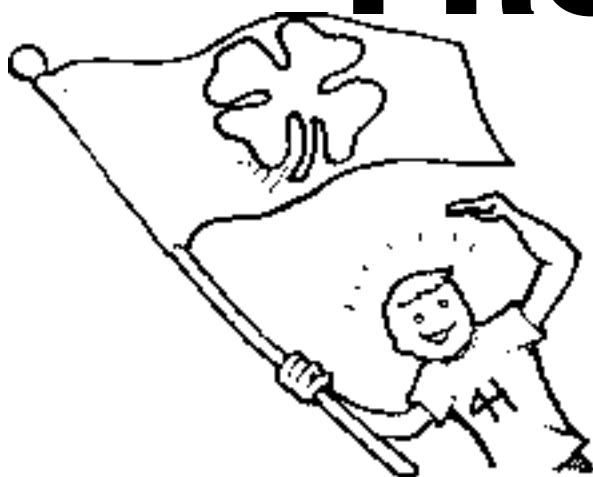


## LEADER GUIDE

# 4-H LEADERSHIP PROJECT



## WORKING WITH TEENAGERS

Teenagers have one foot in childhood and one foot in adulthood. They want to complete that final step to adult freedom, yet don't want to lose the security of adult protection.

Teens may dress, talk, or act in ways that seem strange to adults. These are outward signs of group identity. *Teenagers conform to group standards because their need to be accepted by others who have common interests and problems is very strong.*

Teenagers also want to be treated with respect, to be trusted to make decisions, and to test themselves in an adult role. They want to discuss rules as young adults, not to be treated as "kids." But, they still need and want a sensible set of guidelines to live within.

Teenagers want:

- Acceptance from the opposite sex.
- To build personal confidence in social activities.
- Sympathetic help with dating problems.
- Adult interest.
- Reasonable rules for social conduct.

Part of group acceptance is learning to get along with others. For teenagers this is not easy. They are undergoing rapid body changes that cause some teens to be awkward and self-conscious.

Teenage boys and girls need adults they can depend on for understanding and guidance.

## THE 4-H LEADERSHIP PROJECT

The 4-H Leadership Project allows young people to develop leadership skills and abilities under the guidance of an adult leader.

This project is divided into three units. Each succeeding unit adds information and skills for teenage leaders to master. The recommended ages for members in the three units overlap. However, teen leaders should take on different responsibilities each year they remain in the same unit.

### Delegating Responsibilities

The way you work with your teen leaders will greatly affect their success, growth, and involvement in the 4-H program. Delegating responsi-

bility to teens can multiply your efforts, build good human relations, and help you be more efficient.

When delegating responsibility to your young leaders remember to do these things:

1. Make sure they are capable of carrying out the assignment. If you don't know their capabilities, start with limited responsibilities that build experience and the likelihood of success.
2. Let them know what you expect. Communicate clearly and listen carefully.
3. Involve them in planning. They will feel more a part of the team, and their ideas and suggestions may be helpful.
4. Meet with your young leaders periodically to discuss plans and to exchange ideas regarding assignments. This helps avoid misunderstandings and builds team spirit.
5. Provide encouragement, especially with new or difficult assignments.
6. Let them carry out assignments without interference. Don't insist on having everything done just as you would do it. Be available if they have questions or if assistance is needed.
7. Don't hesitate to delegate responsibility because you can do it more quickly, because you've been disappointed with things you've delegated in the past, or because you don't want to impose on them. Your young leaders need opportunities to learn!



**Unit I. Junior Leaders.** Recommended for early teens—6th to 8th graders. Responsibilities: Help younger members with their 4-H program. Members in this unit are not expected to assume full responsibility for any part of the 4-H program.

**Unit II. Teen Leaders.** Recommended for mid- to late teens—9th to 12th graders. Responsibilities: Assist an adult leader in:

- Teaching part or all of a 4-H project.
- Planning, organizing, and carrying out one or more major club activities.
- A combination of project and club activities.

**Unit III. Ambassadors.** Recommended for 8th to 12th graders. Responsibilities: Work with County Leader Councils and other Ambassadors:

- Help determine county program needs.
- Design and conduct 4-H promotion.
- Help plan and conduct county and state events and activities.
- Assist local 4-H clubs.

### Who Is Eligible for the Leadership Project?

Teenage boys and girls between 13 and 19 years old may select a leadership project suited to their maturity and experience.

Since maturity differs widely among early teens, steer teens toward selecting responsibilities appropriate to their abilities and maturity. Beginning leaders can't be expected to do the same jobs as more experienced leaders.

Adult leaders provide guidance and advice. You should notice when a member is ready to assume extra responsibilities. Some indications of readiness are:

- Willingness to accept responsibility.
- Ability to get along with both teens, younger members, and adults.
- A desire to be helpful to the group.
- Ability to plan ahead and to carry out activities.
- Stable behavior.

### Adult and Youth Leadership Roles

Leadership is a very special kind of project. Its value to members enrolled is directly related to

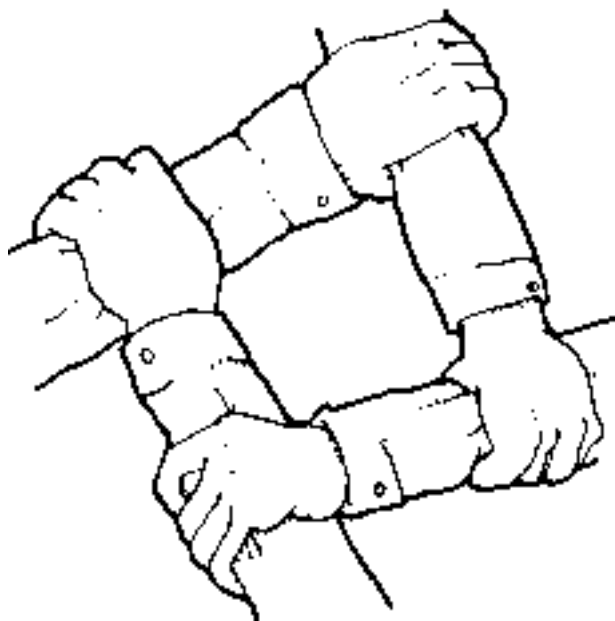
the value the 4-H program receives. Your job is to help members serve the 4-H program in increasingly more mature ways as they gain confidence and ability.

You can also help other adults understand the role of these young leaders. You can be a mediator as well as an advisor. You can help youth and adult 4-H leaders reach a common ground of understanding as they work out their relationships.

In their own ways, both youth and adult 4-H leaders can help 4-H members. Youth leaders may be closer to the issue, are in a good position to observe the reaction of members, and often are better accepted by young 4-H'ers. Adults usually have better judgment and more experience and knowledge. When youth and adult leaders work together closely with mutual understanding, they are an excellent team. They can accomplish more than each one working separately.

### **Importance of the 4-H Leadership Project**

Your potential impact on teens is greater in the area of leadership than in any other area of the 4-H program. Guiding, counseling, and advising teen leaders can be more challenging than teaching a traditional 4-H project. It can also hold longer-lasting rewards.



4-H leaders who work closely with teen leaders state that they get great satisfaction in seeing young people develop qualities and capabilities in leadership. They have also noticed more enthusiasm from the 4-H members working with teen leaders, and believe that they are making an important contribution toward improving their community.

### **What Are the Goals of the 4-H Leadership Project?**

The overall goal of leaders is to help young people develop into mature, well-balanced adults. Specific goals for the Leadership Project are divided into three categories: the teen leader, the 4-H leader, and the 4-H club.

Goals for the teen leader:

- Develop the ability to help others.
- Acquire basic leadership skills important in our democratic society.
- To increase leadership responsibilities as skills and knowledge grow.
- Develop self-confidence as he or she moves toward independence.

Goals for the 4-H leader:

- Share skills, experience, and ability more fully with young people.
- Share responsibilities among more leaders for a more effective program.
- Give leaders an opportunity to focus on just a few activities.

Goals for the 4-H club:

- Enjoy a wider range of experiences that meet the basic needs and interests of members by increasing the number of leaders.
- Attract additional members.
- Retain older members in 4-H by providing an interesting, educational, rewarding program specifically for them.

Three units have been developed to achieve these general goals. Use them in conjunction with activities offered in the Member Manual for this project.

These three units are not designed in a rigid,

lock-step sequence. Use them to match the abilities of the Teen Leader with the needs of your program. You may add other suggestions as you develop a project plan with your Teen Leaders.



## **GOALS FOR THE LEADERSHIP UNITS**

### **Unit I. Junior Leadership**

In this project, Junior Leaders are asked to be like a big brother or big sister to beginning 4-H'ers. Studies tell us that young members need personal attention to feel good about their first year in 4-H and to want to re-enroll.

Most Junior Leaders will be in their first adult-type leadership role. They should be supervised by an adult or by a mature Teen Leader. Have

regularly scheduled meetings to share ideas, to keep you informed of their progress, and to learn how you can help them.

Unit I focuses on learning to work with individuals. Specific goals for this unit are to help teens:

- Learn to respect individual differences of younger members.
- Become confident in their ability to help others.
- Develop skills that will help younger members.
- Learn to give and take suggestions.
- Learn to develop a written plan of work.
- Realize the importance of participating in a team.

### **Unit II. Teen Leadership**

Teen Leaders teach, advise, and manage. They work with adult leaders and other Teen Leaders as part of the club's leadership team. The kinds of jobs they do depend on their knowledge and skills, their maturity, how they are accepted by younger 4-H members, their willingness to work, and availability of adult leadership.

Teen Leaders are still learning leadership. They need confidence and trust from adults and a chance to perform important tasks. They also need recognition and helpful guidance.

Unit II focuses on learning to work with small groups. Specific goals for this unit are to:

- Develop teaching ability.
- Learn to help Junior Leaders.
- Develop the ability to organize and coordinate a club program.
- Show the importance of outlining and carefully planning individual lessons.
- Develop a mature, realistic ability to discuss the club's program with other leaders.

### **Unit III. Ambassadors**

Ambassadors have chosen to function beyond the local club. Some Ambassadors may choose to be part of the organization for senior 4-H members and to take part in that organization's business, education, and social programs. Other Ambassadors may want to provide unique and specialized leadership beyond their local club.

They may work with the County Leader Council and the county 4-H agent to help conduct the county 4-H program, or they may want to be involved in 4-H promotion. Others may want to form teaching teams to help local clubs.

When Ambassadors work with adults, they want to share the leadership load. There may be times when the adult's experience is needed. There also may be times when the Ambassador's knowledge of the program is greater. How each Ambassador fits into the leadership picture depends not only on ability, but also on the adult's willingness to share responsibilities.

Unit III focuses on learning to work with advisors to plan a program, teach a project, lead discussions, make decisions, and personally promote 4-H in these ways:

- Public Relations
- Cooperative Leadership
- Leadership of New Projects and Ideas
- Social Events
- Political Awareness

### **ADULTS AND TEENS WORKING TOGETHER**

A cooperative relationship between the 4-H leader and teen leader is essential. It is the KEY to the degree of personal development a teen leader may achieve and to the contribution he or she can make to the 4-H program. Establish a "helping" relationship from the start, emphasizing teamwork:

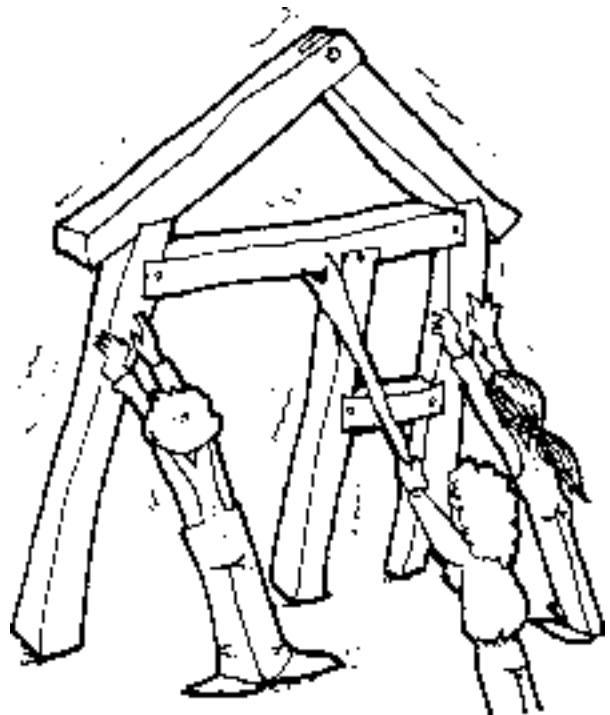
- Share, rather than delegate, responsibility. The Teen Leader should take part in making program decisions not merely be assigned tasks to carry out.
- Make sure the 4-H leader and the Teen Leader understand their responsibilities. A written plan is an excellent way to define responsibilities.
- Impress upon the Teen Leader that sharing responsibility is a two-way process. Both leaders have to give and take to get the job done.
- Create an atmosphere in which each person may freely express opinions, even unpopular ones. Teen Leaders might profit by informally testing their ideas with other Teen Leaders and members before presenting them to the group.

- Be equally concerned with individual and group growth. It would be a mistake to let your concern for Teen Leader growth become so great that group growth would suffer or vice versa.
- Communicate clearly. Accepting another person's ideas requires understanding.
- Evaluate the Teen Leader's progress in a non-threatening way. Let the Teen Leader evaluate his or her weak and strong areas. Then point out strengths and weaknesses and areas where you feel the teen is being too critical of himself or herself. The written plan may help you with the evaluation.

Ongoing, informal evaluation concerning the Teen Leader's growth in skills and understanding is important. A word of encouragement, praise here and there, or a word of caution is the type of guidance and advice the Teen Leader needs. Let the Teen Leader express his or her viewpoint. If necessary, supplement this evaluation in a constructive manner. Destructive criticism has no place in 4-H.

### **Helping the Teen Leader Plan**

Each member participating in the leadership units must develop a written plan of work un-



der the guidance and approval of the adult leader. This plan must be agreeable and realistic to both. The written plan replaces the "requirement for completion" in the more traditional 4-H projects.

Teenagers like to plan their own program and to set goals they can accomplish. However, they still want adults to enforce the rules that have been agreed upon. Even if they protest, don't compromise your agreements. They will thank you later for your guidance.

At the beginning of the project, determine leadership responsibilities jointly with the Teen Leader. Schedule regular conferences with your Teen Leader to discuss progress. Help him or her think through each job in advance to gain a feeling of confidence and success. Discuss the following points to be sure that you understand each other:

- What is to be accomplished?
- What steps will be followed?
- What preparation and equipment are needed?
- What help is needed?

Discuss the contribution the Teen Leader can make to the 4-H program. You may have several young people interested in teen leadership. If so, guide them first in basic leadership skills; later in understanding the interests of 4-H members; and, finally in analyzing their own capabilities to take on certain responsibilities. Above all, give the Teen Leader as much opportunity for making decisions and as much freedom to carry out ideas as he or she is capable of handling.

Teen Leaders can enrich your 4-H program. Make a list of all the things you do as a 4-H leader. Include the experiences you have wanted to offer members but haven't had time to develop in the program. Discuss interests and goals with members. Encourage your Teen Leaders to list things they feel the club needs, and have them check the ones they are interested in doing. List these items according to priority. You should do some challenging jobs as well as chores.

Approve Teen Leaders' written plans. A feeling of commitment usually accompanies plans that are written down and approved by the 4-H leader. Both of you should have a written copy of the plan.

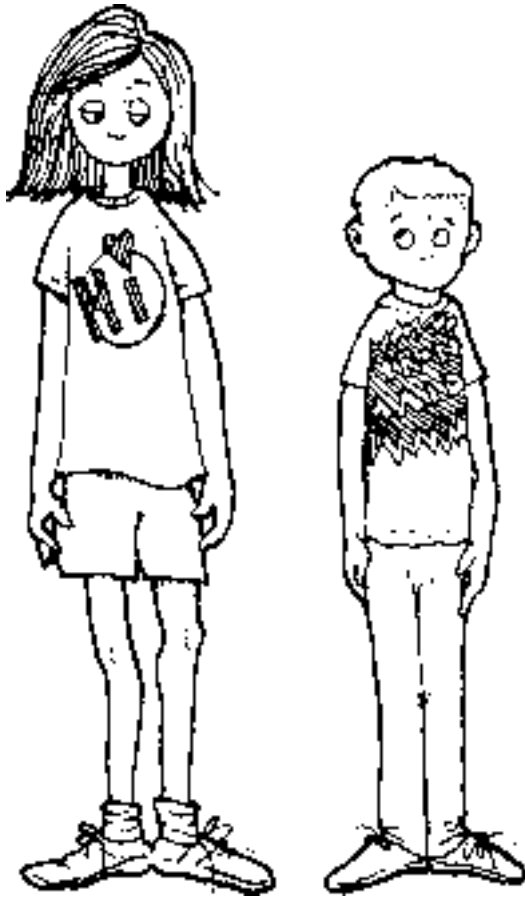
Follow up completed jobs with a word of encouragement. Also, take a look at how you both did. Teen Leaders need to see both their strengths and places for improvement. 4-H leaders need to know whether they gave sufficient help and supervision.

Never back a Teen Leader into the corner. Always provide some way to "save face." This is as important for the adult as it is for the teen.



### **WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUTH OF DIFFERENT AGES**

**Late Childhood: 10-12.** Most children will have attained the following characteristics before the age of 13. However, some persons mature more slowly. Identify the members in your group who are still in this category. Let them lead according to their ability.



The 10- to 12-year-old:

- Girl may experience very rapid growth. This is also the case for some boys, though most mature a little later.
- Prefers to do group activities rather than work alone.
- Develops a sense of worth and security within his or her own group and gradually becomes independent of parents.
- Likes to be useful and important.
- Experiences shifts in interest, but will finish a job if it provides some challenge and doesn't take too long.
- Has mixed feelings about adults; needs and wants opportunities to do some things on his or her own.
- Needs to develop happy relationships with the adults in his or her life; wants to be accepted by his or her own age and gender group.

**Early Adolescence: 13-15.** Most beginning Teen Leaders will have the interests and desires of this age grouping.

The 13- to 15-year-old:

- Girl grows more slowly physically, while growth is still rapid and uneven for boys.
- Learns masculine or feminine behavior.
- Learns to accept his or her own physical characteristics and changing body.
- Continues to prefer group activities. Since they mature faster, girls are often more interested in boys than boys are in girls.
- Shifts interest from a primary concern about the world of material things to a growing concern about people. Mastering social courtesies and skills and establishing more mature relationships with age mates of both sexes are important.
- Wants to be free of direct adult supervision. He or she still wants the 4-H leader around, but resents adults who take over. Remember, enforce agreed-upon duties, but do not dictate your viewpoints.
- Tests and tries many different things; craves action, excitement, and adventure.

**Late Adolescence: 15-19.** By the late teens, physical and mental growth are nearly complete.

The 15- to 19-year-old:

- Has greatly increased his or her ability to think independently and carry out original plans, make decisions, see another's point of view, form opinions based on reasoning.
- Is still interested in group activities but wants to "pair off" with members of the opposite sex. In later teen years many begin to look for a possible marriage partner.
- Faces important educational and vocational decisions about future place in the world of work. Many of life's most important decisions are made in late teens.
- Is moving rapidly toward adulthood. The late adolescent likes to challenge adult thinking as he or she searches for workable beliefs and values.
- Responds readily to adults who will treat him or her as an equal. Adults can help most by helping them see choices, and the consequences of those choices.



## **ASSIGNING JUNIOR AND TEEN LEADERS**

Match the needs of the local club for Junior and Teen Leaders with the interests and abilities of potential leaders using the following procedures.

### **Assess Club Needs**

Discuss club needs in a joint meeting of adult and Teen Leaders. A good time to do this is near the end of the club year in preparation for the following year. You may wish to invite prospective teen leaders to attend.

Divide the discussion into four parts—memberships, projects, club activities, and club management.

**Membership.** Every club needs new members to maintain its vitality. The size of the club generally depends on the kind of program offered. Usually, clubs of 30 or more members have more enthusiasm and provide a greater variety of leadership opportunities than smaller clubs. Clubs of less than 15 members tend to be project-

oriented and may have trouble keeping older members active.

Identify the young 4-H members who may need help from a Teen Leader. List all first-year members. If all the names aren't available, make some estimate of the number of new members your club needs. Also list any second-year members who need another year of close supervision.

**Projects.** The project is the primary teaching tool in 4-H. The best educational experiences result when there are at least three members in the same project, with an adequate number of adult leaders and/or Teen Leaders.

List the projects you offer and the enrollment in each. Determine which ones have the most young members and which need the closest personal supervision. Evaluate the enrollment in and type of adult leadership available for each project or category of projects.

- *Enrollment.* How many members are there in each project? How many project units exist for each adult? How many members can the adult work with easily?
- *Leadership.* Each person works differently and has varying abilities and experience. One adult might work easily with a teen leader while another might prefer to work alone.

**Special Club Interests.** The club should decide which special interests to emphasize. Consider some of the following, but remember that there is not enough time during any one year to do everything. Larger clubs will be able to do more than smaller clubs.

- Develop community interest in your club and at the same time, support your community with a Community Service Project.
- Consider improving recreation if the club has had trouble getting along together.
- Identify areas of strong member interest, such as demonstrations, public speaking, or judging.

**Club Management.** The larger the club, the greater the need for management assistance. Consider some of the following:

- *Communications.* This might include telephone

committees, a club newsletter, special notices, publicity, and public relations. One capable Teen Leader might take charge of the entire area of keeping members, parents, leaders, and the public informed of club plans and progress.

- *Records, equipment, supplies.* A Teen Leader could maintain equipment, order supplies, enroll members, and be the expert on records, record books, and reports.
- *Program.* This responsibility could include assisting the club officers with an annual program, calendar of meetings and events, and assignment of committee responsibilities. It also might include monthly business and program planning as well as training and supervising club officers.
- *Special needs.* Each club will have varied needs depending upon club size and the interests and abilities of the club leaders. The jobs listed here are only suggestions. Your club should determine its own management needs.

### **Evaluate Interests and Abilities**

Consider whether prospective Teen Leaders have these characteristics:

- Previous experience as a Junior or Teen Leader.
- Special interests or requests for assignment.
- Maturity, as shown by their attitude toward adults, the respect shown them by other members, and their desire to place the interests of the club above their own.
- Teaching ability as shown by their patience with younger members, their ability to express their ideas meaningfully, and their conscientiousness in preparing for assignments.
- Knowledge of and skills in specific projects or activities. These may be evidenced through proof of experience, demonstrated ability, respect accorded by fellow 4-H'ers, etc. Remember that this is a leadership training project as well as a source of leadership. Strong motivation often can overcome lack of experience, knowledge or skills.

### **Club Needs and Teen Leaders**

Match the needs of the 4-H club with the interests and abilities of prospective Teen Leaders. The final decision of who is assigned what re-

sponsibility might require considerable compromise. Decision-making often can be handled most effectively by a small group.

If a small club has only two or three teens, they each may be assigned rather broad responsibilities. In larger clubs more specialization is possible. Of course, assignments depend partly on the adult leadership available.

### **Assignment of Responsibilities**

All young first-year members should be assigned to Junior Leaders. Consider grouping by geographic areas for ease of transportation, communication, and supervision. Try to have boys supervised by boys, and girls supervised by girls since many 10- and 11-year-old boys are not yet mature enough to work congenially with girls. Also, try to keep mutual friends and common interests (projects, school, church, etc.) together.

Some Junior Leaders may be mature enough to teach project skills. This is especially true in projects with very young members.

In assigning Teen Leaders project responsibilities, consider the age, maturity, and ability



of the teen relative to other members in the project. Teen Leaders can assist 4-H club project leaders where specific skills or close supervision is needed. This type of responsibility can inspire the Teen Leader to learn much more about the project.

The amount of specialization of a Teen Leader's job will depend on the size of the club, the number of available Teen Leaders, and the interests and abilities of the teen. In some larger clubs, a Teen Leader may work exclusively with the sheep project, while in a smaller club, a Teen Leader may work with all livestock members on everything from committee assignments to record books.

Everyone should be happy with his or her assignments. This means that both adult 4-H leaders and Teen Leaders need to be fully involved in these decisions.

Put the assignments in writing. List the adult leader who will work closest with the Junior or Teen Leader. State agreements reached regarding division of responsibilities, the names of specific members, projects or programs, and particular responsibilities. Include any specific times,



dates, or efforts you agreed upon. Make sure each leader has a copy of the agreement.

## **TEEN PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS**

You will be most successful as a 4-H leader if you understand how teenagers see themselves in different situations.

The adolescent is concerned with his or her physique, for instance Frazier and Lisonbee\* found:

1. Girls generally think of themselves as being overweight, while boys think of themselves as about right with some concern about arms and chest that are too thin.
2. Girls generally think of themselves as too tall and boys think of themselves as being too short. This point is particularly important for 13-to 15-year-olds, as girls have started their growth spurt about 1 to 2 years before boys.
3. More boys and girls were concerned with facial blemishes (blackheads and pimples) than with any one other item studied. The 15-year-old plus age group was very concerned with this item.

Adolescents are moving away from dependence on parents toward an interdependent relationship with other adults, such as yourself. Conflicts may develop as teens attempt to establish values with which they can live and at the same time be accepted in the wider world. Therefore, adults must learn to be patient with teen inconsistencies. Most problems will be resolved in a healthy manner for all concerned if you don't force a premature decision.

The adolescent worries about grades, dating, acceptance by peers and adults, career opportunities, and personality. Show a genuine interest, but don't pry. On topics such as careers and dating problems, you may take an active part by suggesting alternatives the teen might consider, or by helping the Teen Leader and members plan one or two programs addressing these problems.

\*A. Frazier and L. Lisonbee, "Adolescent Concerns with Physique." *School Review*, Vol 58 (1950), pp 397-405



### **AWARDS IN THE TEEN LEADERSHIP PROJECT**

The teen leadership project departs radically from the traditional 4-H project in the area of awards. Traditionally, 4-H accomplishment has been recognized by material rewards—ribbons, plaques, trophies, show equipment, and so on.

Leadership is an area of achievement which cannot be judged in competition for a blue, red, or white ribbon. Who would feel capable of judging the realms of personal growth, maximum use of potential leadership abilities, and service to others?

Teen Leaders find their greatest rewards in the satisfaction they experience in helping others—in self-improvement; in achievement in a leadership role related to that of the adult leader; and in sharing common interests and friendships with other teen leaders. *In other words, the Teen Leader will experience intrinsic rewards for a job well done.*

Certainly extrinsic awards are also important to Teen Leaders. This is one reason why the early Teen Leader in particular is encouraged to carry another project offering extrinsic rewards—to help smooth out the transition period from ribbons to "no ribbons."

How can you help young people outgrow traditional project awards and recognize less tangible rewards? There are many ways of doing this, but here are some suggestions that have worked for other 4-H leaders.

- Discuss the satisfaction you have found in your own leadership experience with your Teen Leaders.
- Recognize the achievements of Teen Leaders in front of their fellow 4-H members.
- Keep people in the community informed of the work Teen Leaders are doing and encourage expressions of appreciation from these persons.
- Take advantage of opportunities for Teen Leaders to participate in community events, meetings of other organizations; radio and TV programs; etc.

The Teen Leader project does not let the 4-H leader measure the success of this program or even his or her own success as a leader and advisor in the traditional 4-H way. Occasionally someone may mention that one of your teens is doing an excellent job as a class officer or as a Sunday school teacher. These acknowledgments are not only few and far between, but are difficult to evaluate.

*This means that you are also rewarded in a more indirect manner than has been customary.* Even so, your level of satisfaction is likely to be greater as well. As a role model for Teen Leaders, you will feel pride in the successes of your Teen Leaders, and satisfaction in knowing that you have helped teens acquire invaluable lifelong skills.



Ellen G. Murphy, Extension Youth Specialist, WSU Puyallup.

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