

The West Wire

West Region 4-H Newsletter

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On The Horizon

Youth Development From A Teen's Perspective

The following article is an excerpt from the brochure entitled "Express Yourself! A Teenager's Guide to Fitting In, Getting Involved, Finding Yourself" (May 2000). Think about your relationship with teens in your county. As you read this you will notice that the article is written for youth. If someone was to interview the youth in your county, could they say that you practice these youth development principles when you work with them?

The best youth organization for you has people you feel comfortable with.

One of the bonuses of being involved in a youth club or program is meeting all kinds of people. Some agencies even have "mentoring programs." These link you with someone your age or an adult. You can discuss ideas with that person and learn about new ways to deal with everyday problems.

Or you can try out new activities together.

In fact, getting to know people is often what makes life fun and interesting. And the best people to have around are those who do care about you. They can be helpful when you feel pressure to do things that you don't want to do. They can offer advice on how to be yourself and still fit in.

Below are signs that a person does care about you, and questions to help you identify those signs.

Think about how real friends treat you...

They're interested in your well-being, not in something that you might give them or do for them.

* Do they value your health and safety (including never asking

you to do something that puts you in danger or is illegal)?

* Do they suggest that you do things that help you, not them?
* Do other people you respect and trust also trust this person?

They listen: they care about what you have to say.

* Are they paying attention to you when you talk to them?
* Do they ask questions when they don't understand some thing you tell them?
* Do they make sure they understand your situation before they offer advice?

They're interested in your success, and are happy for you when things go well.

* Do they praise you when something good happens or you've done something well?
* Do they ask about your goals and interests?

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Shining Stars

BLT Program Featured at Field Day

Sarah Montgomery, Caldwell County Family and Consumer Science Agent, Jennifer Burns, Gonzales County Family and Consumer Science Agent, Charla Bading, Guadalupe County Family and Consumer Science Agent and Laura Petty, Guadalupe County 4-H and Youth Development Agent pre-

sented a Better Living for Texans program to 110 4th graders on "Bone up on Calcium" in conjunction with the Luling Foundation Field Day. Participants learned about calcium, played bingo to reinforce what they learned and then made ice cream in a bag. Borden's sponsored the milk used for the ice cream. For more information, contact Charla Bading, Guadalupe CEA-FCS.



Jennifer Burns and Laura Petty assist youth with preparing their bag to make ice cream!

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Under The Blazing Sun

Hang up your cape and empower leaders

By Tammy Vega | www.charitychannel.org

Volunteer managers are often thought to have super-human strength and stamina, and the ability to single-handedly coordinate large teams of people. Yet, even the best of us can quickly become burned out and disillusioned. It's time to hang up your red cape and retire from your role!

Believe it or not, your program can actually prosper when you step back and empower key volunteers to take on leadership positions within your organization. This will require a large amount of trust and patience on your part -- and you may have to relinquish control over some aspects of your program.

The team leadership concept is often discussed at volunteer administration conferences and workshops, but it is a mindset that must become ingrained into your everyday thinking. You must accept the fact you can not effectively do everything yourself. You must admit you don't have all the answers. And more importantly, you must lose the excuses!

Many program managers buy into that old adage, "If you want it done right, you have to do it yourself." Wrong! Your team leaders will naturally have their own unique ways of approaching challenges, and they may even struggle to get their footing in the early stages of planning, but they can be successful if given the proper amount of support. Program managers suspect their volunteers would not want to take on leadership positions, even if given the opportunity.

Granted, not everyone is cut out to be a leader. Leadership abilities are among the skill sets to be screened during the initial interview and orientation phase of volunteer recruitment. Create a tickler system that will help you track potential leaders' involvement throughout their first several months as a team. As the potential leader becomes more involved and invested into their team, begin nurturing that individual and assessing their inclination to assume a leadership role with the team. You should avoid assigning a brand new volunteer to a leadership position; rather, promote members from within the team.

If you simply do not have any existing volun-

teers who could assume leadership positions, that is an indication of where future recruitment efforts should be focused. Perhaps you find yourself fearing your leaders will not stick with the assignments. Team leaders' level of commitment is entirely dependent upon the time and energy you invest in properly training, clearly outlining expectations, allowing leaders to make decisions, and encouraging their autonomy. In other words, you have the responsibility to adequately prepare them to lead -- and then let them do it

Volunteer managers should see themselves as the program's chief executive and view their team leaders as mid-level managers. As such, mid-level managers are entrusted with appropriate responsibilities for overseeing their teams. Team leaders should have a clearly outlined job description that differs from that of team members. Leaders should understand under which circumstances they should seek guidance and approval from you. Likewise, team members should seek guidance and approval from their respective leaders. The supervision you give to your team leaders should never stifle their ability to direct their teams. Effective supervision equates to the empowerment of leaders.

Volunteer managers might recognize the extra work that goes into such leadership positions by awarding merit hours to team leaders. For example, you might credit team leaders with 2 hours for every one hour worked. This is a way to acknowledge time spent away from the program in promoting volunteer opportunities.

Expect your team leaders to be creative and encourage them to pursue new ideas and program initiatives. Allow them to own their programs. Resist holding team leaders back from the decision-making process. Leaders should be involved from the beginning to the end of program development. Permit direct communication between team leaders and paid staff.

In one very successful volunteer program within my organization, team leaders gained significant credibility and developed lasting rapport after they were permitted to have meetings with paid staff to discuss common issues. The volunteer manager simply attended the meetings as a silent observer and allowed her team leaders to guide the discussions and speak freely. The once-resistant staff now sing the praises of these

"My philosophy is that not only are you responsible for your life, but doing the best at the moment puts you in the best place for the next moment"

-Oprah Winfrey

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The Sky's The Limit

Ag Awareness Grants Available

The Fund for Excellence in Agricultural Education are making available again grant funding to support programming for County Agricultural Awareness for youth. Grant applications were distributed by Cheryl Newberry via e-mail on August 8. A total of \$1,000 will be awarded in each region to one or more counties. Grant applications are due via e-mail or fax to Cheryl no later than August 23! For more information, please contact Cheryl Newberry.

Health Hints

With the emphasis on health and childhood overweight, the FDRM unit has new resources on their website that focus on health. Check out their website at: http://fcs.tamu.edu/health/Health_Education_Rural_Outreach/index.php

Afterschool Grant for A Volunteer

4-H Afterschool and National 4-H Council are proud to provide 4-H Afterschool "Opens Doors" Award for 4-H Volunteers Involved in 4-H Afterschool Work.

Texas 4-H will solicit applications through September 23, 2005. Applications are to be mailed to the State 4-H Office, Attn: Jeff Howard. The State 4-H Office and 4-H Afterschool Contact will review the applications received and select the best application to be submitted to National 4-H Council.

Agents who currently have a collaboration with an afterschool program and afterschool volunteers are encouraged to take advantage of this funding opportunity. The funds will be awarded directly to the Volunteer. Please communicate this funding opportunity with volunteers who work with afterschool programs! This means an afterschool program staff member could be the volunteer who applies!

Application packets were e-mailed to all agents/counties but if you need a copy, contact Cheryl Newberry.

Grant Resources Website

Looking for information on how to write grants, how to get information on grants and more? Check out this website for some great resources, sign up to receive e-mail notices about grants, and more. <http://www.grants.gov/Resources>

Rabbit Project Resources

Each Regional 4-H Specialist received a CD with information on the Texas 4-H Rabbit Extravaganza and other resources at 4-H Faculty Conference in August. If you have a Rabbit Project or would like to begin one in your county, contact your Regional 4-H Specialist to request a copy. Resources include: Rabbit Project materials, information on scholarships, ARBA and TRBA Resources, ARBA and TRBA Judges, and more.

*"Ability is what
you're capable
of doing.*

*Motivation
determines
what you do.*

*Attitude
determines
how well you
do it"*

-Lou Holtz

"If you don't like something, change it.

If you can't change it, change your attitude.

Don't Complain."

-Maya Angelou

On The Horizon...Continued

They say they're sorry when they make a mistake.

- * Do they admit when they are wrong (just as you or anyone else should be able to do)?

They don't expect you to be perfect.

- * Would you feel comfortable telling them when you've made a mistake and need help knowing what to do next?
- * Do they help you recognize and work through mistakes? (Or do they use words that make you feel ashamed or worthless?)
- * Do you have a feeling that no matter what happens, they will look out for your well-being (since everyone makes mistakes)?

When they give you guidance, they do so in a way that shows they care.

- * Does this person make you feel encouraged and motivated?
- * When they are talking or asking about a mistake you made, do you still feel that they are trying to help you?
- * Do they make you feel comfortable (including never physically or emotionally hurting you)?

They let you think things through on your own when you want to and respect your privacy.

- * Do they accept that sometimes you might prefer to think through a problem or situation on your own? (Most people do sometimes.)
- * Do they keep things you say private when you ask them to?

Keep in mind, though, that a person you confide in may not have a choice about whether to keep something you tell them private. They may be required under the law to report a problem to authorities if what you tell them involves a legal issue.

So if you go to someone for assistance, you might want to ask them about whether they can keep a problem to themselves. They may say that they will report legal issues to someone else. If so, ask them how they have handled situations like this in the past. Ask what happened to the teenagers involved. And talk with them about your choices before you tell them your story.

So, ask questions and...Trust your feelings.

Sometimes you may still feel unsure about whether you trust someone. If so, follow your instinct. And talk to someone else. Explain why you feel uncertain. That is one of the best things about having a circle of people to turn to: they can help you think through the doubts all of us have sometimes.

Of course, nobody's perfect. Most people don't always do all the right things. Just remember that people who say they care about you prove that by their actions over a period of time.

People who you trust can help you...Make the best of all that life has to offer.

There isn't any magical answer that will always make life easy. For all of us, there are both hard times and good times. But having a network of friends, supportive adults, and people to talk to at a youth service organization can help. They'll be there for both the unexpected difficulties and life's good surprises.

And below are some ideas to think about no matter how things are going for you.

- * Believe in yourself.
- * You can't compare yourself to others.
- * Don't let a negative response stop your positive effort.

Continued on Page 5

On The Horizon...Continued

Remember the 4 E's:

- * Expect a lot of yourself.
- * Everyone has strengths and limitations.
- * Everybody needs help sometimes.
- * Express yourself: your ideas and feelings matter.

So...Enjoy the good times, learn from the difficult ones, and get help when you need it. If you do, you may find that life has great things to offer.

YOU ARE UNIQUE!!

What are you doing to make sure you are using positive youth development in your programming?

"Express Yourself! A Teenager's Guide to Fitting In, Getting Involved, Finding Yourself" (May 2000) was produced for the Family and Youth Services Bureau by Johnson, Bassin and Shaw, Inc., under a contract from the Administration on Children, Youth and Families; Administration for Children and Families; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to manage the National Clearinghouse on Families & Youth.

Shining Stars...Continued

Building Community Inclusion Mini-Camp

The Kerr County 4-H Building Community Inclusion Team conducted a 4-H Mini-Camp for the local Salvation Army Day Care youth. The 15 BCI members hosted 57 youth all week long for 2 hours each day. Each day of the week long camp focused on a different 4-H project and incorporated leadership and team-building activities. Daily themes included:

Monday, Rocketeer project; Tuesday, Food & Nutrition; Wednesday, Livestock projects & Petting Zoo; Thursday, Leadership Development /Teambuilding; Friday - Sportfishing

The goal of the mini-camp was to expose these inner city youth to samples of the 4-H program in hopes of recruiting them for 4-H membership. On Friday, each child received an information packet filled with goodies and 4-H membership information. For more information, contact Laurinda Boyd, Kerr County 4-H Program Assistant!



A Kerr County Teen leader works with BCI camp participants to learn about following rules through playing games and team building activities.

Vet Science Workshop



Vet Science Workshop participants learn about equine science.

The Youth Veterinary Science Workshop was held June 26-30 in Sonora. The week exposed participants to the many opportunities within the field of veterinary medicine. These included veterinary practitioner (in small, large, or mixed practice), veterinary technician, veterinary assistant, researcher, biological/pharmaceutical work, regulatory medicine, and more. Thirty participants from all across the state attended this workshop. Activities involved classroom study, lab work, and field excursions.

The workshop offered classroom study, lab work and field instruction. Instructors include Extension and Texas Animal Health Commission personnel and veterinary practitioners. Course topics range from the Beef Quality Assurance program, toxicology, parasitology, anesthesiology, and anatomy to nutrition, first aid, beef feedlot health management, large and small animal practice, wildlife health management, necropsy and horse medicine. The annual youth career awareness educational effort was originated by Extension agents in Ward, Crane, and Pecos counties. The last two years, agents in Sutton, Schleicher, and Tom Green counties have hosted the workshop. Agents work with livestock specialist, Bruce Carpenter, to coordinate the event.

"The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant."

-Max De Pree

Landscapes & Cityscapes...Focus on Diversity

Ten Excellent Ways to Stay Stressed Out in a Diverse Workforce

by Marty Brown
<http://www.diversitydtg.com/>

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in the moments of comfort, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

-Martin Luther King, Jr.

1. **Do not communicate openly by expressing how you feel, especially with someone who is different from you!** Do not ask for help. Allow supervisors, customers, anyone to walk all over you. Always try to make others happy, especially if they look different. Above all, go to all lengths to avoid upsetting them, you don't want any trouble. Or heaven forbid, they file a discrimination suit against you!
2. **Harbor resentment and seethe often.** Gripe, whine, and complain about all the advantages all those people have. The world and work are not fair. Chronic bitchitis helps you avoid intimacy and emotional ties that just might help lower your stress. Spend at least two and a half hours a day doing this; it does wonders for your blood pressure. Keep your personal distance, especially from you know whom. The more distance, the more stress!
3. **The reason you cannot be too confident in your own skills is that all those people keep taking advantage of you.** That is the same reason you can't express your real beliefs or your opinions, with the exception of bitching in the women's/men's rooms of course! Accept blindly the judgments of others and definitely personalize ALL the criticism you hear, or think you hear. Stay offended as long as you can. Hold on tight!
4. **Practice nasty, mean, humiliating, embarrassing, and hateful behaviors towards those people - naw, make it everyone!** Slam dunk at least a dozen people a day. Know everyone wants to hear your hate messages. Gossip at every opportunity and concentrate on spreading rumors about quotas, "the only reason she got promoted is because she is a women," "management won't discipline him because he is black," etc. Guaranteed, your turn will come!
5. **Do not develop a support system.** After all, you can't trust those people and don't show any weakness by asking for help from anyone. Languish in loneliness. Suffer, suffer, suffer! Carry that heavy ball with pride!
6. **Avoid & procrastinate.** You don't have to associate with anyone you don't want to at work, especially them. Even if you need to talk with one of them to get your job done, procrastinate until your boss forces the issue. Then make sure they know you had no choice but to talk with them. Builds great teamwork and enhances your reputation!
7. **Keep looking for a job where you will be with the absolute majority, with a minimum of them.** In order to enhance your chances of reaching this career goal, make sure all interviewers know all about your primary goal! This will enhance your marketability and open new career choices for you!
8. **Avoid the urge to manage time. Because of all those slackers, you are the one of the few who can get things done right!** You can keep track of things in your head; you don't need one of those fancy electronic gadgets! Be available to everyone, well, almost everyone. Take on more projects than you can handle. Say, "yes" whenever you are asked, and above all, avoid being assertive.
9. **Tell all the different people that you are not biased or prejudiced.** That's the reason you avoid that "touchy-feely," waste of time, training classes. If they didn't make them mandatory, no one would show up. We should be spending that time forming a Majority Council. It probably won't stress you out too much telling these lies, but it will enhance your credibility tremendously!
10. **Know in your heart of hearts that someday things will be righted.** Find other workers that think like you. Start planning. Caution: be very secretive about this step! Especially don't let any of those diversity-preaching managers get wind of it!

Diversity Activities and Ice Breakers

On line activities that can assist you in exploring diversity. <http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/diverse2.html>

Diversity Activities for Youth and Adults

Publication developed by Penn State University with activities to assist you in addressing diversity. <http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/FreePubs/pdfs/ui335.pdf>

Under the Blazing Sun...continued

volunteers because they understand how passionate volunteers are about the organizational mission.

Team leaders will learn the intricacies of your agency or organization by trial and error. Encourage them to learn from their errors; that's how new leaders become great leaders!

Instituting the team leader structure is particularly important when you have more than one group of volunteers or more than one project. Team leaders can provide that much-needed individual contact with your volunteers. Their job descriptions should outline the frequency and mode of contact with team members. You might ask leaders to provide you with monthly or quarterly reports summarizing their contact with members. Team leaders should facilitate all of the team meetings, including training sessions.

The first time I promoted a volunteer to a team leader position was soon after I initiated a mentoring program at the agency where I worked. It didn't take me long to realize I simply could not stay in close contact with the new mentors I was bringing into the team. As these new mentors struggled with building rapport with their assigned youth, they would quickly become discouraged and begin to fall away from the program. I needed someone to help me encourage the mentors; provide needed resources to them, and follow-up on concerns and requests.

I noticed that one of my mentors was particularly concerned with the program development aspects of mentoring services. He also had a special knack for connecting with people -- that nurturing, encouraging type of personality. Bobby Ross was eager to serve in the capacity of Mentoring Team Leader. I soon came to understand that if I just took care of Bobby, he would take care of all the mentors on his team. Taking care of my new team leader meant providing him with adequate work space, a computer, and custom-designed simple stationery on which he could communicate with his team members, allowing him to determine many of the logistics of the services, and recognizing his accomplishments. The program exploded with success!

Team leaders are only as good as you allow them to be. Don't be afraid of retiring your red cape. You'll find you enjoy those free moments you'll soon have.

Around The Bend...Upcoming Events & Activities

August 2005

- | | |
|----|---|
| 13 | District 10 Mega Meeting - Castroville |
| 17 | State Recordbook Judging at Regional Sites - San Angelo |
| 20 | District 6 Fall Meeting & Leader Recognition - Ft. Stockton |
| 22 | District 6 Accountability Training - Fort Stockton |
| 23 | District 10 Accountability Training - Uvalde |
| 24 | District 7 Accountability Training - San Angelo |
| 27 | District 7 Fall Forum - San Angelo |

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"The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say thank you. In between, the leader is a servant."

-Max De Pree

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We're On The Web!
<http://Uvalde.tamu.edu/xtension/4-H/westregionindex.htm>

Around The Bend...Upcoming Events & Activities...Continued**September 2005**

- 10 District 6 Fashion Show - Odessa
- 19 District 7 INVEST Training - San Angelo
- 20 District 10 Program Development Committee - Uvalde
- 21 District 10 4-H 101 Training - Uvalde
- 27 District 6 INVEST Training - Fort Stockton
- 28 District 6 4-H Planning/Training - Fort Stockton

October 2005

- 2-8 National 4-H Week
- 6-9 Southern Reg. Leader Forum, Rock Eagle 4-H Center - GA
- 15 District 10 4-H Gold Star Luncheon - Uvalde
- 17-21 New Employee Orientation - College Station
- 25-26 District 6 Agents College - Fort Stockton
- 30-November 3 NAE4-HA Annual Conference - Seattle, WA

November 2005

- 4-6 Junior Leader Retreat - Texas 4-H Center, Brownwood
- 5 District 6 4-H Food Show - Fort Stockton
- 10 NEATO - San Angelo
- 12 Texas 4-H Rabbit Extravaganza - Belton
- 12-14 Ambassador & Recreation Team Workshop, Texas 4-H
- 18-20 District 10 SpecTra - Camp LaJunta, Hunt, TX
- 19 District 7 Food Show - Abilene
- 24-29 National 4-H Congress - Atlanta, GA
Texas 4-H Leadership Conference - Washington, DC

December 2005

- 1 District 10 INVEST Training - Uvalde
- 3 District 10 Food Show and NOB - San Marcos
- 7-9 Wellness in the City Urban Conference - Dallas
- 15 District 10 Judges & Commissioners Conference

