



4-H   
COMMON  
MEASURES  


**Lesson Study in 4-H**  
*Benefits*

## Lesson Study in 4-H: What do we know so far?

### Benefits of Lesson Study to 4-H Educators

#### Summary

Key benefits to the majority of 4-H educators who have engaged in lesson study include improved content knowledge, confidence in and understanding of lesson planning and implementation, and social connections. Strengths include distributed leadership whereby discussions were egalitarian in nature, the use of outside content experts to help build competence and confidence, and the use of formative data to inform the revisions of lessons and improvements to teaching through data-driven decisions. These outcomes reflect similar results described in the literature pertaining to the use of lesson study in school-based settings.

#### Improved Lesson Planning

The main focus of lesson study group meetings is the review of formative data to help plan for subsequent lesson implementations. This preparation helps direct providers improve their understanding of lessons, their confidence in facilitating them, planning for future lessons, and potentially, more reflective and analytical, through discussing potential modifications to the standard curriculum.

#### Improving Content Knowledge of Educators

- Less experienced participants improved their content knowledge because of their interactions with participants who were more experienced and more knowledgeable
- More experienced participants reported no improvement in their content knowledge.

#### Improved Teaching Practice

- Lesson study meetings, which involved individual and group reflection and discussion guided by the formative data aid with data-driven improvements to teaching practice.
- Participants have reported improving their abilities through reflecting on formative data with others.

#### Improved Social Connections

- Participants strengthen relationships with colleagues which, in turn, help improve their teaching abilities.
- Relationship-building is one of the greatest benefits; helps to substitute for the lack of colleagues in close proximity.
- Development of relationships with colleagues reduces feelings of isolation by connecting to others who share similar experiences.
- Helps colleagues develop cohesiveness; enhances motivation and future collaboration.

## Role of Content Experts

- The availability of content expertise is beneficial to participants, whether it was an outside expert or someone within the group with subject matter knowledge. This is especially beneficial to LS groups with less experienced participants. Furthermore, there is an expressed benefit of having content experts (e.g., Cooperative Extension Specialist) at the lesson study group meetings so that individual can gain an understanding of practical realities of program implementation.

## Use of Formative Data Tools

- 4-H Youth Reflections: Allow 4-H educators to assess participant learning and engagement:
  - Formative data from 4-H youth provide 4-H educators an opportunity to think about what they did, what they learned, and what is important from the lesson.
- 4-H Educator Reflections: Provide 4-H educators with an opportunity to systematically and intentionally assess the lesson and their performance.
  - Reflections are most beneficial when done right after the lesson is completed. They allow the educator to think about what took place, talk about it as a team, and make adjustments before the next lesson.
  - Reflections help identify strengths and weaknesses and provide a “window” on how a lesson and teaching practices can be improved.