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Youth Board – Orientation

<http://texasvolunteer.tamu.edu/>

Youth Boards are replacing the 4-H & Youth Development Program Area Committee. This is one of the most significant changes in the INVEST Plan associated with Program Area Committees.

The main reason for the change was the Volunteer Steering Committee indicating and providing proof that the current structure of the 4-H & Youth Development Program Area Committee was not properly functioning statewide. That does not mean that there were not outstanding 4-H & Youth Development Program Area Committee in certain areas of the state, but overall, when it came time to compare the effectiveness of the 4-H & Youth Development Program Area Committee to other established program area committees, there was a large gap.

So, the proposal of a Youth Board was developed to see if it would be more appropriate.

The following slides will help outline the Youth Board. Also, you may want to follow along in the Program Area Committee / Youth Board publication as this presentation supplements the publication.

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Mission

To provide quality, relevant outreach and continuing educational programs and services to the people of Texas.

It is important that our volunteers know the mission of our agency. This drives what we do.

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What is Cooperative Extension

- Cooperative Extension is an organizational entity of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Land-Grant University System created under provisions of the Smith-Lever Act (1914)
- Extension was created as part of the Land-Grant University in each state to interpret, disseminate, and promote practical use of knowledge to improve the quality of life for all citizens.

What is Cooperative Extension?

Cooperative Extension is an organizational entity of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Land-Grant University System created under provisions of the Smith-Lever Act (1914) and subsequent related legislation. Extension was created as an organic part of the Land-Grant University in each state to interpret, disseminate, and promote practical use of knowledge to improve the quality of life for all citizens.

The Cooperative Extension System is unique in structure and function. It consists of county Extension agents located in 3,000 counties across the country and Extension specialists at each state's Land-Grant University or in regional locations within the state. Local Extension agents draw upon their expertise, the expertise of specialists, and the knowledge resources of the Land-Grant University to provide information and educational programs which address local citizens' issues and problems. Extension agents and specialists are also linked in regional and national networks and the USDA. This integration of teaching, research, and public service enables the Cooperative Extension System to respond to critical, emerging issues with research-based information.

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**Smith-Lever Act:
Defining the Mandate**

- Serve Agriculture and the Public
- Define Agriculture Broadly
- Enhance Human Development
- Meet Local Problems

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Smith-Lever Act: Defining the Mandate

While the authors of the enabling legislation for Cooperative Extension could not foresee the future, the mandates implicit within the legislation is as applicable today as in 1914:

Serve Agriculture and the Public - The Smith-Lever Act gave Extension a very broad clientele base—"the people of the United States"—yet also specified that its programs should be concerned with "agriculture and home economics and subjects relating thereto."

Define Agriculture Broadly - The term "agriculture" was used in a comprehensive sense in the Smith-Lever Act and subsequent legislation to include producing, processing and marketing farm and forest products, plus those businesses and industries concerned with supplying the resources needs in the production and marketing process. For example, the report by Mr. Lever of the House Committee on December 8, 1913 stated:

"To teach the farmer the best methods of increasing production is exceedingly important, but not more vitally so than is the importance of teaching him the best and most economical methods of distribution. It is not enough to teach him how to grow bigger crops. He must be taught how to get the true value for these bigger crops. . . . (The Extension agent) will be expected to give as much thought to the economic side of agriculture—the marketing, standardizing, and grading of farm products—as he gives to the matter of larger acreage yields."

Enhance Human Development - In the same report, Representative Lever further defined the role of the Extension agent: *"He is to assume leadership in every movement, whatever it may be, the aim of which is better farming, better living, more happiness, more education and better citizenship."* This broad and significant leadership challenge was applied first to teaching home economics or home management to farm women, and to programs aimed at youth. The underlying mandate is to provide educational programs for individuals and families which will enhance human development and maximize the individual's contribution to society. In this way, Cooperative Extension "clearly fits into the ranks of institutions established by the federal government to stimulate national growth by helping the individual."

Meet Local Problems - Section 8 of the Smith-Lever Act establishes the obligation of Extension to provide ". . . Assistance in counseling to local groups in appraising resources for capability of improvements in agriculture or introduction of industry designed to supplement farm income; . . . cooperation with other agencies and groups in furnishing all possible information as to existing employment opportunities, particularly to farm families . . ." This section establishes the need for additional assistance in areas faced with special or unusual hardships, and acknowledges Extension's role in working with groups as well as individuals in meeting local problems.

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What are the base programs?

- Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment
- Family and Consumer Sciences
- 4-H & Youth Development
- Community Development

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These are the four base educational programs provided by Texas Cooperative Extension. This is intended to show the growth and dimension of our program.

It is important to point out that the program still has a strong and rich history in production agriculture, the agency has evolved to dealing with environmental issues, water issues, and protecting natural resources.

Moreover, the family & Consumer Science

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What is 4-H?

Traditional Perception	Reality
- Production Ag.	- Leadership
- Canning	- Community Service
- Food Preparation	- Over 90 projects
- Livestock showing	- Community clubs and in schools
- On the farm	- More kids involved in urban areas vs. rural
- Rural	

"4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills" "4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills"

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Why the Change to Youth Boards?

- Expectations developed by adults without youth involvement set youth up for failure (Natriello & Dornbusch (1984).
- Program Area Committees (comprised predominantly of adults) that attempt to predict educational programs for youth will have **far less impact** because youth are not represented.

Introduction. For many years program development for youth serving entities has been driven by the social ills of youth. Over the last two decades the reshaping of the youth serving field has seen formation of youth-adult partnerships and youth development.

Most youth programs are still deficit-based by design; they focus on particular problems or risks experienced by young people and offer to “keep kids out of trouble” or to expose them to positive activities and relationships. It is also clear that most programs still rely heavily on adults and “experts” in the field to design, implement and evaluate youth programs. We must take a closer look at the concept of “youth engagement” –an essential ingredient of a successful youth development approach. Several key factors of engagement are critical to explore, including the role of young people in youth programs, the relationship between adults and youth, and the settings in which programs take place (The Innovation Center for Community and Youth Development, 2003).

Previous Research. To further illustrate the importance of having youth partnering with County Extension Agents and adult volunteers to develop, implement, evaluate, and interpret youth educational programs, the following research bullets provide the impact youth in educational partnership roles.

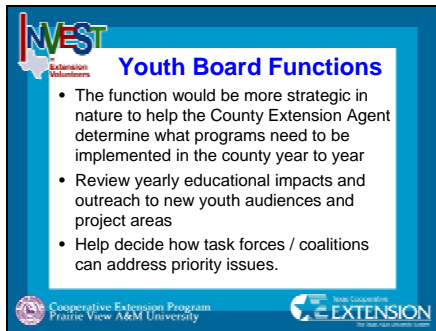
Expectations developed by adults without youth involvement set youth up for failure (Natriello & Dornbusch (1984). In other words, having a Program Area Committee (comprised predominantly of adults) attempt to predict educational programs for youth will have far less impact and success because youth are not represented. Thus, having a youth board comprised of a majority of youth allows them to provide insight about youth activities in a county and allows them the comfort to express their thoughts because other members of the board are youth as well.

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What Youth Board Members Do?

- Represent youth from across county
- Extend educational services to clientele
- Spokespersons for 4-H & Youth Development Program
- Ensure educational programs for youth is **RELEVANT**.

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Youth Board Functions

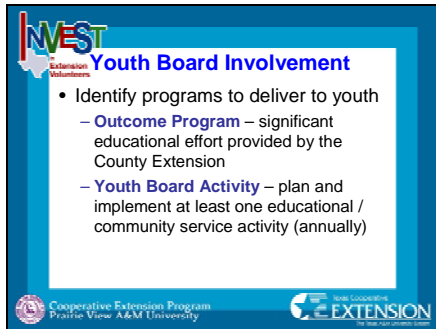
- The function would be more strategic in nature to help the County Extension Agent determine what programs need to be implemented in the county year to year
- Review yearly educational impacts and outreach to new youth audiences and project areas
- Help decide how task forces / coalitions can address priority issues.

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These will be very similar to Program Area Committees that were noted in the PAC discussion.

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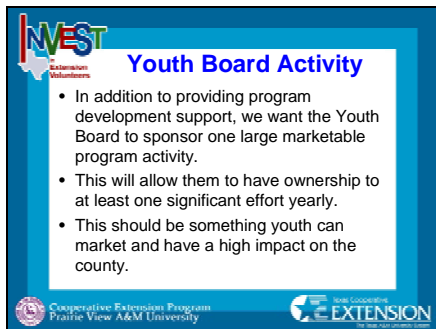
Youth Board Involvement

- Identify programs to deliver to youth
 - **Outcome Program** – significant educational effort provided by the County Extension
 - **Youth Board Activity** – plan and implement at least one educational / community service activity (annually)

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Youth Board Activity

- In addition to providing program development support, we want the Youth Board to sponsor one large marketable program activity.
- This will allow them to have ownership to at least one significant effort yearly.
- This should be something youth can market and have a high impact on the county.

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In addition to providing support in outcome programs associated with youth, another responsibility is that the entire youth board sponsor and develop one highly marketable educational activity.

This can be an existing activity already happening, but we want them to be highly involved in an activity.

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Examples of Activities

- **Leadership Workshop**- a one-day leadership workshop sponsored by the youth board, focused on bringing potential youth leaders together and provide subject matter to help them lead.
- **County-wide Community Service Project**- a one-day event sponsored by the Youth Board that identifies local youth partners to help with a one day community service project.
- **Farm Safety Day Camp**- a one-day event sponsored by the Youth Board that is focused on teaching youth about safety on the farm.

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**Youth Boards:
Task Forces / Coalitions**

Once the **Youth Board** has helped decide on the program efforts for the coming year, then a smaller group of people would help address the program (range of 3-10 people). There are two types of smaller groups:

- **Task Force**
- **Coalitions**

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UNLIKE THE PAC'S FOR ANR, FCS, CD, where counties have the options / flexibility to have smaller groups to address prioritized issues, the **YOUTH BOARD** is strongly encouraging that the outcome program support be made up of a smaller group of people that have a greater interest in that subject matter.

Once the committee has helped the County Extension Agent decide on the programming efforts for the coming year, then the County Extension Agent would assign a much smaller group of people to help address the programming efforts for that year. This smaller group is a **task force** or **coalition** that would provide specific direction for outcome programs and other significant efforts. These task forces or coalitions (recommended 3-5 people) provide specific direction to a program because of their interest in that particular educational area in a one-year time frame. Task force / coalition membership would change yearly based on the educational programming issues. In addition, multiple task forces / coalitions could be appointed as needed and could also include resource people or other key leaders who are not currently members of the Program Area Committee.

Task Force – This educational planning group may be used when 1) the committee membership has strong professional and personal interests in the issue and 2) the outcome program will be addressed in one year or less.

Coalitions – This is an educational planning group that is comprised mostly of individuals that are going to meet for a longer time period than one year.

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Task Forces / Coalitions

Once the committee has helped decide on the program efforts for the coming year, then a smaller group of people would help address the program (range of 3-10 people). There are two types of smaller groups:

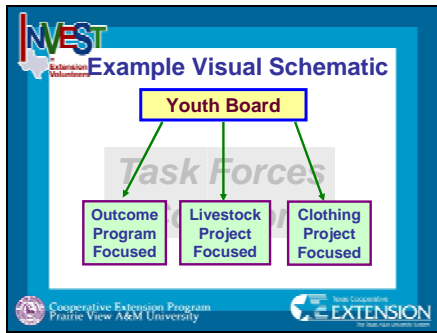
- **Task Force** – This educational planning group may be used when 1) the committee membership has strong professional and personal interests in the issue and 2) the outcome program will be addressed in one year or less.
- **Coalitions** – This is an educational planning group that is comprised predominantly of professionals in the related topic or subject matter and typically meets for a longer time period than one year.

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This is just discussing the differences between task forces and coalitions. Agents that have a multi-year program will want to use a longer term group defined as a **coalition**. Year to year outcomes would be addressed by a **task force** based on the definitions.

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The point here is that the new Youth Board concept focuses on youth county issues and that membership includes a diverse group of youth that represent all types of issues in the county. The task forces and coalitions that come from the youth board can focus on:

Outcome Programs – a small task force can obviously be implemented to address the county issue the outcome program focuses on.

Livestock Project Focused – In addition, you can also have a small group of youth and adults focused on developing educational programs for this specific subject matter area and need.

Clothing Project Focused - Also a small group of youth and adults can focus on developing educational programs for this specific subject matter area and need.

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Group	Function
Youth Board	Support in providing high quality, outreach educational programs and service to the people of Texas
4-H Council	Promote 4-H Program
VLAT	Support County 4-H Program

YOUTH BOARD:

Function: Support in providing high quality, outreach educational programs and service to the people of Texas

- Planning phase of programming.
- Implementation phase of programming.
- Evaluation phase of programming.
- Interpretation phase of programming.
- Committee membership rotation to insure optimum representation and diversity.
- Utilize the best management practices for the management of external support funds

4-H COUNCIL

Function: Promote 4-H Program

- Implement leadership educational sessions for county 4-H membership (club officer trainings and club programs)
- Develop opportunities for the 4-H membership to provide service to their communities (community service and service learning)
- Promote inclusion and mutual respect among 4-H members (exchange trips and social and recreational events)
- Recognize Adult Volunteers Working with Youth
- Identify 4-H Training Needs
- Serve as advocates for the County 4-H Program


VLAT

Function: Support County 4-H Program

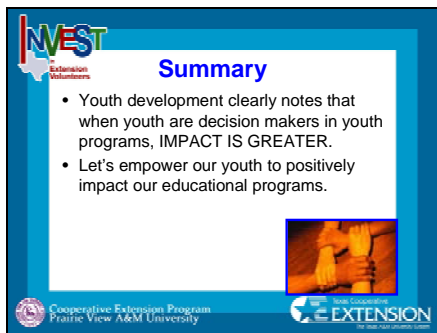
- Identify leader training needs
- Promote Idea Exchange and Mutual Respect
- Help Explain 4-H to the Public
- Involve Leaders in 4-H Activities
- Recognize Leader Accomplishments
- Help develop program resources

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Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results.




Andrew Carnegie



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Summary

- Youth development clearly notes that when youth are decision makers in youth programs, IMPACT IS GREATER.
- Let's empower our youth to positively impact our educational programs.



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