



Clarification of Membership Rules Mark Tassin, Department Head

I have had many inquiries concerning 4-H membership from parents, faculty and volunteers. Below is information taken directly from Policy Statement 12. Please refer to this information concerning membership and age of 4-H youth. As per information below, a person cannot obtain membership in more than one parish at one time. This is a frequent question where a young person would want to show livestock in one parish and compete in another parish for other regional and state events. This is not allowable. Additionally, I have had inquiries that want permission to show livestock with FFA in one parish show and show livestock in 4-H in another parish show. A person can only participate in one parish level event, and they would have to choose FFA or 4-H. As per the policy bolded below, a young person can choose to be in 4-H either in the parish they reside or the parish they go to school. They cannot be members in more than one parish.

Another question I have had on number of occasions concerns a 4-H'er joining a parish Jr. Leadership Club without being a member of a school 4-H club or a community 4-H club. A Jr. Leadership Club is a project club just as an outdoor skills club, livestock club, dog club, etc., and these young people do not have to be a member of an in-school club or community club to be a member of a project club. Project clubs are just another delivery mode. Be reminded that we should not create barriers for membership, but we do need to adhere to membership policies and guidelines.

Taken from Policy Statement 12

*The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service provides equal opportunities in programs, and 4-H membership is open to all youth without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability. **The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service policy on 4-H membership allows potential 4-H Club members a choice of full membership and participation rights in their parish of residence or parish of school attendance.** Potential home-schooled 4-H members will have a choice of full membership and participation rights in their parish of residence or the parish of the home-school affiliation. Home-school clubs fall in the category for community clubs.*

Every three years, all 4-H Clubs in private/parochial schools, community clubs and project clubs must be documented (in writing and on file) to be nondiscriminatory in their membership practices and operations. For youth to participate in parish, district, state, regional or national events, they must be a bona fide 4-H member 30 days prior to the event. Participation at parish educational events and activities (i.e. workshops, clinics, fun days, etc.) should be open to all interested youth and not limited to those just officially enrolled in 4-H. Youth must be a bona fide 4-H member by the possession date of the respected livestock species they are showing. 4-H Club members must be 9 years of age before January 1 of the current club year and must not have passed their 20th birthday on January 1. Those who graduate from high school after being enrolled at the beginning of the club year and are active members during the club year will be eligible to compete in contests as permitted through the remainder of the club year ending August 31. High school graduates with live animal projects will be permitted to conclude their projects at the first fall show.

Parishes may lower the age of youth participating in 4-H at their discretion with the support of the parish 4-H Advisory Committee. There are no age requirements for those special individuals who are mentally challenged. Participation of extended ages will be limited to parish activities.

Upcoming 4-H Events:

**01/14/2009
Deadline for
Award of
Excellence &
Key Club
Applications**

**01/19/2009
MLK Jr Day
National Day
of Service**

**01/23/2009
State Fashion
Meeting**

**Jan. 24-25, 09
Fashion Camp**

**02/11/2009
Honey Bee
Essays Due**

**Feb. 14-15, 09
Food &
Fitness Camp**

**Feb. 19-21, 09
Northwest
/North Central
Challenge
Camp**



Delivery Modes of 4-H Youth Programs **Lisa Arcemont, 4-H Regional Coordinator**

Youth programs can vary in many significant ways, including different settings that ultimately can affect the manner in which a program is delivered. Researchers suggest using a diversity of information delivery methods (Bardon, Hazel & Miller, 2007). Therefore, the choice of information delivery method used by an extension educator may have serious consequences for program effectiveness requiring matching the delivery methods with target audiences to insure their efficacy (Cartmell II, Orr, & Kelemen, 2006).

The Louisiana 4-H Youth Development program provides a variety of ways to incorporate the essential elements of positive youth development through its many 4-H delivery modes that address clientele needs. These avenues of delivery include **youth participating in organized 4-H clubs, 4-H special interest/short-term/day camp programs, 4-H overnight camping programs, 4-H school-enrichment programs and school-age child care educational programs.**

Louisiana 4-H's long-standing co-curricular status through its collaborative partnership with the Louisiana Department of Education has allowed LSU AgCenter 4-H faculty, paraprofessionals and trained volunteers to provide a quality 4-H experience through organized 4-H clubs during school time and community clubs.

Adult-led, project-focused programs include educational lessons, parish events and activities through the year. The special interest, short-term and day camp delivery mode has proven to be a successful one through hands-on learning workshops, retreats and service-learning projects that involve Louisiana youth in various program areas as the environment, healthy lifestyles, leadership and citizenship.

Overnight 4-H camping programs are somewhat similar. As educational, outdoor experiences, with an added overnight component, the statewide, regional and parish camping experiences are for youth as campers and counselors with the assistance of volunteers and staff in different programs.

4-H also has expanded its outreach through 4-H school enrichment programs in which 4-H faculty train teachers as volunteers in character education, science, environment, safety and healthy living for youth not currently enrolled in organized 4-H clubs.

Individual study is yet another delivery method that allows independent, planned learning experiences, usually with limited involvement from an adult, on a topic relevant to the individual. Mentoring, on the other hand, allows an individual to shadow an expert or a whole family to learn together with the guidance of an adult.

Last, but certainly not least, school-age child care or after-school programs provide a variety of educational experiences through collaborations with grants and through other agencies.

The Louisiana 4-H Youth Development program has a lot to offer the youth through its different methods of program delivery that enhance the opportunities for youth to "learn more by doing." As youth audiences continue to grow, develop and change, the Louisiana 4-H program will strive to accomplish its purpose of developing future productive citizens through its many modes of delivery to increase its outreach and impact.

02/25/2009
Central Region
Quarterly
Training

02/25/2009
Intellectual
Property Group
Meeting

02/26/2009
South Central
Quarterly
Training

03/06/2009
2010 National
Conference
Applications
Due

03/13/2009
LA 4-H
Foundation
Scholarship
Applications
Due

March 13-15, 09
JLC

March 23-27, 09
Scholarship
Judging





Outdoor Skills
David Boldt, 4-H Youth Development
Instructor

The wheels are turning for the 2009 Louisiana Shooting Sports Program. The State 4-H [Shooting Sports Match Handbook](#) was sent out in December and is available on the Intranet.

A few changes have been made so please read carefully. Here are a couple of dates that are important for the Shooting Sports program. Please help in spreading the word about these dates.

Northern Regional Shoot, April 17-19, Shreveport and Grand Cane, Louisiana (Shreveport Gun Club and Long-Range Alley Gun Club).

Southern Regional Shoot, April 24 – 26, Lake Charles, Louisiana (Lake Charles Gun Club).

State Shoot, May 1- 3, Lake Charles, Louisiana (Lake Charles Gun Club)

Please be sure to share this information with your parish volunteers in your shooting sports program. We want this line of communication to be open to the youth, volunteers and parents. This concerted effort will help your program to be successful. We are doing our best to get this information out to you in a timely manner, so please feel free to contact [David Boldt](#) if you need clarification in any aspect of this project focus.



Youth Wetlands Week
Ashley Mullens, 4-H Extension Associate

Youth Wetlands Week is quickly approaching – April 20-24, and we are excited that more than 48,000 students in 54 parishes are registered! Through the help of America’s WETLAND Conservation Corps (AWCC) members, your curriculum and materials will be delivered to you in early spring. In these materials you will find exciting new lessons, new materials and a great video we have filmed for the program called “Wet Work!”

“Wet Work” was modeled after the Discovery Channel’s Dirty Jobs, where the host of the program profiles professionals making a difference in conserving and restoring Louisiana’s wetlands. By showing students a typical day-in-the-life of these professionals, we hope they will apply their wetland learning in everyday situations and aspire for wetland-related careers.

The YWW program is working to bring you restoration projects, vegetative plantings and service-learning activities to get your students outside and active in the world of wetlands. During the first week of January, 25,000 trees purchased through the YWW program are being delivered to Baton Rouge. Thank you to all who placed tree orders; we look forward to receiving reports and pictures on your tree plantings!

New this year, the pre- and post-tests and the Teacher Assessment surveys will be included in the curriculum binder. We hope that this will make it easier for you and your parish educators to return this much-needed information to the YWW program office.

I want to thank you for your continued support of the YWW program. I am really looking forward to working with all of you. I would like to know how your parish youth are helping to save the wetlands! Please send articles, pictures or any information to demonstrate how Louisiana youth can make a difference in these unique habitats by e-mailing your information to awmullens@agcenter.lsu.edu.

03/24/09
4-H University
Training at
Dean Lee

April 1-7, 09
LEAP & iLEAP

April 3-5, 09
Coop Camp

04/09/2009
LA 4-H
Foundation
Annual Golf
Tournament
Marksville, LA

April 19-15, 09
National
Volunteer
Week

04/21/2009
State 4-H
Ambassador
Contest

April 20-26, 09
AgMagic

04/25/2009
National Youth
Service Day





LAE4-HA Spring Retreat Is Set!!! Kimberly Jones & Angie Arnould, 4-H Youth Development Agents

The LAE4-HA Spring Retreat is set for March 30-31 at the Grant Walker Educational Center. This year's retreat will offer a much-needed and welcomed makeover and change of pace. It will offer helpful tips on how to recognize the symptoms of stress and prevent and manage stress before the effects are irreversible.

The retreat focuses on two aspects of SPA – that is, Start Paying Attention and Self-Preservation Awareness. Start paying attention to what your body and family, friends and coworkers are telling you. For self-preservation, develop plans to make time for what's truly most important to you and your programs, so you may breathe, evaluate and renew.

Stress is what you feel when you have to handle more than you are used to. When you are stressed, your body responds as though you are in danger. It makes hormones that speed up your heart, make you breathe faster and give you a burst of energy. This is called the fight-or-flight stress response. Some stress is normal and even useful. It can help if you need to work hard or react quickly. For example, it can help you win a race or finish an important job on time. If stress happens too often or lasts too long, however, it can have bad effects. It can be linked to headaches, an upset stomach, back pain or sleep deprivation. It can weaken your immune system, making it harder to fight off disease. If you already have a health problem, stress may make it worse. It can make you moody, tense or depressed. Your relationships may suffer, and you may not do well at work. ([WebMD](#))

Come and hear from agents who have found positive ways to manage their stress and develop strategies for balancing their personal life and career. The Professional Development committee is working hard to offer a memorable and appreciated experience for all agents. So, we are asking you to mark your calendars and come and experience the premier SPA treatment and to leave refreshed and renewed with more clarity and purpose.

Louisiana 4-H Centennial Celebration Renée Castro, 4-H SE Regional Coordinator and Centennial Organizer

Well, the end is finally here, or should I say the beginning. Although the Louisiana 4-H Centennial year has ended, it is truly a new beginning for us. It is a new beginning for change, to look ahead and to strive to "make the best better" for another 100 years. In the last 100 years, 4-H in Louisiana has made a tremendous impact on the youth of our state.

I would like to sincerely thank everyone for the support they have given throughout our centennial year. The work that everyone has put into this has truly made this a year to remember. The whole state worked together in raising more than \$60,000 for this event. In 100 years, when someone else will be in charge of this celebration, they, too, will have something worth remembering. As we continue to reflect on an eventful past, I know we all look forward to an even more exciting future.

Rural Electric Youth Tour Ashley Mullens, 4-H Extension Associate

The Rural Electric Youth Tour Contest, provided by the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives Inc. (ALEC), is a unique opportunity for students to compete for a trip to Washington D.C. where they will learn about political processes, interact with governmental officials and take in the sites of our nation's capital. ALEC will sponsor two students from 4-H; however, if they are customers of their local co-op, they are eligible to apply through both 4-H and their local electric co-op (they would need to contact a co-op representative for more information on applying there).

Selected winners must attend the Youth Leadership Conference in Baton Rouge on Wednesday, March 25, beginning at 6:00 p.m. and lasting until noon on Friday, March 27. Trip dates are June 12-19, which does not conflict with 4-H University!

Continued on page 5



Interested students must submit an application and an essay (at least one page in length) to the state 4-H office by February 27. Essay guidelines are as follows:

Students are being given the opportunity to voice their opinions (positive or negative) to their elected officials on any issues, problems, situations or successes. In the letter the topic of concern should be stated and thoroughly discussed. The letter should be addressed to the respective local, state or federal official and should be in the format of a formal letter at least one page long. Letters become the property of ALEC and may be published at the discretion of ALEC.

For more information go to <http://www.alec.coop/youthtour.aspx> or <http://www.myspace.com/layouttour>.



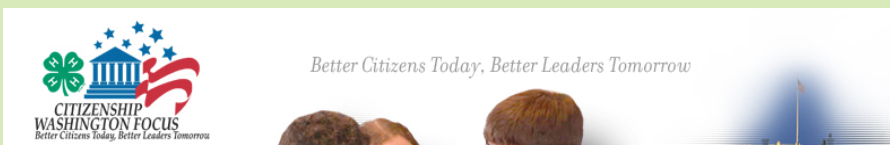
Louisiana State 4-H Fashion Camp 2009 **Tanya Walker, 4-H Youth Development Instructor**

“A Passion for Fashion” will be held at Grant Walker 4-H Educational Center, January 24-25. Fashion Camp has been planned by and will be conducted by the State 4-H Fashion Board. Fifty campers, ages 10-13, along with adult volunteers, will increase their technical sewing skills and return home with ideas to conduct their own fashion camp workshop in their local parishes. The State 4-H Fashion Board has pulled together a great weekend for your members. Thanks for supporting this program in your parish. Contact Tanya Walker with questions at the 4-H State Office, twalker@agcenter.lsu.edu

Citizenship Washington Focus **Tanya Walker, 4-H Youth Development Instructor**

Deadline for registration forms and fees is January 23. Please note: Week #6, July 5-11, is full and no longer available. Currently open and **STILL AVAILABLE!** is Week #7, July 12-18.

You are encouraged to offer your 4-H'er a higher level experience leadership through Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF), a six-day intensive summer citizenship program for youth ages 14-19. CWF delegates learn about the democratic process and their role as citizens while they experience our nation's capital. We hope you will help identify 4-H'ers in your parish who want to learn more about how government really works from prominent guest speakers. College-age program fellows lead bill-writing workshops, a national issues forum and mock elections and congressional sessions that prepare you for leadership now and in the future. If your teens are interested, please send their names and contact information (e-mail address) to Tanya Walker at twalker@agcenter.lsu.edu. Registration materials will be sent to those interested. The deadline for Registration forms and fees is January 23, 2009. Check out the Web site for more details. <http://www.citizenshipwashingtonfocus.org/default.aspx>





Service-Learning Reporting and Evaluation

Janet Fox, 4-H Youth Development Associate Department Head

With our hands to larger service, 4-H is based on the principles of serving our community. As your parish 4-H program has been engaged in a community service or service-learning program this year, keep in mind a couple of things.

Reporting Web site

As you are involved in your service-learning project throughout the year, keep in mind that you will be **required** to report on the service-learning/community service project through the 4-H Service-Learning Reporting Web site. The site has gone through an update for 2008-2009 and is ready to go. It can be found at:

<https://www.lsuagcenter.net/fourh/servicelearning/index.aspx>. You'll be asked to report the following: a summary of your program, goals and objectives, youth and adult partnerships, needs assessment, steps in planning, service experience, collaboration, celebration and reflection techniques.

Thanks to Amanda Causey's efforts, you now have a place to upload pictures and other documents. You can upload items at the newly created "Parish Uploads" section under Service Learning on the 4-H Intranet (<http://intranet.lsuagcenter.net/unit/4H/Service%20Learning/Forms/AllItems.aspx>). Parishes can access only their folder. Every time someone uploads a document to their parish folder you will receive an e-mail notification.

Your 4-H Parish Service-Learning information from the Service-Learning Web site will be used for Website Features, Impact Reports, Service Group Award Recognition that is part of records program and the Annual Service-Learning Award presented at Annual Conference. So, it's important that you do a thorough job filling out the report. The final Service-Learning report will be due **September 1**. If you have any problems that are technical in nature, please touch base with Amanda Caruso. If you are unsure about what goes in the report, you can contact Janet Fox.

Evaluation

For those parishes that signed up for the Service-Learning Evaluation, the survey will be available on-line around mid-March for you to administer to your 4-H members. During the time of administration, we'll have a form that you'll need to fill out that will accompany your survey. If there are over 10 surveys from your parish, a separate evaluation report will be developed for your parish. You can use the information next year for your portfolio, stakeholder reports and in other ways. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact any member of your State 4-H Service-Learning Team.

Louisiana 4-H MasterCard

Eric A. Eskew, Executive Director, Louisiana 4-H Foundation

Support 4-H the next time you travel for business! Did you know that when you travel on official LSU AgCenter business, you can use any credit card to pay for your hotel and meals? Why not sign up for a Louisiana 4-H Mastercard?

For every new account that is opened and every purchase made with the card, Bank of America will make a contribution to Louisiana 4-H at no additional cost to you. In addition, you will be part of the WorldPoints Reward program and earn 1 point for every \$1 in net retail purchases. The WorldPoints are yours to use on such items as cash back, travel or merchandise. Your new Louisiana 4-H Mastercard comes with a 0% APR for balance transfers, no annual fee, fraud protection and 24-hour online access.

This card is a great way to show your support for Louisiana 4-H! You can obtain a card online at www.la4hfoundation.org or by calling 800-932-2775 (Please mention priority code FACNWW).





**Louisiana CYFAR Sustainable Community Project
Reading to the HEART: A Youth Literacy Program
Juanita Johnson, Citizenship & Collegiate 4-H**

Reading is to the mind, what exercise is to the body.
– Joseph Addison

Current research about reading motivation reveals that the Reading to the HEART project seeks to help children develop specific reading development skills and also to educate parents and guardians on ways to support their children's literacy advancement. The project is a reading intervention program designed to provide standards-based instruction that is aligned to two of the essential dimensions of reading as identified by the National Reading Panel: vocabulary development and comprehension. To accomplish the project's goals, 4-H teen leaders, parents or guardians, teachers and other adult volunteers work with youth ages 8 to 11 to conduct one-on-one reading tutorial activities, after-school reading activities and community literacy events.

The program seeks to:

- Motivate children to read for fun and fall in love with reading and books
- Actively engage parents as partners in their children's education
- Conduct literacy workshops to inform youth development partners on the latest reading research
- Develop community partnerships that support literacy
- Provide opportunities for children to develop advanced reading skills

Literacy Resources

1. "School-Home Links Activities: A Compact for Reading Developed by the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education," by the U.S. Department of Education (Archived Materials);
<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/CompactforReading/index.html#links>

The School-Home Links Reading Kit was developed for teachers, families and reading partners through the Compact for Reading Initiative, an activity that was developed by the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education at the U.S. Department of Education. The purpose of the School-Home Links Reading Kit is to encourage greater family, school and community involvement in the education of children and to improve their skills and achievements in reading and other language arts.

2. PowerPoint Presentation, "Stretch Your Technology Budget: Using Web-based Resources in Literacy Programs." Visit <http://www.cyfernet.org/cyfar08/labs.html> for details. Developed by Patsy Gibbs, Madison Parish School Board and Juanita Johnson and Karol Osborne, LSU AgCenter.

Research is emerging on the impact of technology on reading achievement. Researchers have consistently found a significant positive gain in academic achievement by students who use technology-assistive devices versus those who do not. The computer lab presentation highlights findings by providing Web links to online and interactive resources for use in reading literacy programs. Also, check out other resources on the CYFERnet Web site. Contact the 4-H Department if you re interest in starting a program in your parish.



Time Management & Delegation Tina Goebel, 4-H Regional Coordinator, Central Region

Being a 4-H Agent means you wear a lot of hats. You're responsible for delegating, motivating youth and volunteer leaders, working under pressure, meeting tight deadlines, organizing people, organizing contests and projects and scheduling all types of events and educational activities on an ongoing basis. Agents must learn how to effectively manage not only youth and volunteers, but also projects and time. Effective time management involves: (1) "backward" planning to accurately estimate how much time a project requires; (2) ideally daily planning each afternoon for the next day (sometimes you may need to do this on a weekly basis depending on your schedule); (3) dealing with interruptions assertively (you may have to have secretaries hold your calls for a period of time to get projects completed); and (4) delegating task when appropriate.

Delegation is the key to getting it all done. First you must decide what can and can't be delegated. You have competent volunteers and Junior Leaders that can take on many tasks. Don't be afraid to ask them. The key to delegating is to make sure they understand the task, clarify what the expectations are, provide the needed resources and create checkpoints to track the progress of the task. Be sure to delegate the authority along with the responsibility. Don't make people come back to you for too many minor approvals. By meaningfully involving other people in the project, you develop those people skills and leadership abilities. Isn't that what our goals are as Youth Development agents? Lastly, and most importantly, give praise and feedback at the end of the project.

For more information on the topic of delegation check out these Web sites:
http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_98.htm
<http://www.getmoredone.com/tips9.html>

New Year's Resolutions Or A Lesson in Goal Setting? Provided by Lanette G. Hebert, Regional 4-H Coordinator, SW Region

I want to lose 15 pounds in 6 months!
I want to save 10% of my allowance monthly!
I want to improve my average in Math from a "C" to an "A"!

With the New Year, many people make New Year's resolution – even young people! As 4-H Youth Development Agents, we can help young people reach the resolutions or project goals. In many of our educational programs and activities, we provide opportunities for goal setting, decision making and problem solving.

In programming, remember the basics of goal setting:
Action – how you will do something
Result(s) – what you are going to do
Timetable – when you are going to do it.

As with all programming, keep in mind the developmental stages. Ages 9 to 11 can set short-term goals, ages 12 to 14 can set long-term goals and plan strategies to reach the goals and ages 15 to 19 can implement strategies for reaching long-term goals, manage resources to achieve goals and display perseverance.

For more information on goal setting visit the references for this article at the Web sites for University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension and University of Illinois Extension Service.



Activities

Karen Martin, 4-H Regional Coordinator

4-H Night at the Mudbugs

4-H Night at the Mudbugs will be held March 7 at the Century Tel Center, in Bossier City. Last year more than 1,300 4-H members and their families enjoyed food, fun and a lively game of hockey. This year the Mudbugs will be playing the Mississippi River Kings. This is a great Jr. Leader or multiparish activity. You're invited to begin your fun-filled evening with a tailgate party outside beginning at 5:00 p.m., followed by the game at 7:05 p.m. All tickets are \$11 each and need to be preordered by Feb. 11 to guarantee group seating. For more information contact Joe Barrett. We hope you'll join us for a fun night on the ice at the 4-H Mudbugs Hockey game.

4-H...The Original Green!

Members of the 4-H Executive Committee Service-Learning group were excited to debut the state wide service-learning project **4-H ...The Original Green!** during Annual Conference. The group wanted a project that everyone could be involved in and decided to go green! After all, 4-H is The Original Green! Committee members identified areas where they think we can make a difference by just educating others and changing some of our habits. They are providing some resources to help us do it.

Service-learning has created a Web site that is accessible to everyone that includes fact sheets, pictures from parish projects, interactive environmental quizzes, a blog to share your thoughts and tips to make going green easy for all of us. Please visit the Web site at <http://www.4htheoriginalgreen.com>. We also need your help to make this site even better. We know you are all doing great projects that are helping preserve our environment, and we'd like to include information about your parish. Will YOU please send pictures to show us what you are doing to go green? Send your pictures to theoriginalgreen@ymail.com with a brief description of what is happening in your picture. We won't post any names of youth, but we'll let everyone see what is happening throughout the state.

Another part of our **4-H... The Original Green!** project is a collaborative effort with Entergy. Their *Geaux Green* project is a perfect tie-in to our **4-H The Original Green!** We're both taking steps that will help save our environment for the future. Check out the Web site to learn how you can be involved in purchasing blocks of green power that is created by burning renewable resources.

Working together, we'll truly make a difference and make more of an impact. So help spread the word and be a part of the statewide service-learning project that can make a difference for the future: **4-H The Original Green!**

Louisiana 4-H Museum News

Rose Anne St. Romain, 4-H Museum Coordinator

The Centennial Scavenger Hunt wrapped up on December 16, 2008 and brought in hundreds of items to showcase in exhibits and to archive for future research. Many thanks to everyone who sent in items – they will be reviewed in January. Winners of the scavenger hunt will be announced in February with checks issued to winning parishes soon after. Please continue to send items for donation or loan as you discover them. The 4-H Museum exhibit design includes plans for exciting multimedia components, an animatronic puppet show, a timeline mural and a parade of projects, programs and initiatives. Parish 4-H features will be showcased in a special exhibit area featuring digital images and displays of memorabilia. The 4-H Hall of Fame inductees will be celebrated on a giant trophy with digital images and biographies. The museum will open before the summer of 2009 and will be worth the wait! For more information, please contact Rose Anne St. Romain rstromain@acenter.lsu.edu (225) 937 – 2114.



Youth as Evaluators in Service-Learning Melissa Cater, PhD

Evaluation is a critical, though often overlooked, component of the service-learning cycle. In many cases, evaluation is understood as the adult program leader seeking to understand the impact of the program on the youth. As with other aspects of the service-learning program, involving youth in the evaluation process increases both youth ownership of the process as well as deepening youth understanding of the service-learning experience.

Building an evaluation process that is participatory can be very messy – not a word we usually like to associate with evaluation. It becomes a less frightening word when we remember that the process is at least as important, and often more important than, the product. This is a wonderful opportunity to challenge youth to find out if their service project has had an impact – on someone, on the community, on the environment, in themselves. The goal is to inspire the youth to go beyond simply “doing service” to determining if the service made a difference.

Building a team that is inclusive is the first step to success. Every person, youth and adult, brings both strengths and weaknesses to the table. Through every step of planning, conducting, analyzing, and reporting the results of the evaluation, encourage the group to create a process that builds on each individual’s strengths so that every person has a meaningful role.

Next, have the group brainstorm evaluation questions. This provides an opportunity for every voice to be heard and for the team to work together to build consensus around which questions are most important to them. Once questions are identified, the group will need to decide the best method for gathering data.

Common data collection methods include focus groups, interviews, observation, surveys, and reviewing written documents such as journals or activity logs. The choice of which method(s) to use will largely depend upon the types of evaluation questions that are asked. Once a decision is made, provide training based on the needs of the group. Training topics may include creating the data collection tool (i.e. survey or interview guide), selecting respondents, collecting data, and analyzing the data.

Remember that all good evaluations culminate with a report to stakeholders. Stakeholders may include service-learning participants (i.e. all of the youth involved in the service-learning project who may or may not have been a part of the evaluation team), service recipients, community groups, funders, and local government.

In the end, the value of youth participatory evaluation is best exemplified by the following quote:

Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results. ~Andrew Carnegie

References:

Flores, K. (2008). *Youth participatory evaluation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
Shumer, R. (n.d.). Students as evaluators: Service-learning helping service-learning programs. Retrieved December 17, 2008, from www.paservicelearning.org/Pace/links.htm

Smart Bodies: “A Healthy Fit” in 4-H By: Janie Kelly and Amy Long-Pierre

You may be wondering how the Smart Bodies program fits into 4-H? As 4-H agents, we teach the 4-H pledge to all members and reinforce the four branches of the 4-H clover which include, pledging heads to clearer thinking, hearts to greater loyalty, hands to larger service and HEALTH to better living. The Smart Bodies program reinforces the health component of the 4-H clover by teaching children about healthy lifestyles. Learning to make healthy choices is at the core of 4-H youth development’s basic values.

It is no surprise that 4-H agents need to incorporate a wide variety of programs to meet the diverse needs of our clientele. An essential component of 4-H is to provide hands on learning opportunities for members to apply the knowledge that they have gained. The Smart Bodies program compliments the healthy lifestyles 4-H mission mandate. Through the Smart Bodies program, children learn about healthy lifestyle choices such as physical activity and healthy food choices that can be applied and utilized throughout the remainder of their lives.

Continued on page 11



Smart Bodies is directly linked to the 4-H healthy lifestyles mission mandate, but what about the essential elements (BIG M)? Let's start with belonging. Overweight children are frequently the last to be selected as playmates, starting as early as preschool. Research indicates that overweight children are more likely than normal weight children to develop harmful dieting practices or even eating disorders. Consequently, this group may also be more susceptible to depression or to turn to negative coping behaviors such as substance abuse. Clearly, you can see how belonging plays a vital role within the Smart Bodies program.

How does Smart Bodies integrate the essential element independence? The responsibility of a child's health and wellbeing should be placed on parents, however many children live in single family homes or both parents work which leaves lots of children to be left at home alone after school. One component of the Smart Bodies program teaches children about healthy food choices. This program provides children with the knowledge to choose healthy options when at home alone and also in their every day lives. Moreover, many parents do not have the understanding themselves to know "what is healthy." The Smart Bodies program could be the only opportunity a child has to learn this vital information to help them make healthy choices and continue these behaviors into adulthood.

The final essential element that is incorporated in the Smart Bodies program is mastery. It is much easier for children to adopt behaviors than adults. Adolescents that eat healthy and have an active lifestyle are more likely to carry on these healthy behaviors as adults making mastery an important component of the program.

There are numerous benefits to implementing the Smart Bodies program into your parish. In St. Tammany parish, implementing this program was both challenging but rewarding. For instance, it comes as no surprise that principals and teachers have a lot of pressure placed on them regarding LEAP testing. At first, many principals were hesitant to commit to adding one more thing into their teachers daily lesson plans. However, it was really easy to get principals and teachers to "buy in" to the Smart Bodies program once they were educated about how research shows that poor nutrition and health is linked to poor academic performance and that the Smart Bodies program could positively impact the students at their school.

The assistance from the state office is phenomenal. Denise has all of the Smart Bodies materials needed for agents and school coordinators well organized and easily accessible. You won't have to create anything. PowerPoint presentations needed to conduct presentations for principals, teacher trainings and school assemblies are all provided. Each school coordinator will receive a folder full of information (pre-assembled) explaining what their job duties are as it relates to the Smart Bodies program. Are you hesitant to implement this program into your parish because you believe it will add a tremendous amount of workload to your already hectic schedule? Nothing could be farther from the truth. The program is completely laid out, easy and simple for both old and newly hired agents to carry out and be successful.

In St. Tammany Parish we currently have four elementary schools participating in the Smart Bodies program and two more already signed up for next year. It is not hard to get other schools to commit to the program once they hear about the free materials and see pictures of the Body Walk exhibit. The two schools signed up for next year contacted us because of the great publicity surrounding the program in our parish. A few of our schools decided to offer a family night to parents and siblings to teach lessons that reinforce healthy eating habits and benefits of exercise. The family night is offered when the Body Walk exhibit visits the school so parents and siblings can experience what the students will discover in this truly amazing and larger than life display.

The responsibility for who will educate today's youth is shifting. Where the parents, schools, and the community once contributed an equal share to the teaching of our youth, a deficit is now occurring. Twenty-eight million school-age children have parents who work outside the home. A large percentage of juvenile crime, according to the FBI, occurs between the hours of three o'clock pm and six o'clock pm. Children are also at a much greater risk of being the victim of a violent crime after the school day has ended. 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. After-school hours represent either risk or opportunity.



Quality after-school programs offer children and youth enjoyable alternatives to television watching during the after-school hours in environments filled with opportunities to learn and grow. Schools and communities are beginning to implement after school programming as a way to keep children of any age safe and out of trouble, help improve the academic performance of participating children, and contribute to raising children's self-confidence. It is important to realize that there is a direct link between social development and academic achievement. By providing a structured, safe, supervised place to be after-school for learning, fun and friendship with their peers' children are safer and more successful in school.

In St. Tammany Parish, we are discovering an increase in the demand for after school education material from our schools. Through a partnership with our local school board curriculum specialists, we are able to effectively distribute resources to our schools that benefit the objective they are striving to achieve. Through our success with the Smart Bodies program, we were able to assist those schools obtain additional free grant resources for their after school programs. The Health Rocks program and MetLife After-School Grant are currently two programs being offered to our school system and the response has been overwhelming.

Another example of a long term partnership, being conducted currently in St. Tammany Parish, is the 21st Century Community Learning Centers. This program is a three year grant that was established by Congress to award grants to rural and inner-city public schools, to enable them to plan, implement, or expand projects that benefit the educational, health, social services, cultural and recreational needs of the community. These school-based learning centers provide safe, drug-free, supervised and cost-effective after-school, weekend or summer havens for children, youth and their families. Grants awarded under this program may be used to plan, implement, or expand community-learning centers. The design of the program is to target funds to high-need rural and urban communities that have low achieving students and high rates of juvenile crime, school violence, and student drug abuse, but lack the resources to establish after-school centers.

There are several studies that have been done over the years that draw a direct correlation to youth members achieving because of a positive role model in their lives. Youth can be a positive catalyst for change if motivated in the right direction. When given leadership roles, youth are given a voice within their community that enables them to enhance their communication skills and motivates them to strive to achieve excellence. The opportunities to impact the life of a child is endless. As agents, it is our responsibility to utilize our resources and impact the lives of the children in our parishes.

The Smart Bodies program has been truly beneficial and rewarding in our parish. The program clearly fits in with the healthy lifestyles mission mandate and also incorporates the essential elements of 4-H. We have been fortunate to capitalize on these participating Smart Bodies schools by getting participation in other 4-H enrichment programs. Most importantly, is the fact that we are providing children the knowledge necessary for them to start adopting healthy behaviors that they can carry on for the rest of their lives. As you can see the Smart Bodies program can be extremely worthwhile and gratifying for all involved. Smart Bodies is without a doubt a healthy fit in 4-H!

Submitted by: Denise Holston, Healthy Living