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Educating Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations: Empower Your Group by Developing Leadership

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Facilitator's Guide

Educating Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community Organizations

Empower Your Group by Developing Leadership

Rationale:

Educating, empowering and equipping 4-H members, volunteers and leaders adds stability, quality and effectiveness to the organization and its provided programs

Goal:

To develop the educational processes that ensure successful member, volunteer and leader experience and continued organizational service.

Note: The extensive content of this session may be broken into multiple 30 minute programs—one per objective—for more in-depth learning activity participation. Program design should focus on member, volunteer and leader needs and timeframes appropriate for selected content delivery.

Objectives:

- Distinguish elements of an effective orientation program for members, volunteers and leaders
- Examine Extension procedures required for client and member, volunteer and leader protection
- Evaluate resource elements critical for a positive individual experience within the organization
- Design learning situations for continued skill development

Pre-Program Preparation:

- Review *GEMS Administrative Model Overview* (CLD2-3) to understand content sequence in overall organizational leadership development process.
- Review *Educating Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community* (CLD2-7) fact sheet for content delivery background.

- Prepare copies of *Educating Members, Volunteers and Leaders in Community* (CLD2-7) for each member, volunteer and leader.
- Prepare a sample volunteer orientation packet, including an orientation letter, annual report, CES Report to the People, directories for the 4-H Council and club leaders, a membership brochure, a 4-H Camp flyer, a state 4-H brochure, a state Extension brochure, the agent's business card, and a listing of 4-H projects, programs, and activities.
- Prepare copies of the Member, Volunteer and Leader Activity worksheet entitled *Project Resource Inventory*.

Introduction:

Share: “Educated, empowered members, volunteers, and leaders are more effective in serving any community organization. Educating adds stability, quality and effectiveness to organizations and their programs. Members, volunteers and leaders who understand their duties, roles and responsibilities will serve more effectively serve the organization as well as the youth and adults with whom they have contact. But all too often, little attention is given to helping a new member, volunteer or leader understand the big picture profile of Extension, its purpose as well as the individual's service opportunities.”

This leadership curriculum was developed by 4-H Youth Development agents with University of Kentucky specialists. Examples in the guide are geared toward a 4-H audience. This guide may be reproduced or modified for educational or training purposes and used with other audiences.

Introductory Activity

Ask members the following questions:

- “You have just been accepted as a volunteer in the Jasper County 4-H program. What questions would you have as a new volunteer?”
- “Why might a new volunteer be reluctant to ask questions?”
- “If 4-H provides opportunities for learning by doing, how do you make a new volunteer feel welcome so that they can begin learning and doing? What needs to be communicated to a new volunteer joining the organization?”

Objective 1: To distinguish elements of an effective new member, volunteer and leader orientation program

Share points from the content fact sheet: “The initial step in educating is orientation. Orientation provides an overview of the organization’s programs and activities, policies, procedures and programs. In addition, the roles and responsibilities of paid and volunteer staff, organizational leadership structure, and ways that individuals can serve the organization should be covered. Orientation should be presented to all newcomers; including employees, volunteers and leaders.”

Learning Activity 1:

Divide the participants into small groups. Provide this scenario for group discussion:

You have been asked to develop volunteer orientation packets and provide materials that might answer volunteers’ questions regarding Extension, 4-H programs, and ways in which members, volunteers and leaders can be involved. You choose to provide an orientation letter with the packet.

Evaluate the “Who are Jasper County 4-H Volunteers?” orientation letter for the following orientation components:

- Does the language make new volunteers feel welcome?
- What additional items could be included to make them feel welcome and informed?
- What is the mission of Kentucky 4-H?
- Do you understand the culture of Kentucky 4-H?
- Is the focus of 4-H programs clear?
- Do you find opportunities to be of service and be involved in 4-H?
- Is the relationship between members, volunteers and leaders and Extension professionals outlined clearly?

What other items would you provide in your new volunteer orientation packet? (An annual report with pictures, a Cooperative Extension Service Report to the People, directories for the 4-H Council and club leaders, a membership brochure, a 4-H Camp flyer, a state 4-H brochure, a state Extension brochure, a promotional incentives such as 4-H pens, notepads, mouse pads, etc.)

How would you present the orientation packet information? (Packets could be distributed at a club meeting, through a conversation with a mentor Homemaker, through the mail, or at an orientation luncheon for collective new members.)

Objective 2: To examine organizational procedures required for client and member, volunteer and leader protection

Share the following information from the content fact sheet:

“One of the most unfortunate aspects of group participation in public projects and activities is the issue of liability or risk resulting from participation. Many organizations often overlook or ignore making members, volunteers and leaders aware of risk management strategies. In the protecting phase of the education process, volunteers learn about risk management strategies such as appropriate and acceptable behaviors, conflict resolution, personal liability and confidentiality issues.

“Risk management education for members, volunteers and leaders includes explaining the concept of risk management, developing an awareness of potential liabilities, exploring alternative methods of insuring losses, and developing procedures to minimize liabilities. Risk management can focus on overall organizational protection or specific event risks for identifying necessary procedures. Client protection examples include a signed photo release on a membership form, allowing individual photos to appear in print or web-based media, a ‘hold harmless’ clause on a 4-H camp enrollment form, liability shields or other procedures related to specific situations.”

Learning Activity 2:

Present the group with the following scenario for group discussion:

The Jasper County 4-H Council decided to hold a ribeye steak sandwich sale in conjunction with the Jasper County Cattlemen, where sandwiches are grilled at the Tractor Supply Company parking lot, wrapped on site, and sold to drive-up customers or delivered for pre-order sales.

- What potential risk or liability issues could the organizations face with this project?
- What steps should the organizations take in educating volunteers to reduce risk?

Risk/liability potential

- » Food borne illness related to undercooking meat, cross contamination on handling surfaces, sandwiches not stored at correct temperatures
- » Individual injury on the property

Potential steps to minimize liability

- » Temporary food service permit from local Health Department
- » Safe food handling procedures training with all volunteers: wear gloves when wrapping sandwiches, keep raw meat surfaces separate from cooked meat and other food surfaces, have sanitizing solution available for wiping surfaces, coolers to keep meat above 140 degrees, instant read thermometers to check temperatures during cooking and storage, potable water hand-washing stand available for volunteers, and safe storage available for wrapped sandwiches and other items for deliveries
- » Consider different site location for cooking steaks, with certified kitchen for storage, food handling equipment
- » Consider organizational liability policy or site liability policy
- » Post safe food handling procedure signs at the event site

Objective 3: To evaluate resource elements critical for a positive individual experience within the organization

Share: “Leaders, members and volunteers should not be expected to provide their own personal resources in order to serve 4-H or Extension. The Extension professional should identify the specific resources that are necessary to allow members, volunteers and leaders to be successful at all levels of participation: implementing leadership roles and responsibilities, community volunteer service projects for desired impact or simply member education activities. Resource areas can include human resources (identifying other individuals who can provide support, skills, or services); financial resources such as the identification of sources of funding, budgetary guidelines, and fundraising strategies; Education or technology resources

such as curriculum, computers, software packages, internet access, wireless service, etc. or facility resources, such as meeting room space.”

What resources may be provided by sponsors or co-operating organizations? As a plan of work or action plan is developed, the Extension professional should educate members, volunteers and leaders regarding resources available for use to ensure a positive 4-H experience.

Learning Activity 3:

Ask each group to identify the resource elements required for volunteers to complete a specific project or activity, using the following scenario:

The Jasper County 4-H Council plans to hold a Spring Community Livestock Skill-a-thon in conjunction with the community’s annual Spring Festival.

Using the *Project Resource Inventory* worksheet, ask small groups to identify the human, financial, technology, or facility resources that the organization should provide for project success. Examples may include:

Human: project chair, project leaders for each species, volunteers (such as marketing, registration, scoring, setup, concessions, awards, etc), parents, Extension support staff

Financial: cash for awards, ribbons and plaques, refreshments, lunch, registration supplies (could be in-kind donations or sponsor donations)

Technology: computers for registering participants; software to prepare marketing flyers, registration sheets, judging cards; posting website information; wireless access for on-site scoring, projectors, laptops, etc.

Facilities: large room for skill-a-thon judging; break-out rooms for scoring, refreshments, coaches, etc.; restrooms, parking, registration area, private office space for tabulating results, kitchen for storing food supplies, concession area, etc.

Objective 4: To design learning situations for continued member, volunteer and leader skill development

Share: “Additional teaching or learning opportunities related to specific skills and knowledge can assist members, volunteers or leaders in carrying out their responsibilities. Additionally, teaching opportunities should be presented that will develop personal volunteer development and leadership skills. Education should be conducted in a variety of ways (individually, through group meetings, workshops or classes or

online) and address multiple learning styles. Insufficient learning opportunities contribute to volunteer turnover.”

Educational opportunities go beyond initial orientation, risk management, and resource access. Developing member, volunteer and leader skills makes the organization more effective in representing the organization throughout the community. *What tools or resources could be used to educate members, volunteers or leaders?*

Learning Activity 4:

The Jasper County 4-H Council wants to add more depth to their traditional leadership programs and go beyond distribution of officer and chairmen training materials. How would you design different learning opportunities that offer skill development for both members, volunteers and leaders? Break into small groups to discuss the following questions:

- What specific knowledge or skills beyond understanding officer/chairmen roles and responsibilities would you select to educate members, volunteers and leaders?
- What different teaching methods could you use to meet the needs and fit the schedules of your members, volunteers and leaders?

Example: The Jasper County 4-H Council has developed a three-part program plan:

- A lesson on effective conflict resolution from the KELD curriculum Section I to build skills for members, volunteers and leaders
- A workshop presented at the Kentucky 4-H Volunteer Forum featuring conflict resolution scenarios and role-play situations during the first 30 minutes, in addition to roles and responsibilities training
- County website postings of all conflict resolution materials, roles, and responsibilities for online reference

Summary:

To coordinate successful youth development programs, Extension must determine the best ways to educate members, volunteers and leaders throughout the organization. Educating may be getting a member, volunteer and leader off to a good start with orientation; helping member, volunteer and leaders manage risk by implementing prescribed risk management strategies; providing members resources for a positive experience; or making continued skill education a part of ongoing support activities. Educating adds stability

to organizations and enables and empowers its membership, volunteers and leadership to more effectively represent, lead and serve. These individuals are therefore more likely to be retained in their role and expand the outreach of the organization and its programs to audiences who would otherwise not be served.

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Project Resource Inventory

What resources do we need to complete this project?

Project Name: _____

Human	Financial	Technology	Facilities



Volunteer Welcome Letter

Dear 4-H Volunteer:

Congratulations on your decision to volunteer as a club leader for Jasper County 4-H! You're beginning an interesting, challenging and rewarding experience. Because I know you have many questions about membership, we hope you will find this information letter helpful! Your fellow club leaders are excited to have you join and share our mission of "4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential, working and learning in partnership with caring adults" that is now entering the 111th year!

Please feel free to contact me with questions at any time. Call (859) 123-4567, email ces-Jasper@uky.edu, or visit me at your Jasper County Cooperative Extension Service facilities (600 East Main Street, Scottsburg). Visit the Cooperative Extension Service website, where you will find the Jasper County 4-H homepage link for current information, forms, and other helpful items at www.ca.uky.edu/Jasper/4-H/.

Again, welcome to Jasper County 4-H! I look forward to working together this year as we strive to make the best better!

Sincerely,

Janie Johnson

Jasper County Extension Agent – 4-H Youth Development



Volunteer Orientation Fact Sheet

What is Kentucky 4-H and the Jasper County 4-H Council?

4-H volunteers develop youth potential by delivering educational programs, providing leadership opportunities and conducting community volunteer service projects throughout Kentucky. Organized in 1902 to teach youth the best practices for agriculture and home economics, membership now includes over 5 million worldwide, of youth ages 9 – 18, living in cities, towns and rural areas that focus on youth development. Educational support is provided by the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service and the Department of 4-H Youth Development. Each county has a local organization to support volunteers and leaders in delivering programs and activities to youth ages 9 to 18.

What does the “4-H Youth Development Agent do?”

The County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development serves as the local educational advisor, helping the organization with developing educational programming, leadership opportunities as well as coordinating service project opportunities with county committee members. Other Extension Agents across district also provide support with projects and area –wide educational programs. The vision of 4-H is “a world in which youth and adults learn, grow and work together as catalysts for positive change.” The mission of 4-H is “4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential, working and learning in partnership with caring adults.”

Who can belong to the Jasper County 4-H?

Youth, ages 9 – 18, may join as members of community or project clubs or as a member-at-large. Club members, meet monthly during the day or evening, in schools, homes, the Jasper County Cooperative Extension Education Facility, or other locations, depending on what meets members’ schedules. Members-at-large are independent members, who do not necessarily meet with a specific club monthly, receiving all program materials through the mail.

All youth are welcome, regardless of race, color, national origin, creed, marital status or sex or income level.

What is my role as a 4-H club leader?

All members provide the enthusiasm, knowledge, skills and personal support to others that make 4-H a special and unique organization! Sharing time at monthly meeting discussions, county or club events or special projects provides a way for each member to contribute in their own way. You can be as active as your time and schedule permit! Educational materials are distributed to club members at the monthly meetings with newsletters and other communications received through the mail; members-at-large receive all materials and communications through the mail. We are working to make the 4-H website more user friendly with e-mail options. Contact the Jasper County Cooperative Extension to volunteer or ask questions at any time!

Are there other opportunities for leadership recognition?

The County recognition banquet is held each year in October, to provide opportunities to recognize 4-H members, clubs and volunteers for accomplishments as well as learning opportunities. Members receive recognition for participation in 4-H projects, programs and activities. Clubs receive recognition for community service, member completion and enrollment. Volunteers receive awards for leadership roles and club accomplishments. Clubs may apply for the Outstanding Community Service, as well as the Outstanding Club Awards.

Welcome to the Jasper County 4-H!

If you have any additional questions please contact your Jasper County Cooperative Extension Service or fellow 4-H members or volunteers anytime.