



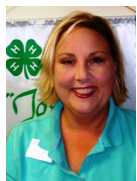
Volunteering In The Panhandle

Solutions Through Helping!

Provided By Your 4-H Extension Agents in Northwest Florida

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Letter From the Editor



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Greetings fellow Agents and Volunteers! It has been a while since we have had an issue of "Volunteering in the Panhandle," so welcome back. We are making a few changes to our newsletter and want to let you know what you can anticipate in upcoming issues. First, I have taken over the reins from Whitney Cherry and I know that I speak for all of the agents in our district and myself when I say that we sincerely appreciate all that she has done to make the transition a smooth one. This issue was largely her effort and I have only been on the job long enough to press "send." While I am not yet proficient at using the LYRA software, this will also be the final issue using the current format. Again, in an effort to provide useful news and information for Volunteers who subscribe to our newsletter, I hope to publish four issues per year and have feedback from what volunteers would like to see included. I hope to see everyone at the upcoming Youth Development Institute in Gainesville. As always, thank you for your continued

commitment and dedication "To Making The Best Better".

What is Coming Up at the Youth Development Institute in January?



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This year Florida 4-H will be offering a Youth Development Institute for 4-H agents, volunteers, program assistants, and afterschool care providers. Please mark your calendars for the event January 25th-29th, 2011 at the Hilton in Gainesville. Registration and scholarship information is available at this website: <http://florida4h.org/events/ydi.shtml> or you can check with your local 4-H agent. Here is just a sampling of workshops that will be offered:

- Land Judging 101
- Florida 4-H Bug Club
- Learning with Legos
- Consumer Choices

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- Conflict Resolution
- New 4-H Energy Projects (Power of Wind and SAVE)
- Building Your Program Around the Science Mission Mandate
- Science of Food Preservation
- Rocketry
- Using You Tube, Facebook, and Twitter to Communicate with 4-H Members

black.” “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.” But are these sentiments really new? Think about it. “Give a Hoot... Don’t Pollute.” “Keep America Beautiful.” “Keep Our Forests Green.” The use, or abuse, of our natural resources has long been an issue debated by our nation. It has more or less been the price we have had to pay for progress; but regardless of one’s political views and beliefs, the fact that Earth is the only planet that will sustain our human lives is hard to dispute. It is therefore critical that you, as 4-H volunteers, promote principles of conservationism amongst your 4-Hers.

The practice of reducing, reusing, and recycling may be easily incorporated into many aspects of your everyday lives. So why not into 4-H and 4-H programs?! As YOU reduce, reuse, and recycle in your daily lives, you will be teaching by example your own children at home. Knowing that youth learn by seeing and doing, they will be much more likely to implement the practices of reducing, reusing and recycling into their own daily lives if they see you practicing the 3 R’s in yours. The next natural step is to then incorporate these principles into your own 4-H clubs and programs.



Remember the 3 R’s? Remember the 3 R’s!



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Do you remember the 3 R’s? If you are over the age of forty you are probably thinking of a classroom, a teacher, and learning about Reading, wRiting, and aRithmetic. These are the basic standards for learning, of course. But it is now 2010 and the 3 R’s have a whole new meaning to a whole new generation of young people: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

In today’s society, we are constantly hearing concerns about our environment and how we can have a positive impact upon its future. It is nearly impossible to pay attention to any media without feeling bombarded by messages of conservationism. “Go Green!” “Green... it’s the new



How does the Environmental Protection Agency describe each of the 3 R’s? the amount and toxicity of trash you throw away. containers and products. as much as possible and buy products with recycled content. These are all things we can do daily with just a little thought and effort. In fact, businesses are making it easier for us every day. We can reduce our trash in many ways, but an easy way is to reuse water bottles instead of throwing them away after each use. We can use the reusable bags that many stores now offer for our purchases; this is a great alternative to using plastic shopping bags. Of course, we can all make

more of an effort to recycle by collecting our newspapers, aluminum cans, plastic bottles and glass jars for local recycling centers.

By instilling the importance of the 3 R's into today's youth we will be helping them to clean the planet for the future. For after all, "A true conservationist is a man who knows that the world is not given by his fathers but borrowed from his children." (John James Audubon) Remember... Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

Show Me the Money



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Many people believe that having lots of money will answer all their problems. Once many of us come into the understanding of the power of money we want it and more of it.

There are a multitude of resources written about money as well as many opinions or attitudes towards money. Have you ever used a search engine to find information about money on the World Wide Web? This would be a great simple activity for you and 4-H members to do together. You will quickly be burdened by information overload as you search for reliable sources of information. (Isn't it great to have a local UF/IFAS Extension office in your county where you know you can get research based information?)

Even considering our fascination with money, it rarely gets talked about in our homes. As adults let's think about it; did we see or hear our parents discuss money matters? Did our parents go over budgeting and "why" we couldn't have those shoes or jeans that we so desperately "needed"? In many cases, no, and this is the cause of some concern for our youth today as they are bombarded with offers for credit cards, but don't understand the implications of borrowing money or paying interest. And, while it is important for us to discuss openly in our homes and in other educational settings the reality of money, in other social situations it is taboo to discuss such matters; the good, bad, or ugly.

So what can we do to help our 4-H youth better manage this resource called money? We can help them first recognize their current conceptions of money. One great activity, the Allowance Game, will help youth explore their beliefs about money as they make choices. You can find the game at :



www.extension.iastate.edu/publication/pm1776.pdf

or visit your local extension office to have your 4-H agent print it off for you. A great follow-up to this game would be having the youth complete the "Money Personality Profile" found in book 1 of Money Fun-damentals project book on pages 3 and 4.

You can do these activities as part of the learning component of club meetings, day camps, etc. You can also invite someone from the bank or credit union to go over how to fill out a bank account log. Whatever you decided to do, have fun as you do these activities with the youth, and you will soon have them on their way to financial responsibility!

News You Can Use



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With the growing concern over Swine Flu (H1N1), it is felt that everyone needs to be reminded to lend a hand to reduce the spread of germs. Many people have the

misconception that their immediate environment must be germ free. This is only possible in a lab or some type of germ-free lab. We live in a world full of living things that cannot be seen by the naked eye. Some of these microorganisms can cause illness or diseases, while others are essential to our well being.

Prevention of the spread of germ requires sensible, simple measures and actions. According to the Centers for Disease Control, hand washing is the simplest, most effective measure for preventing the spread of bacteria, pathogens, and viruses. It is important to remember to wash your hands:

1. Before eating
2. After using the toilet
3. After blowing or wiping your nose.
4. After you cough or sneeze into a tissue
5. Upon arriving home from work or school to prevent bringing germs from work or school into your home
6. Upon arriving at work or school to prevent bringing germs from home to work or school.



How to Properly Wash Your Hands:

- Use soap and warm running water
- Rub your hands vigorously for at least 15 seconds

- Wash all surfaces including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under fingernails.
- Rinse well
- Dry hands well with paper towel
- Turn off the faucet with the paper towel you used to dry your hands.

Children learn by example and hand washing needs to be reinforced. Repetition is the most effective method for absorption.

Interesting Fact: A sneeze is a blast of air that goes approximately 200 miles per hour. It carries tiny bacteria or virus in a mist and spreads everywhere. When you feel a sneeze coming, use a handkerchief or tissue and if neither are available sneeze into the crook of your elbow.

The flu season is still with us, so do your part to spread the word not germs.

Risk Management: A Concern for Every Volunteer



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In today's world risk management is becoming an increasing concern for volunteers and agents involved with the 4-H Youth Development Program. Risk management is the process used to protect our assets by minimizing the potential or negative outcomes. It involves how we handle the many unexpected things that can happen during 4-H events that would result in negative reactions from participants or spectators therefore damaging the reputation of 4-H and our ability to obtain financial resources. This means a 4-H club, group, or planning committee should anticipate potential risks as activities are planned and decide ways to best manage those risks.

Risks come in a variety of forms that 4-H faculty, staff and volunteers need to be aware of:

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1. Physical –Risk or bodily harm to participants
2. Reputation – Risk of others losing confidence and/or trust in the organization
3. Emotional - Risk of participants feeling uncomfortable, embarrassed, anxious, or upset
4. Financial – Any risk that is associated with money

When planning a program or activity, it is essential that those involved review all the elements of the activity to identify any potential risks and develop a risk management plan. This can be done by clarifying the severity of the risks and prioritizing the top two to five issues to address. Sometime the hazards can be reduced or eliminated by using these four approaches to a problem:

1. Reduce the risk – Risk reduction involves removing the risk or hazards to the highest extent possible and having policies and procedures in place for handling what risk is left. An example of this would be camp fires at 4-H residential camps. Of course there are potential dangers involved when 80-120 kids are all crowded around a fire, but camp fires continue to be among the leading favorites of camp activities among the campers, so rather than eliminating camp fire time, we simply implement procedures that help reduce risks. Campers are SEATED a SAFE DISTANCE from the blaze during camp fire time. They are of course, ATTENDED by adults at all times, and LIGHTS OUT immediately follows camp fire time, so there is no reason for any camper to be out of his/her cabin and accidentally get into the fire. Additionally, the fire is continuously monitored by a responsible adult until it has safely been put completely out. This removes the risk of accidental death,

injury, or loss of property that could be caused if the fire were to get out of control during the night.

2. Avoid the risk - This approach involves removing the risk completely by avoiding it. Knowing there are many dangers associated with specific 4-H projects makes it easier to identify areas that need to be avoided. An example of avoiding the risk is the state policy where 5-7 year old club members are not eligible to participate in large animal projects. The risk is that youth this age may not have the physical strength to manage a large animal. Another example would be not wearing a certified riding helmet when participating in a 4-H horse show. The risk of a head injury is too great. Do not conduct the activity, if the risks are too severe and the possibility of an accident is too great.

3. Transfer the risk - This approach literally transfers the risk to someone else. When there is a risk, one person may not want to deal with risk management and therefore, passes the responsibility to someone else. When parents sign the Florida 4-H participation form, they are assuming the risk if something happens. Florida 4-H is admitting there is a chance something could happen but are telling parents that if their child is to be involved, the parent must accept the risk. The University of Florida 4-H staff and volunteers cannot be liable for all risk. They are to be as proactive as possible with the understanding that some risks that were not originally identified may appear.

4. Assume the risk - This may be the most difficult strategy for you to employ. It includes realizing there are risks involved, and accepting responsibility for them. Knowing some of the dangers/hazards of a specific 4-H event or activity will help adults be more observant about what is happening. So when you choose to employ this tactic PLEASE be sure to inform all other parents and volunteers of just what the realities are. An illustration of just such a tactic is transporting youth to or from a 4-H event in your personal vehicle. When you do this you are assuming liability for those youth under your personal insurance unless your county has another policy in place to protect you, because the University of Florida does not. In some counties there are no county vehicles, or there are not vehicles large enough to transport youth, so you must assume this risk. All drivers should be sure youth are buckled and well behaved during transit, and of course they should use the safest of driving practices.

When planning 4-H events and activities, it is important to plan for the unexpected as much as possible, so keep these things in mind:

1. Youth safety always takes precedence.
2. Consider the risks.
3. Consider the ages of the youth and implications of the risks.
4. With other adults/chaperones, using the [pre-event planning guide](#), develop a risk management plan that includes a strategy to address each risk.

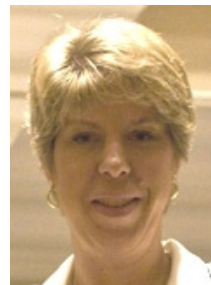
Other considerations for risk management can be ensuring to include the following in for your 4-H program:

1. Volunteer Orientation and Training
2. Volunteer Overnight Chaperone Training
3. Importance of [Participation Forms](#) for youth and adults.
4. Club and Event Insurance (American Income Life)

Dealing with risk is an important issue and not to be taken lightly. It will never go away and will always be something that should be included in every program plan. Whether the activity is geared toward youth or adults, risks are inherent. It is up to the 4-H member, chaperone, volunteer, or faculty/staff member to know what the risks are and how to properly manage them.

Source: Volunteer Chaperone Facilitator's Guide, section 5, prepared by Georgene Bender, South Central RSA

Handling Group Problems



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4-H organizational club leaders have many responsibilities. And once they think they've got it all organized and figured

out, sometimes they then realize their group may have some problems. From the archived document, “Handling Group Problems,” adapted by Extension Youth Specialist, John Rutledge, comes some suggestions for dealing with membership, disorderly meetings and poor group relationships.

Membership

Membership needs attention either when members are dropping out or when attracting new members is difficult.

Possible Causes

1. Some people may not know about the group, what it does, who may belong, how to join.
2. Present members may be cliquish and fail to welcome prospective or new members.
3. The program may not be of interest to current or prospective members.
4. Some members may not have a way to get to meetings.

Suggested Solutions

1. Strive to improve atmosphere—make it warmer, more friendly.
2. Make a list of prospective members and extend friendly, personal invitations.
3. Invite prospects to attend a meeting with you.
4. Make sure that present and prospective members understand the purposes of the group.
5. Involve members in planning a program attractive to them.
6. Give members responsibilities so they will have a role in the organization and feel important to the group.
7. Give members recognition for what they do.
8. Make members feel liked and wanted.
9. Publicize the program and activities.
10. Arrange car pools if transportation is a problem.

Disorderly Meetings

Meetings are disrupted when members come late, don't attend regularly or are disorderly.

Possible Causes

1. Group has fallen into bad habits.
2. Some members do not feel a part of the group.
3. Some members feel insecure and strive for attention.
4. The group has cliques.
5. Members may lack interest in group or program.
6. Members may not know what is expected.

Suggested Solutions

1. Discuss problems with members. What standards do they want? What kind of group do they want to be?
2. Encourage members to state their expectations.
3. Hold training school for members, leaders and officers if increased knowledge or skill is needed in such areas as conducting meetings and decision-making.
4. Change meeting time if it doesn't fit the group.
5. Involve group in planning a more interesting program if that seems to be the problem.
6. Perhaps, open with the most attractive parts of the program to encourage promptness. This might mean starting with some recreational activities as members arrive.

Poor Group Relationships

When there is bickering and jealousy among members or the group has cliques, poor group relationships occur. This problem also arises when young people want to run the show and feel that adult leaders are too dominating. Often members not knowing how to discuss these problems with leaders add to the problem.

Possible Causes

1. Individuals may not understand their own motivation or that of others.
2. Individuals have not learned to distinguish between differences in ideas and differences between personalities.
3. Individuals may feel insecure and, therefore, are excessively shy or aggressive.

Suggested Solutions

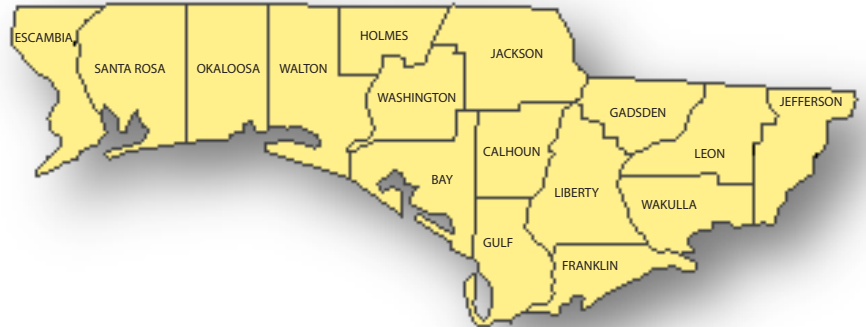
1. Build self-confidence and feelings of worth by focusing on each member's assets and strengths. "I like the way you handled that." "I appreciate what you did."
2. Let the members know their worth. Recognize improvement and effort, not just accomplishment. Encourage cooperation rather than competition. "You're improving." "It looks as if you worked very hard on that."
3. Focus on the members' ability to manage his/her life and make decisions. Do not anticipate failure. "I trust you to become responsible and independent."
4. Focus on contributions and appreciation. "Your contribution counts." "We appreciate what you have done."
5. Accept members as they are. Don't make your approval and acceptance dependent on their behavior.
6. Work to develop mutual understanding and trust between members and leaders.

Group problems in 4-H clubs and other organizations can be tricky and need to be tailored to individual situations. Often they are not a reflection of the volunteer organizational leader, but do become a sign of whether a 4-H club will be successful or not. Membership, disorderly meetings and poor group relationships are common issues in a club setting but can be handled with a little effort and commitment.

Original Source: Handling Group Problems LDL41, J.A. Rutledge, UF/IFAS, Gainesville, FL, 1985.

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In Northwest Florida*

