

**Pennsylvania  
4-H Youth Development  
Curriculum and Training  
Needs Assessment  
Findings**

**May 2000**

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## **4-H Youth Curriculum and Training Needs Assessment**

### **Introduction**

A committee of extension administrators, faculty, staff and volunteers met to identify curriculum and training needs and priorities for the 4-H/youth program. This expert panel shared their findings with county-based extension educators and extension faculty and staff via the Web. Extension faculty and staff were asked to react to the findings and to suggest additions and deletions to the identified needs for training and curriculum. The findings from the committee and responses from extension educators and faculty are highlighted in this report. Information from this report will be shared with 4-H/youth curriculum committees and extension faculty who develop curriculum and design training.

### **4-H/Youth Curriculum Needs and Priorities**

#### **Curriculum Needs**

The panel of 16 experts identified needs for curriculum development or revision in 46 project areas. The committee members subsequently voted for ten of the 46 projects that they felt were of highest priority for revision or development. The projects that had at least 33 percent agreement to be on the priority list were retained. Thirteen project areas met this criterion after review by the panel of experts.

The priority list was shared via the web with all 4-H/youth and family and consumer sciences staff. The county educators were asked to review the curriculum priorities identified by the panel of experts. Respondents (n=31) were asked to identify projects that they felt should be added to or deleted from the priority list. If ten (33%) or more educators wanted a project removed from or added to the priority list, the project was added or removed. The only project suggested by the panel of experts that was removed from the list was "emotional self-regulation." No additional projects were added.

#### **Project Priorities**

Table 1 shows the 46 project areas identified as a need by either the panel of experts or the survey respondents highlighted in red. The project areas highlighted in blue indicate that they were one of the twelve priority projects identified. The twelve priority projects were:

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. Computer        | 7. Career Exploration                   |
| 2. Engineering     | 8. Food Preparation                     |
| 3. Ethics          | 9. Farm to Table                        |
| 4. Fitness         | 10. Youth Leadership Development        |
| 5. Communications  | 11. Aviation and Space Projects         |
| 6. Fix-it/Handyman | 12. Practical Economic Skills for Youth |

Table 1

**PENNSYLVANIA 4-H/YOUTH CURRICULUM  
ALL SUGGESTED PROJECTS**

ANIMAL SCIENCES (chairs of sub-committees)	CONSUMER AND FAMILY SCIENCES (chairs of sub-committees)	SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND EARTH SCIENCES	INTERNATIONAL AND DIVERSITY	COMMUNICATIONS AND EXPRESSIVE ARTS	HEALTHY LIFESTYLES EDUCATION	LEADERSHIP AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT	CITIZENSHIP AND CIVIC EDUCATION
Dairy	Textile Science -crafts -exploring folk art	Ag. Engineering Sciences -bicycle project -farm safety -small engines	Forest/Natural Resources -environmental education -pollution education -wildlife/fisheries	-urban programming -cultural appreciation -diversity education	communications project -music project	Leisure Education crafts -fitness -conflict and stress -outdoor cooking camping -shooting sports	youth leadership development -adult leadership development -self-esteem (esp. for girls) -exploring 4-H -career exploration (ag. careers) -time management -interview skills	-ethics project -competition -values clarification -local govt. days -service learning -community building
Entomology	Foods & Nutrition -food preparation -food safety -microwave	Computer/Web Technology -web-based camp	-soils, water, air -sustainable ag -stewardship			-bicycle project -self defense		
Horse -equine therapy	-international -food science -farm to table -EFNEP projects	-creating web pages -consumer issues	Plant Sciences -plant therapy -gardening			-general recreation (games and songs)		
Livestock	Intergenerational -genealogy/family history	General -science experiments -aviation/space -engineering projects -"Fix-It" project -aviation/space						
Poultry	-grandparenting -animal bonding							
Small Animals	Family Living -home environ. -babysitting -parent/child communication -grooming -family projects youth literacy Consumer Econ. economic life skills -youth entrepreneur							

Red = all projects suggested

blue = priority curriculum projects

## **Youth Programming and Volunteer Management In-Service Needs**

Sixteen youth development educators and administrators (expert panel) each identified ten priority training needs related to youth programming and volunteer management. The entire list of training needs was then categorized by the expert panel into the areas of evaluation, youth development skills, marketing, curriculum, personal development, reaching new Audiences, and volunteer development. Many sub-themes were identified under each major category. The category listing and the sub-themes were placed on the web for review by Pennsylvania 4-H/youth and family and consumer sciences faculty and staff. The faculty and staff had the opportunity to add additional priority in-service training topics. The additions from the staff who responded (n=31) are incorporated into the listing below. The number of staff and members of the expert panel who indicated that the topic was a priority training need is indicated after each topic.

### **Evaluation Training Topics**

Evaluation tools (user-friendly) (9)  
Impact evaluation (7)  
Encouraging participation in evaluation (3)  
What to evaluate (2)  
Reporting results (2)  
Life skill evaluation (2)  
Statewide evaluation of 4-H program (2)  
Qualitative evaluation methods (2)  
Cost effectiveness of evaluation  
Evaluating collaborative efforts (2)  
“Human Subjects” rules and regulations  
Evaluation how-tos  
Evaluation for program improvement

### **Youth Development Skills Training Topics**

Communications skills (6)  
Adolescent development (5)  
Leadership development (5)  
Targeting life skills (4)  
Decision-making skills (2)  
Prevention of risky behaviors (2)  
Teen leader development (2)  
Group/social skills (2)  
Ethics (2)  
Working as a team (2)  
Working with at-risk youth  
Promoting resiliency in youth  
Emotional development and regulation

### **Youth Development Skills Training Topics (cont.)**

Youth governance  
Pre-teen leader development  
Meeting management  
Youth adult interaction  
Conflict resolution/management  
Successful YD activities  
Motivating youth  
Imaginative thinking  
Diversity  
Age-appropriate activities  
Civic involvement  
Non-formal teaching skills  
Teaching techniques

### **Marketing Training Topics**

News, radio, print training (4)  
Promotion (3)  
Brochure development (3)  
Reaching new audiences (3)  
Resource development (2)  
Advertising on a budget (2)  
Starting a 4-H Alumni Assn.  
Sharing success stories (2)  
School presentation/marketing aids  
Web page development  
Image identification  
New marketing methods  
Marketing plan development

**Curriculum Training Topics**

Training on specific curriculum (4)  
 Animal Science (4)  
 Crafts/Leisure (3)  
 Career education/exploration (3)  
 Computer education (3)  
 Health (2)  
 Home related/home economics (2)  
 County projects (2)  
 Science/Technology (2)  
 4-H in a variety of settings (2)  
 Fitness  
 Embryology  
 Cooking  
 Engineering  
 Diversity education  
 Leadership  
 Officer education  
 Wildlife/fisheries  
 Locating resources  
 Search Institute's Assets  
 Prevention topics  
 Enhancing life skills through  
     demonstrations, record books, fairs  
     exhibits  
 Creative training techniques  
 Youth voice in curriculum development  
 The curriculum development process

**Personal Development**

Time management (4)  
 Technology use(3)  
 Conflict management (3)  
 Self-esteem (3)  
 Communications (3)  
 Balancing work and family (2)  
 Interpersonal skills (2)  
 Diversity/Inclusion of all youth (2)  
 Ethics training  
 Workforce/Careers  
 Stress management  
 Leadership  
 Dealing with change  
 Citizenship  
 Administrative management  
 Youth Dev. current research

**Personal Development (cont.)**

Youth education as a profession  
 Team skills  
 Teaching skills  
 Presentation skills

**New Audiences**

Diversity training (7)  
 Urban 4-H clubs/projects (4)  
 Collaborations with other youth  
 organizations (3)  
 Identifying new audiences (3)  
 Affirmative action (2)  
 Volunteer recruitment (2)  
 Time needed to work with new  
     audiences (2)  
 After school programming  
 Summer camps  
 Techniques that work  
 School enrichment  
 Curricula for diverse audiences  
 Working with at-risk youth  
 Enrichment activities

**Volunteer Development**

Recruiting volunteers (traditional and  
     non-traditional) (13)  
 Volunteer retention/rewards (6)  
 Volunteer orientation (5)  
 Communication (4)  
 Conflict resolution (4)  
 Communication (4)  
 Empowering or motivating adults (2)  
 Annual updates (2)  
 Empowering or motivating adults (2)  
 Working with advisory committees  
 Adult teaching and learning strategies  
 Volunteer trends  
 Volunteer management resources  
 Organizational skills  
 Middle management skills  
 Train the trainer approaches  
 Policy training  
 Club management  
 Child abuse reporting  
 Risk management

**Volunteer Development (cont.)**

Updated curriculum

Volunteer networking

Training models for volunteers

Involving seniors as volunteers

Leadership development

Inclusion/diversity

Organizational skills

Middle management skills

Train the trainer approaches

Policy training

Club management

## Volunteer Competencies

A panel of sixteen 4-H/youth and family educators and administrators identified competencies they felt were important for a 4-H Youth volunteer to possess. The generated list of competencies was categorized by the panel into the areas of attitudes, abilities, knowledge, and ethics. These five general categories were shared on the web with extension faculty and staff. Respondents (n=28) were asked to identify the five skills or competencies that they felt were most important in each competency area. The competency listing identifies skills in each category and the number of respondents (panel of experts and respondents) who identified that skill.

### Attitudes

Willingness to work with diverse youth (16)  
 Willingness to learn and participate in training (16)  
 Positive (13)  
 Dependable/responsible (13)  
 Concept of team (10)  
 Interest in working with youth (7)  
 Nurturing/supportive/caring nature (7)  
 Resourceful (7)  
 Belief in the positive power of youth (6)  
 Flexibility (5)  
 Can follow policies and procedures (5)  
 Emotionally stable/rational (4)  
 Patience (4)  
 Sense of humor/fun(4)  
 Fair (4)  
 Open-mindedness (5)  
 Enthusiasm (3)  
 Pleasant (3)  
 Willing to delegate (3)  
 Realistic (3)  
 Idealistic (2)  
 Change with times (2)  
 Tolerant (2)  
 Encouraging  
 Understanding ages and stages of youth  
 Humble  
 Wholesome  
 Sensitive  
 Commitment to program goals  
 Open minded in diversity issues

### Abilities

Good communication/interpersonal skills (22)  
 Organizational skills (15)  
 Conflict management/resolution (12)  
 Leadership (10)  
 Ability to teach (7)  
 Group/club management skills (6)  
 Time management skills (6)  
 Able to work with youth (4)  
 Money management skills (4)  
 Creativity (4)  
 Ability to work with and involve parents (3)  
 Good listener  
 Flexibility in skill level of youth  
 Engages teen leaders  
 Ability to represent a larger voice  
 Ability to process information  
 Stress management  
 Empowers youth

### Knowledge

Competence in subject area taught/subject matter expertise (32)  
 Ages and stages of youth development (10)  
 Understand 4-H educational philosophy, mission and goals (10)  
 Knowledge of program policies and procedures (8)  
 Knowledge of extension (4)  
 Health and safety skills (2)

**Knowledge (cont.)**

Parliamentary skills (2)  
 Knowledge of activities and events (2)  
 Child abuse recognition (2)  
 How to recruit other adults (2)  
 Understanding of learning styles (2)  
 Public speaking  
 Understanding emotional development  
 and resiliency  
 Ability to recognize life skill  
 development  
 Understand role in 4-H organization  
 High school degree

**Ethics**

Role model for youth (13)  
 Ethical (12)  
 Honest/trustworthy (6)  
 Managed competition/show ethics (4)  
 Know difference between right and  
 wrong (4)  
 Screened PA or CES (4)  
 Everyone can voice an opinion (2)  
 Clean language (2)  
 Good listening skills

**Panel of Experts**

Claudia C. Mincemoyer, Assistant Professor, 4-H Youth Curriculum Development, *Chair*

Marilyn Corbin, State Program Leader, Children, Youth and Families

Patty Anderson, CED, Clarion County

Blannie Bowen, Department Head, Ag. and Extension Education

Patti Fantaske, Curriculum Management Coordinator, Ag. and Extension Education

Brian Bumbarger, Prevention Research Center, Health and Human Development

Natalie Ferry, Special Assistant to the Director, Cooperative Extension and Outreach

Christy Kohler, Youth Program Coordinator, Ag. and Extension Education

Norma Lash, 4-H Youth Educator, Fulton

Patti Mauk, Volunteer Leader, Centre County

Michael McDavid, Regional Director, Northeast Region

Robert Mikesell, 4-H Youth Curriculum, Dairy and Animal Science

Dale Olver, Dairy and Animal Science

Robert Pollock, CED, Indiana County

Jan Scholl, Associate Professor, Ag. and Extension Education

Katina Showman, 4-H Youth Educator, Lancaster County