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4HCPL20

Florida 4-H Community Pride

Leader's Guide

Florida Cooperative Extension Service/ Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences/ University of Florida

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FOREWORD

The Community Pride Program is one of the most important endeavors of 4-H groups, because the community is the center for programs and activities that make life enjoyable and worthwhile.

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COMMUNITY PRIDE FUNDING

Community Pride Proposal Funding is provided to help 4-Hérs to improve their communities. The 4-H members see a need and then work together cooperating with others, to improve the situation. This funding is not provided for the purposes listed below:

- Purchase of major price articles or equipment to be given away.
- Money-making projects of the 4-H Club.
- Purchase of food for the 4-H members.

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COMMUNITY PRIDE
A FLORIDA 4-H CITIZENSHIP ACTIVITY

LEADER'S GUIDE

The 4-H Community Pride program is designed as an action-oriented program to give 4-H'ers a better understanding of their community by participating in its overall improvement. Members identify some of the needs and problems of their community and take action in helping to solve one or more problems.

Your role as leader is to help your group to study your community, to decide what to do, and to help them learn by doing. In many cases your role will be that of an observer or catalyst. You must believe in your members' ability to learn by doing.

You should have little difficulty in recruiting 4-H'ers for a Community Pride project. Explain to the youth in your community exactly what Community Pride is and point out the objectives. Explain that they will determine the action they wish to take after they explore the needs.

Age should not restrict participation. Interest in the project is the key to success. Your group may consist of 3rd through 12th graders or it may be made up entirely of one age group. It may be a 4-H Club already organized or a group you get together for the specific purpose of doing a Community Pride project

What is a Community?

There are many different ways to define a community. Most of these definitions share four common characteristics. People, common ties among these people, social interaction, and geographical location are important in defining a community.

People make up a community. These people generally have many things in common. They share beliefs about what is right and wrong. Also shared are religious, educational, economic, and legal institutions. Common transportation and communication channels are apparent.

The people in a community are constantly interacting. They live, work, and play with each other. They participate with each other in groups, clubs, and informal meetings.

The fourth characteristic common to most definitions of community is geographical location. A community is made up of people in a defined area. You can draw a line around a community on a map (or find approximate boundaries).

For our purposes a community is a group of people with common ties interacting with each other in a certain geographical location.

Why 4-H Community Pride?

The youth you see in your neighborhood today will live, on the average, in five or six different communities within their lifetimes. The more they learn about their present community and its decision-making process, the more effective citizens they will be in other communities in which they will eventually live.

As a leader, you are helping the youth and your community. Assuming you will work with ten youth, you will have an influence on about 50 to 60 communities where the youth will live in the future. This is how we keep America strong - with good, informed citizens in action.

It is important that youth learn about the communities in which they live. Every community can be improved - large or small, in the city or country, subdivision, or apartment complex. What will make your community better? What do the people around you think?

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Objectives

The 4-H Community Pride program involves helping the members of your group discover their community and encouraging them to improve the quality of their environment. The specific learning objectives for the 4-H Community Pride program are to have youth:

1. learn about and understand their community and the impact it has on their lives.
2. know how to relate, individually and through groups, in order to work effectively in community activities, programs, and organizations.
3. develop their knowledge and skills in community leadership.
4. gain actual experience in carrying out meaningful community projects to improve their environment.
5. develop an interest in and love for their community.

Put another way, we want to help youth come to an understanding something like this: "If I am going to live in this community, I am going to do something to make it a better community. I won't just sit and grumble; I will go to work with others to improve what we have and add things we don't have. I'm no great leader, but I can learn to speak, organize, and work with others. We can start with small projects, and as we gain experience and learn to work with and through others, we can tackle larger, more difficult projects. This is a fine community, and we have the opportunity to make it better for everyone who lives

here, and that includes me."

Eight Steps to Successful Community Action

Listed below is the actual step-by-step process that you must follow in leading your 4-H group in community action.

The urgency and nature of needs in your community will determine the amount of time you spend on each of the steps outlined below. However, to meet all of the learning objectives of this activity ***it is important that each step be emphasized***. Study the following outline. Adapt it to your situation. The following steps were adapted from Virginia publication #486, "Youth in Action Improving Their Community."

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Step 1. ***Community Awareness and Understanding***

(Initial action - where to start)

- Discuss the community and its different meanings to different people. Discuss what makes up the community agencies, services, industry buildings, systems. Name examples of each. How do individuals fit into a community? What destroys or improves a community? Develop a list of three to five concerns that the club members feel they would like to work on to help improve their community.

- Assign individuals as groups to collect information, through personal interviews, on the concerns of people within the community. (We recommend each group interview five or six people who represent different areas of interests in the community. Examples are a business leader, health specialist, government official, or recreation director.)

Step 2. ***Exploration of Community Concerns***

(Agreeing on Concerns)

After your members have compiled a list of three to five concerns which they feel to be the most pressing, and after they have interviewed community members to determine their primary perceptions of the community's concerns, do the following:

- Have each individual group give reports to members concerning information gathered in the interviews.
- Combine this information with the list of three to five concerns that the members listed in the previous meeting.
- Have members select one upon which they will take action.
- Assign groups to gather additional information about the one concern selected.

Step 3. ***Analysis and Information About the Concern***

(Discussion Phase)

Once a major concern has been selected, do the following:

- Have members present additional information about the problem to the rest of the 4-H group.
- Have experts and other outside resource people present their facts to the 4-H group.
- Restate the problem in the light of the new information gathered.
- Do further research and reflection.

Step 4. ***Alternative Choices***

(Possible Solutions)

After information about the problem has been gathered through individual research, discussion, and outside experts:

- Have members think through the possible solutions and have each individual group present its case for what it considers to be the best alternative.
- Continue discussion regarding the best possible choice.

Step 5. ***Group Decision - Choosing One Alternative***

(Course of Action)

After all the different solutions are presented and discussed:

- Have each individual group present a short summary of the alternative which it considers to be the best.
- By democratic vote, or consensus, select the best possible one.

Step 6. ***Planning and Carrying Out the Project***

(One alternative has been chosen)

List specific objectives and goals (essential for Evaluation step).

- Develop a list of individuals and organizations that should be involved in the action. Determine the responsibility of each organization or individual to be involved.
- Decide how your group is going to get others to help it carry out the plan.
- Outline the plan of action including why, what, when, who, and how. Describe materials and facilities needed and available.
- Put the plan into action.
- Make necessary adjustments in the plan as the situation demands.

Step 7. ***Inform Others of the Group's Project***

- Radio programs

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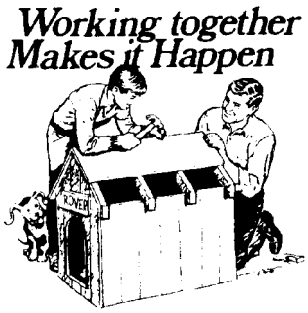
- News articles
- Speaking at civic and governmental group meetings.

Step 8. ***Evaluation and Follow-Up***
The plan for action has been developed and implemented. Considerations prior to the plan's development include such items as who would be affected, how they would be affected, who would be assisting the group, and how they would be approached.
- Have individual groups explain what part they played in the implementation and what reaction they received.
- Evaluate the plan in light of the group's original goals and of the community.
- Discuss the continuation of the group as an action or study group.

SUMMARY

1. List community problems and concerns.
2. Gather and study the facts in order to choose one concern to work on.
3. Study the concern and secure acceptance of key people to work on it.
4. Discuss and review the different ways of alternatives for action to solve the problem.



5. Decide on one course of action.
6. Organize and carry out the plan of action.
7. Inform others of the group's project.
8. Evaluate your success and make the necessary follow-up.

Possible Areas for Community Pride Program

Look at the big picture. Today's youth are ingenious and creative. Don't limit their possibilities by telling them ANYTHING is impossible - let them find out for themselves; they might do the impossible. They might increase voter turnout by 25 percent and ignite the spark that results in a community water system or baseball league!!

Your group can conduct specific projects in any of these or other areas of concern that need attention in your community.

Crime Prevention

- Conduct shoplifting prevention clinics.
- Organize a Community Crime Watch.
- Plan workshops on burglar-proofing homes.

Energy

- Set up a ride-sharing program that will involve the entire community.
- Conduct an "energy awareness" survey and find out the energy-related subjects about which the public is interested in learning. Report your findings to local groups who are involved in energy education.
- Organize a "Watt-Watcher" weekend. Get support from your local utility representatives and see how

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many kilowatt hours can be saved in one weekend in your community.

- Prepare daily energy information tips to be announced by 4-H members over the radio or the school's P.A. system.
- Hold a series of "solar" tea parties at one of the nursing homes. Prepare tea and refreshments using solar cookers.

Environmental Improvement

- Conduct an anti-litter education program.
- Encourage tree planting and beautification of homes.
- Begin a recycling program for aluminum, paper, and other products.
- Conduct an educational program in environmental awareness for 4-H families and others.

Government

- Study the legislative process.
- Conduct a voter registration drive.
- Conduct a community survey to share with community leaders.

Health

- Conduct a health education program on some health problem area (eye care, dental health, cancer warning signs).
- Hold blood-pressure checks at local shopping areas.
- Establish jogging trails or promote physical fitness in other ways.

Marketing & Economics

- Start a job referral service.
- Organize a 4-H - run business.

Recreation

- Establish a park or improve an existing park.
- Organize a community sports league.
- Hold workshops to train local recreation leaders (church, youth groups, school, day care centers).

Safety

- Cooperate with Fire Department in Fire Safety workshops for community members.
- Do a community traffic safety survey to identify trouble spots and bring these to attention of residents and officials.
- Hold bike safety workshops for young people.
- Conduct a Poison Prevention Education program for the Community.

Work With Special Audiences

- Develop sharing programs with senior citizens (youth help them; they help youth).
- Do a survey of community buildings which are accessible to citizens confined to wheelchairs or other projects to aid the handicapped.

PROGRAM SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADERS

1) Learning experiences should be action-centered.

2) Youth should be involved in the total process of *planning*, *implementation*, and *evaluation*.

3) Youth should continue to "LEARN BY DOING".

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Funding of Proposals

Most local projects will be funded at the rate of $50.00 - $200.00. The most innovative projects, in the opinion of the judges, will be funded at a higher level. If your group wishes to compete for the higher funding, your proposal should reflect the process outlined in "Eight Steps to Successful Community Action."

If your 4-H group desires to conduct a Community Pride Project that doesn't need financing, they may wish to submit a proposal requesting a minimum amount for film. This will qualify your group for competition at the state level next summer.

In June, when Community Pride Reports are judged in the State 4-H Office, the top five reports (over-all) will be chosen for recognition.

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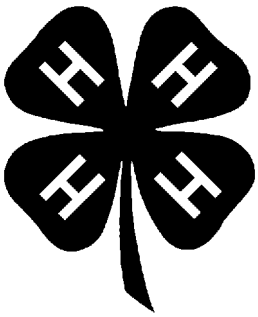
Helpful Hints for Completing Your Community Pride Report

The great thing about Community Pride is that it benefits not only the youth involved in the program but also the community. However, the educational part of the program, what the youth learn about their communities, should always be first in mind. It is a most important criterion in judging the proposals for project grants and also in judging the record books describing the projects. A simple record sheet is provided for each Community Pride Project to use in reporting the work. The main thing to remember is to describe how the group followed the EIGHT STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY ACTION (pages 4 through 6 of this Leader's Guide).

REMINDER

4-H + Community = Community Pride

4-H + Good Deeds = Community Service



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