

# California 4-H Association

May 2016



University of California  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

*The California 4-H Association is committed to improving our professional skills and development, exchanging new program ideas, methods, and techniques, while getting to know 4-H Youth Development Program colleagues across the state.*

## Welcome

Hello and welcome to the latest edition of the CA4-HA Newsletter. The 2016 California 4-H Association Retreat is nearly upon us and we look forward to seeing many of you there. We have a number of great workshops and presentations lined up, so let's move some mountains and blaze some new paths! Unable to join us for this year's retreat? You'll be missed, so be sure to mark those calendars, set aside some development funds, and join us next year. In the meantime, we still have a full schedule of webinars, so please feel free to join us for those. Looking for a topic that isn't listed? Let us know. We value your feedback and work hard to provide you with valuable information and engaging development opportunities. Finally, we love to share! Have you discovered some great curriculum? Are you finding success with a fun activity? Perhaps you've read or written an interesting article. If that sounds like you, post it on our Facebook page or submit it for inclusion in our newsletter. As always, thank you for reading and thank you for being a part of the CA4-HA!

*"Every kid is one caring adult away from being a success story."*

*~ Josh Shipp*

## California 4-H Association Webinars

Do you have a thirst for knowledge? Please join us for our monthly professional development webinar series. Webinars are held the first Thursday of each month at 10:00 AM. Additionally, recordings of past webinars, are available on the CA4-HA website at: [http://ucanr.edu/sites/CA4-HA/PD/Webinar\\_Series/](http://ucanr.edu/sites/CA4-HA/PD/Webinar_Series/).

**May:** Advocacy in the Community (New Community/Government Relations Coordinator)

**June:** Putting Youth on the Map (Nancy Erbstein)

**July:** How to Make an Effective Social Media Post (Tyler Ash)

**August:** Overview of Qualtrics Survey System (Kendra Lewis)

**September:** Fund Development (Paula Allison and Shannon Horrillo)

**October:** Open (Please Contact Us with Any Suggestions)



## Points to Ponder

### Are set office hours really important?

*Written by Jacki Zediker*

This morning a friend attempted to drop her child at the day care facility. As she parked she noticed a sign posted on the door. "Day Care closed today. I am spending time skiing with my children." No warning, just a sign and now, no place for her child to go for the day. Would you be frustrated? This is not the first time this has happened. Would you chance staying with this provider or would you seek a consistent day care person/place?



For those of us working in a service industry, setting office hours becomes a fundamental element in preventing client frustration.

Providing this consistency with office hours in my 4-H career has been one of my biggest challenges. For sixteen years, I have been a half-time 4-H Program Representative. As a half-time employee I already have limited hours in the office. Add the nature of this job where we work weekends and nights, we can simply run out of hours to be in the office as much as we would like.

Technology has helped to eliminate some of the issues of availability. However, when you work weird hours and send emails or texts at 10pm on a Friday night, you are sending a message that you are available around the clock. Without a set schedule, clients don't know how long they need to wait or when it is appropriate to call. This results in phone calls during family dinners and expectation of email and text responses immediately during the weekend.

Prior to my appointment, the previous 4-H staff person had varying days of the week that they were available in the office. In addition, because of another half-time job, they chose to have office hours from 4:30pm to 6:30pm on the days that they were in the office. Several issues occurred because of this practice. The first is obvious, because of inconsistent days nobody knew when the staff person would be in the office. The second is that the office hours may have worked for the staff member but they were not times that the clientele were able to make use of because of family schedules. To say the least, frustrations led to a less than thriving program.

If you state that you will be in on Tuesdays and Thursdays, people will expect you to be in the office. Perhaps it would be better to say that you will be in Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1pm-5pm. This way if you need to vary your hours because of extra hours worked on weekends, nights or because of travel you could take the mornings on Tuesday or Thursday off and still be available for clients when they need our services.

Being consistent is the main goal. Regardless of how many counties we are serving, hours that we work or other commitments we need to remind ourselves that we are a service industry and we need to be available to our clientele.

## Tips on Maintaining a Culture of Innovation as Your Program Grows

No 4-H educator strives for mediocrity. But all too often, successful proposals lead to grant funding and an increase membership. This is great! But beware of growth, it sweeps in and sets in motion a downward spiral toward mediocrity.

As a 4-H program grows, we as leaders put systems, processes and structures in place to deal with complicated issues that arise as part of scaling. It's at this point that we risk losing our appetite for innovation that motivated us to win that funding in the first place. We might fall back on the belief that, "This is the way it has always been done," or else resort to tired lessons from best practices at association conferences.

Although systems and best practices are important for successful scaling, if you apply too many at once you risk razing the innovative spark inside you. 4-H programs move from innovative to mediocre when they conform to the status quo instead of striving for innovation by moving quickly and pushing boundaries.

Now, as 4-H leaders we must remember the systems that made our programs successful to begin with. Similarly, we need to stay wakeful, lest our programs succumb to mediocrity.

Here are four tips to maintain a culture of innovation as your program grows:

- **Think outside the 4-H box:** National and state 4-H association meetings teach you how to run traditional programs, 'best practices' that work, but you'll never hear about 'next practices' or the ideas that utterly failed and what your colleagues learned from their mistakes. Don't use only best practices as building blocks if you want an innovative 4-H program. Look outside of 4-H for ideas and concepts that work in the world of business. New 4-H programs thrive on innovation, not more of the same.
- **Cultivate a culture of innovative:** Culture defines your 4-H program. Do you want to have a dynamic, creative team? Then your culture needs to reward initiative, encourage communication and provide autonomy. You can't just give lip service to the word 'innovation,' you have to ingrain innovation into your culture by honoring it with every decision you make. Prioritize open sharing of innovative ideas and listen closely to those teammates who think differently than you. Diverse perspectives help innovation flow.
- **Blaze your own trail:** Commitment to innovation becomes even more critical as your 4-H program grows because unfortunately, *size encourages tradition*. As the size of your staff grows, strict structures will appear more attractive in order to help keep things organized. Only your leadership will stave mediocrity. Question every best practice by asking, "What if we did the opposite?" Set your own course and ascertain the best way to organize your 4-H program when it is small so the transition remains steady.
- **Reinforce agility:** Smaller, agile teams collaborate better and can tackle new challenges more effectively than a large staff working in silos. When your team is small, use tools like [Slack](#), [Google Groups](#), [Drive](#), [Basecamp](#) and [Box](#) to share openly about what everyone is working on. When you have established a collaborative nature in your 4-H program, it will be easier to scale and bring on more people while maintaining a spirit of innovation.



## Maintaining a Culture of Innovation Cont.

As the grant funding rolls in for your 4-H program, keep innovation at the nucleus of your leadership to prevent slowing slipping into mediocrity. Examine the traditional best practices, but be sure they're a proper fit for your team culture before applying them. This type of focus will keep your program firmly anchored in innovation.

Posted by Paul Hill on 03/14/2016 at <http://www.4-h.org/4-H-Today/Four-Tips-on-Maintaining-a-Culture-of-Innovation-as-Your-4-H-Program-Grows/>.



## The 4-H Latino Youth Outreach: Best Practices Toolkit

The 4-H Latino Youth Outreach: Best Practices Toolkit is a guide to help 4-H Cooperative Extension professionals become active catalysts and change agents for engaging Latino youth in 4-H high-quality positive youth development programs. It provides researched approaches, templates, checklists, and examples of best practices to help field staff develop a wide variety of strategies for successfully engaging Latino youth and their families in 4-H.

Given that Latino youth already comprise 50 percent or more of the school-age population in many states, it is imperative that 4-H increase its capacity and understanding of this diverse population. Since 1997, the number of Latino students nationwide nearly doubled to 12.9 million. As National 4-H Council partners with America's public universities and Cooperative Extension System to engage more youth in 4-H, this Toolkit will be a valuable resource in support of your local priorities and programming efforts.

For more information and to download this toolkit, please visit: <https://www.4-h.org/LatinoOutreach/>.

### LATINO YOUTH OUTREACH: Best Practices Toolkit



Version 1.0  
Last edited July 7, 2015

## 4-H Youth Mentoring

**Curious how matching a caring adult with a young person can make a huge difference?**

Formal mentoring matches caring individuals with young people to provide support, friendship, reinforcement and constructive examples.

Mentoring is also a partnership between the mentor and mentee for the positive development of the mentee. The mentee is not reduced to a recipient role. The mentee is an active participant and decision maker in his or her development. This allows an emotional transaction between them to occur with bonds of mutual trust and respect at the core of each relationship.



**What is a mentor?**

- **A friend**

A mentor has time to listen and give thoughtful, caring advice and assistance. He or she is someone who notices the little things and uses simple phrases like “I’m proud of you,” to help build self-esteem of young people. A friend realizes that time is needed to build a relationship; especially if the youth’s past relationships have not been stable ones.

- **A role model**

A mentor is someone who has had successful life experiences and who is willing to share them. Modeling can come at many levels. Some can be as basic and tangible as making a craft, playing a sport or washing the car. Others can be less tangible, but just as important. These might include controlling anger, using good manners, or directing one’s energy in a positive direction.

- **A link to the community**

A mentor should be knowledgeable about the community and be willing to research any information that is unknown to him or her. He or she will teach the young person how to access local resources.

**Why do youth need mentors?**

Youth need caring, nurturing, open and encouraging people in their lives. It is paramount to their psychological development that youth, especially at-risk and underserved children, have someone in their life to provide positive support to help them realize their potential.

Many youth have a desperate need for enduring contact with positive adult role models. Youth need to be guided, supported, prized and nurtured. Mutual trust, respect and awareness of being valued are key components for an emotional bond to occur between the mentee and mentor.

## 4-H Youth Mentoring Cont.

### How does mentoring affect youth?

The intimate connection that can form between the mentor and the mentee helps reinforce positive perceptions of self-esteem and self-worth in youth. Mentoring is a tool for positive youth development. It can help improve grades, develop communication skills, enhance leadership abilities and encourage civic values and participation.

### Research indicates:

- Students who met regularly with their mentors are 52% less likely than their peers to skip a day of school and 37% less likely to skip a class (Tierney & Grossman, 2000).
- Youth who met regularly with their mentors are 46% less likely than their peers to start using illegal drugs and 27% less likely to start drinking (Tierney & Grossman, 2000).
- Faith-based mentoring has reduced recidivism rates to 5 to 12% (Prison Fellowship International, 2007).

From the Michigan State University Extension at [http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/youth\\_mentoring](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/youth_mentoring).

## Youth Mentoring Resources

### **4-H National Mentoring Program**

<http://www.4-h.org/youth-development-programs/mentoring/national-mentoring-program/>

### **4-H Tech Wizards from Oregon State University**

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/washington/4h//techwizards>

### **Mentor: The National Mentoring Partnership**

<http://www.mentoring.org/>

### **The Wisdom of Age: A Handbook for Mentors**

[http://www.mentoring.org/old-downloads/mentoring\\_1217.pdf](http://www.mentoring.org/old-downloads/mentoring_1217.pdf)

### **Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, Fourth Edition**

<http://www.mentoring.org/program-resources/elements-of-effective-practice-for-mentoring/>

### **NASA Girls & Boys—Virtual Mentoring Project**

<http://women.nasa.gov/nasagirls/>

### **youth.gov**

<http://youth.gov/youth-topics/mentoring>





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## **Did You Know?**

The California 4-H Association is on Facebook! We are currently revamping our Facebook page in order to provide additional opportunities for networking, learning, and development. Be sure to "Like" us the next time you're online.



## **When I'm Not at Work...**



Academic Coordinators are friends, not food. Maybe she needed a bigger boat!



When she's not travelling, Kendra nearly gets eaten alive and creates amazing cards.



What do you do when you're not at work? Are you a globetrotter? A volunteer? A stargazer? Send us a picture and a brief caption to let us know what you've been up to. We'd love to share!