



Creating the future through continuous learning

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Youth Board—Frequently Asked Questions

How do we make Youth Boards function in both very rural and very urban counties?

The Youth Board membership should represent the diversity of the county and other youth organizations; therefore, it is important for county Extension agents to know the structure and dynamics of the county.

Rural Counties - It is well-known that youth are often involved in numerous activities. If a youth is a 4-H member but also serves as Student Council President, he/she can serve on the

Youth Board as the Student Council Representative.

Urban Counties - Some youth may represent multiple organizations; however, not all Youth Board members should be members of 4-H. This will allow for other perspectives to be taken into consideration when identifying youth issues and planning educational activities.

What are the actual roles and responsibilities of the Youth Board?

The Youth Board serves as a Program Area Committee. The committee should work together to identify youth issues in the county. Based on the findings from the needs assessment, the board members then are expected to sponsor an educational activity to address the youth issue or a community service project.

With the implementation of Youth Boards, are task forces still necessary?

Task Forces may be formed within the Youth Board as needed. 4-H Project Task Forces should also operate, supporting specific project areas with leader trainings, project learning experiences (clinics and workshops) and any contests. The type of task forces that exist may depend upon the needs of the county program and supervisory expectations.

What are the expectations for Youth Board meetings and activities?

Youth Boards should meet face-to-face at least two times each year. Additional meetings can be held as needed. Meetings can also be held with the use of technology (Centra, blogs, etc.).

How do I recruit members to serve on the Youth Board?

Make a list of potential Youth Board members you know personally (4-H members and non-4-H members that are involved in other youth organizations, i.e. FFA, Student Council).

Ask adult leaders and other youth organization sponsors to make a list of potential members.

Have 4-H members make a list of potential members they know that are *not* 4-H members.

Provide potential members with Youth Board flyer, outlining benefits of being a member.*

Have potential members complete a County Youth Board Application Form.*

Use the sample letter of invitation to invite each potential member to attend the first meeting.*

*Youth Board support materials can be found at: <http://texasvolunteer.tamu.edu>



For more information on Volunteerism within Texas Cooperative Extension, please visit:

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

And for information regarding Leadership Advisory Boards, please visit:

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

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact:

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Youth Board Success Stories

Bee County: Rusty Hohlt

Bee County Youth Board members were recruited from all school districts, private school coalitions, girls scouts and boy scouts, in order to achieve representation of a diverse cross-section of Bee County. Members of the board were selected because of their hard work, commitment and leadership in their respective organizations. The Bee County Youth Board was built on a foundation of teamwork instilled in the members at a two-day retreat that kicked off the Youth Board. The retreat offered a time for fellowship among the members, as well as building leadership, communication and event planning skills. The board hosted a youth summit in one of the rural communities in Bee County to identify youth issues. As a result of this summit, the youth board has partnered with Bee County Commissioners Court, Bee County Road and Bridge, and Coastal Bend College in order to establish a community park with a paved walking trail in the rural community.

Guadalupe County: Laura Petty

Prior to scheduled fall meetings, letters were sent to schools, organizations and churches asking for youth and some adult representatives to be a part of the Youth Board. Only one person attended the September meeting. Therefore, another attempt at a meeting was set. This time, a "youth issues" program was offered on the Report Card on American Ethics. A news release was also distributed to promote the program. This time, ten people attended. After the program, the participants were transitioned in to a Youth Board Meeting. The presentation led to good discussion about local youth issues. Currently, it is the plan to continue to offer a brief youth issues program immediately prior to each meeting. The President has developed a survey on bullying, and the officers have been charged with making plans to distribute and compile the survey results, in addition to recruiting more members

Tom Green County: Garry Branham

Members of the Tom Green County Youth Board were recruited through 4-H families, school teachers, county Extension agents and Region 15 school Counselors. The board met once to establish the functions of the Youth Board using orientation materials from <http://texasvolunteer.tamu.edu> and to brainstorm ideas for a program. The second meeting was held to plan out logistics of the program. The Youth Board-sponsored program is a three-part series called "Preparing Youth for the Future." These three parts took place on three separate evenings in two-hour sessions. The first part was on scholarship preparation and process. The second part was financial aid (grants, loans, FAFSA, etc.). The third part was college and career preparation, which focused on resume preparation and how to conduct yourself in an interview. Resources include Extension staff and instructors at the West Texas Training Center.

Walker County: Kelsey Christian

The Walker County Youth Board has been a great success thus far. In creating the committee, it was a priority to make sure all youth organizations in and around Huntsville were represented. In recruitment efforts, the county Extension agent physically went to local organizations such as the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club, local school districts, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and the youth little league association to talk with representatives and discuss the importance of the Youth Board. All seemed to see the importance of such a committee and were more than interested in serving on the committee. From meeting with the Youth Board members, many expansion opportunities have been created. The Youth Board is planning a Youth Leadership Education Event for the summer of 2007. The program will be based largely on the curricula provided by "Putting the Pieces Together."

Washington County: Dustin Coufal

The Washington County Youth Board is comprised of youth and adults from each geographic region and demographic population of the county. The members consists of 10 youth and 3 adults and is governed through by-laws and an officer team. The County Extension Agent serves in an advisory role. The Youth Board is providing an educational workshop to high school students in May 2007 titled "Striving for Success" to teach interviewing skills, resume building and leadership skills. Prominent local business men, local elected officials, and Extension faculty will be presenting the workshops.

"Youth Board was built on a foundation of teamwork instilled in the members at a two-day retreat that kicked off the Youth Board."

- Bee County

"The Youth Board is providing an educational workshop to high school students"

- Washington County

"A plan to continue to offer brief youth issue programs prior to each meeting."

- Guadalupe County