



Positive Youth Development

Overview of Positive Youth Development

VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy

Intended Audience:

4-H volunteers

Learning Outcomes:

- Volunteers will understand the concept of positive youth development.
- Volunteers will be able to identify the components of a positive youth development environment.

Time:

20 – 30 minutes

Supplies Needed:

- Pencils and paper
- Markers and flip chart paper
- Power Point, Computer and LCD Projector
- Handouts and Evaluations

Do Ahead:

Prepare handouts.

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Volunteerism for the Next Generation:

<http://nextgeneration.4h.org/volunteerism/>

4-H National Headquarters:

<http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/>

INTRODUCTION

While there are many organizations that work with and for youth, 4-H Youth Development is unique in its approach of positive youth development. As 4-H volunteers, it's important that you understand the basics of positive youth development. (Power Point Slide 1)

WHAT TO DO

Activity 1: What is Positive Youth Development?

Give participants a minute to brainstorm answers to the question, "What is Positive Youth Development?" Have them share their answers with the group, capturing key phrases on a flip chart. Have the group review the phrases and come up with one definition. (Power Point Slide 2)

Youth Development is defined as an ongoing process through which young people attempt to meet their needs and develop the competencies they perceive as necessary for survival and transition into adulthood.

So, what is Positive Youth Development? (Power Point Slide 3) Positive Youth Development is the process that incorporates social, emotional, cognitive, physical and moral development of youth to meet the challenges of adolescences with the outcome of becoming competent, caring, contributing adults. It occurs from an intentional process that promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, choices, relationships, and support. The impact affects the young person, families and communities.

How is this done? (Power Point Slide 4)

Adults do this by providing environments for youth that are safe and nurturing and by offering experiences that help young people develop skills needed for adulthood.

Activity 2: Creating a Positive Youth Development Environment

(Power Point Slide 5) Divide the large group into smaller groups of 4-5 participants. Give each group a piece of flip chart paper and markers. Have them think of a 4-H experience such a 4-H meeting, 4-H camp, or 4-H event. Have them write down that 4-H experience on the paper. Then have them write or draw how that environment is positive for youth by considering:

- What makes the environment safe and nurturing?
- What opportunities and choices are there for youth?
- How are youth getting their needs met?
- What relationships and support is there from adults or other youth that help develop skills needed for adulthood?



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VRKC: Volunteer Research Knowledge Competency Taxonomy for 4-H Youth Development:

<http://www.national4-h-headquarters.gov/comm/vrkc.pdf>

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References for this lesson:

- *Strengthening Positive Youth Development Environments.* (2004). University of Wisconsin-Extension, <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/cyd/index.cfm>
- *4-H 101: The Basics of Starting 4-H Clubs.* National 4-H Headquarters. <http://www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?tabid=75>

Have groups present their 4-H experiences to the rest of the group with people asking questions or for clarifications. After each group presents, ask: What is one improvement that could make the environment even more positive? Have them share or have a large group brainstorming session to answer the question.

Conclusion:

Positive youth development is the foundation of 4-H programs. It includes developing life skills, leadership skills, understanding ages and states of youth development, empowerment of others, practicing youth-adult partnerships, motivating and encouraging youth, and appreciating diversity. Volunteers are needed to ensure that positive youth development is the primary focus of every 4-H activity, program, and event. The more we keep this focus, the more the youth will benefit. (Power Point Slide 6)

TALK IT OVER

Reflect:

- What makes a positive youth development approach to youth work unique to 4-H?
- Why is it important to have a positive youth development environment in 4-H?

Apply:

- What is one thing you will do to make an upcoming 4-H experience a safe and nurturing environment?

EVALUATION

Ask each participant to complete the evaluation tool (Handout 1).

ENHANCE or SIMPLIFY

Seek additional activities from the resources listed in the Resource section.

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Handout 1

Evaluation

Please complete the following evaluation. The results of the evaluation will be shared with those who work with the program. Your participation in this evaluation is voluntary. Your responses will be combined with the responses of all other participants and you will not be individually identified on any report prepared.

Please answer the questions by circling the number that indicates your level of understanding of the topics listed before and after the training.

1 = Very little understanding

2 = Understand somewhat

3 = Clear understanding

	NOW – After the training	THEN – Before the training
1. I can explain what positive youth development is.	1 2 3	1 2 3
2. I know ways to create a positive youth development environment.	1 2 3	1 2 3
3. I feel confident in my ability to create a positive youth development environment in 4-H settings.	1 2 3	1 2 3

- Please list at least two ideas or skills that you learned as a result of this presentation.

- How will you use what you learned in this presentation?



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