. The initiative focused on early childhood, school-age youth, and teens. A web-based evaluation system also

was designed and implemented. To learn more about the many resources available from ECI, you can do a search on the web or contact your state or National 4-H office.

CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES AT RISK

The CYFAR (Children, Youth and Families at Risk) Initiative began in 1991 through a Congressional Appropriation to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES). CYFAR provides leadership and funding to state Extension Services in land-grant universities for community projects that are focused on at-risk audiences, are research-based collaboratives, and are committed to self-sufficiency. CYFAR is designed to provide educational resources to Cooperative Extension professionals and other educators who work with at-risk audiences. In addition to providing financial support to local communities to start programs to support families and communities, CYFAR has an extensive list of resources on its web site. Many of the programs supported by CYFAR are after-school programs. Additional information about CYFAR and its many resources can be found on its web site.

State and National Efforts

MILITARY PARTNERSHIPS

Through an agreement between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of Defense, resources of Army and Air Force are merged with those of CSREES and the land-grant universities to develop education and research programs which benefit youth and families on military installations. One such program is the USDA/U.S. Army Youth Development Project in which Extension and Army Child and Youth Services (CYS) have teamed to place extension professionals representing 14 state Extension programs in seven Army Major commands and at CYS headquarters. These professionals provide training and technical assistance to CYS staff at 123 Army installations worldwide. Likewise, Extension conducted a three-year demonstration project with the U.S. Air Force from 1999–2002. This collaborative project combined the expertise of local Cooperative Extension/4-H offices with that of Air Force youth serving agencies to design and implement strong, sustainable youth development programs on Air Force bases. Currently, the model this project developed is being replicated on Air Force bases across the country and the U.S. Army is working with 4-H to organize 4-H clubs at all Army installations around the world.

AFTERSCHOOL ALLIANCE

The 4-H Afterschool initiative supports the Afterschool Alliance's vision of ensuring that all children have access to after-school programs

by 2010 and its belief that after-school programs are critical to children and families today. 4-H uses the research of the Afterschool Alliance to educate after-school professionals across the country to raise awareness and promote collaboration of community partners around after-school issues.

FIGHT CRIME: INVEST IN KIDS

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids is a national anti-crime group of more than 1,600 police chiefs, sheriffs, prosecutors, crime survivors, and leaders of police officer organizations working together to reduce crime in the United States. This organization is conducting valuable research in the area of crime reduction and the value of quality youth development and after-school programs. Organized in the late 1990s, this organization has helped create awareness of the many benefits youth receive from participation in quality after-school programs. This group is a great source of data. Additional information is available at the Fight Crime, Invest in Kids web site.

NATIONAL SCHOOL-AGE CARE ALLIANCE

The National School-Age Care Alliance (NSACA) is a national membership organization representing public, private, and community-based providers of after-school programs with more than 9,000 members and over 36 affiliated state organizations. NSACA's mission is to build a profession that develops, supports, and promotes quality

after-school programs for children and youth. It focuses its resources on professional development activities to improve the knowledge and skills of providers who work with youth after school. It is the only national, membership-based organization designed to address the professional development needs of all after-school providers. Some of NSACA's major activities include:

- 1 An annual national conference.
- 2 A public policy forum held in Washington D.C. annually.
- 3 The School-Age Review, its national journal.
- 4 A national accreditation program.
- 5 National school-age care standards.
- 6 An extensive web site of information and support for after-school staff.



State and National Efforts

Although NSACA is a national organization, it has affiliates in most states. The state affiliates work closely with NSACA and mirror many of the services offered by the parent organization. In most states the affiliates conduct annual state conferences and regional training events. By joining an affiliate, the member is automatically a member of NSACA. Individuals also can join through the national office. Becoming a member of NSACA is a great way to stay abreast of developments in the after-school profession. More information is available at the NSACA web site.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME

The National Institute on Out-of-School Time (NIOST) is a well-known, national research organization for after-school issues. Since its inception in 1978 (formerly known as the School-Age Care Project at Wellesley College), NIOST has worked in research, evaluation, and consultation; policy development and public awareness; and training and curriculum development. Research from NIOST formulated the *NSACA Standards for Quality School-Age Care* and contributed to the *After-School Programs and the K-8 Principal, Standards for Quality School-Age Child Care*. You can learn more about NIOST at its web site.

21ST CENTURY COMMUNITY LEARNING CENTER

One of the most visible and popular initiatives that have occurred in the after-school field is the 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) program. Started in 1997 with a congressional appropriation of \$1 million, this project expanded to \$1 billion in 2002. The major focus of 21st CCLC is to help improve the academic achievement of youth during their after-school hours. Although the program has other key components, the after-school effort has received the most recognition. Originally, the program was administered to local LEAs (Local Educational Authority) by the Department of Education. In 2002 funds were distributed to the state educational departments for implementation. Many Cooperative Extension professionals serve important roles in securing and using these funds for after-school programs. This program offers many collaborative opportunities for Extension professionals to get involved at the local and county levels to improve the availability of programs for youth after school.

In some states Cooperative Extension staff have used resources from the Department of Health and Human Resources, Department of Juvenile Justice, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of Labor, and many other state and federal agencies to improve the quality and availability of after-school pro-

grams. Foundations, businesses, and other grant sources are used to address after-school issues. There are many local, state, and national sources for educational and financial support to after-school programs. Contact the after-school leaders in your area to learn more about what is going on after school in your county and state.

These are only a few of the many initiatives, agencies, and resources available across the country that improve the quality and availability of after-school programs. There are many more. Chances are, there are many programs in your state that are helping expand and support after-school programs.

We hope this resource guide has given you some ideas for establishing, maintaining, and expanding 4-H in after-school settings. We believe that as a youth development professional, you will find ways to expand on what we have presented in this short document. The need for quality after-school program is great. We invite you to take an active role in helping create safe, healthy, educational, enriching and fun programs for youth during their after-school hours.

We invite
you to take
an active role
in helping
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and fun
programs

Chapter

5

Do you have outstanding programs
you want others to know about?

Are you pressured to report results
of your programs?

Do you feel as if you have
no time for reporting the outcomes
of your programs?

Have you been in a situation
where you needed to report program
results immediately?

Would you like to contribute to a
National effort?

Then 4-H Afterschool has
a few solutions!!

This chapter was written by Toni DeWeese,
ECI National Data Coordinator

Join Up...and Share Your Results

4-H Afterschool programs will have several opportunities and systems available for reporting program results and being recognized for quality efforts. They include:

- 1 The Extension CARES Initiative (ECI) Evaluation and Reporting System
- 2 4-H Afterschool Program Profiles (a.k.a. Benchmark Information)
- 3 State Plan of Work reporting system
- 4 ES-237
- 5 4-H and Family and Consumer Science “Programs of Excellence” Collection

WHAT IS THE ECI?

The Extension Cares Initiative (ECI) is a national initiative of the Cooperative Extension System that aims to increase the quality, availability, accessibility, affordability, and sustainability of child care, school-age and teen out-of-school programs. Program goals and objectives can be found at the reusda.gov/extension-cares web site.

WHAT IS THE ECI EVALUATION AND REPORTING SYSTEM?

The ECI evaluation and reporting system is a web-based system for reporting information from early care and education, school-age care and teen programs. This is the primary system 4-H Afterschool programs will use. It generates local reports and provides data that can be aggregated for state and national use.

There are three ways in which you can report results of your efforts with 4-H Afterschool projects into the ECI system.

PART 1: Simply tell us what trainings/programs you are doing. With the report you will get from this data, you can answer evaluation questions such as: Who am I reaching with my program?; What range of topics have I offered through training?; How many training hours have I offered my participants?

PART 2: Use ECI Client Satisfaction evaluations to evaluate the training/program you’ve done.

There are four versions of client satisfaction surveys: Provider/Staff, Extension, Families, and Community, each depending on the target audience of the program. Each evaluation contains basic questions on demographics of that population, plus four simple questions about the program. You can either send evaluations for scanning or enter evaluation data into the online system. With the report you will get from this data, you can determine multiple characteristics of your audience, as well as answer questions such as: How do participants rate the quality of the training?; Am I reaching my target audience?; How do my programs compare to the national average?

PART 3: Report specific activities or outcomes you’ve been working toward. For a list of the questions asked in the semi-annual report, refer to the website at: www.eci.msstate.edu. While the semi-annual report can be conducted alone, we highly encourage it to be used in conjunction with reporting programs and using client satisfaction evaluations to maximize the power of this system and the reports you get back.

Why should you use the ECI system?

- It’s on the Internet, so no special software is required.
- Data entry is fast and easy, and the system performs all the analysis for you!
- Provides instant professional reports of your results!

NOW, HOW DO YOU START?

1 Obtain an ECI User ID and password for logging into the system. Visit our website for a list of state ECI coordinators, then contact your coordinator for a User ID.

2 Once you have a User ID, you can login to the system to start reporting.

3 *You also need to download the reporting and evaluation system training manual. This manual gives you step-by-step instructions on how to report your data in the system.* It also tells you complete instructions on how to use client satisfaction evaluations. To download the manual, visit our website at: www.eci.ext.msstate.edu.

Join Up...and Share Your Results

Our website has just about everything you need to know about the evaluation and reporting system so you can start reporting right away! If you have questions about the evaluation and reporting system, please go to the www.eci.ext.msstate.edu web site.

The ECI evaluation and reporting system is one of the few that allows the aggregation of data across the country. Summary data will help market our excellent work and position Cooperative Extension System for resources in the future. JOIN UP and become part of the national effort! You'll be glad you did!

Other than the ECI evaluation and reporting system, how can I participate in...

4-H AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM PROFILES (AKA BENCHMARK INFORMATION)?

4-H Afterschool Programs will be asked to respond to an on-line survey during the fall of each year. This gives the 4-H Afterschool Leadership Team valuable information that profiles programs, lets us know who is involved in afterschool programs, and provides information which can be used to market the nation-wide efforts of the Cooperative Extension System. Some of the questions in this quick survey are similar to the ones asked in the "Semi-Annual Report" through the ECI system. The "profiles" offer quick snapshots

of what is happening across the country, while the semi-annual report collects and analyzes the information in more detail. To preview the Profile questions, visit our website at: www.eci.ext.msstate.edu.

STATE PLAN OF WORK (POW) REPORTING SYSTEM?

A set of outcome indicators that measure impact in early care and education, school-age care, and teen out-of-school time programs, has been developed and will be integrated into the national Plan of Work system that states submit to the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) in order to receive federal funds. These outcomes and indicators were developed by a national committee of Family and Consumer Science faculty and the School-Age Care, Teen Out-of-School Time, and Evaluation Committees of ECI.

Watch for this opportunity in the next POW reporting cycle. Copies of the indicators can be found on the ECI website at: www.reeusda.gov/extensioncares.

ES-237 ANNUAL REPORTING FOR 4-H?

There are two categories in the ES-237 Annual 4-H Report, starting with the reports due November 1, 2004, that will capture 4-H Afterschool efforts. Under the "4-H Club" category, states will be able to report youth members in: community 4-H clubs, school 4-H clubs, afterschool 4-H clubs, and military 4-H clubs. It is a new option to be able to report 4-H clubs in these different categories. Previous reports

only asked for 4-H clubs and many interpreted this to mean community clubs only. This category assumes there is a 4-H club structure present in the afterschool environment.

There is another category in which states can report "youth participating in School-Age Child Care programs." States can report youth reached through all afterschool efforts (needs assessments, curriculum enhancement, staff training, community development, etc.) here. A 4-H club structure does not have to be part of the afterschool experience.

4-H PROGRAMS OF EXCELLENCE?

For a number of years the National 4-H Headquarters staff collected "4-H Programs of Excellence" from the states and compiled them into a web-based resource of information. These were narrative reports that could document results. Opportunities such as this may be available in the future. 4-H Afterschool programs are encouraged to provide program information for these types of requests.



ENDNOTES

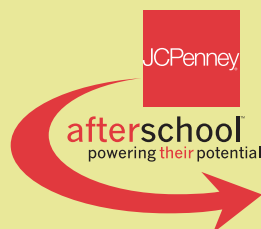
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