

Dear Lynn,

I'm a new middle school science teacher in Santa Cruz County and am looking for some curricula that will engage my students and build their appreciation for science.

Sincerely, Stressed over Science

Dear Stressed over Science,

I suggest that you check-out the “*Youth Community Science Education Program*” of the University of California Cooperative Extension Santa Cruz County 4-H Youth Development Program.

The Youth Community Science Education Program provides schools, after school sites, youth organizations and community collaborators with research based curricula, resources and workshops in the areas of Science, Technology, Natural Resource Education, Environmental Stewardship, Garden Based Learning and Staff Development. Curricula in the Youth Community Science Education Program use the experiential learning model, where young people have an opportunity to participate in fun, engaging activities that promote learning and understanding. The training workshops are highly interactive and seek to link research with practice by providing research based information, interactive activities, practical tips, resources and on-going technical assistance.

Participation in the Youth Community Science Education Program is available on a variety of levels:

Program Sites: are cooperative ventures between your school and the University of California Cooperative Extension's Youth Development Program. By designating your school as a program site, your staff and clientele will be provided with curriculum, on-going training, support, resources, evaluation tools and possible grant support in order to sustain your program.

Curriculum Training: provides your faculty and staff with six to twelve hours of hands-on training to develop the skills necessary to successfully implement a curriculum at your site.

Staff In-services: are two to six hour professional development experiences that will provide your faculty and staff with practical tools and resources to work with the clientele at your facility.

Program Visits: are one-time 1 to 3 hour visits to conduct a lesson with the students in a classroom setting.

For a listing of the resources that are available to educators through the Youth Community Science Education Program, contact me at 831-763-8026 or contact me at the University of California Cooperative Extension Office.