Purpose: Introduce youth to skills which will help them be effective leaders at the local and county level.

Objective of a youth leader:
- Actively recruit youth volunteers.
- Nurture positive leadership characteristics.
- Be positive role model.
- Take responsibility for club or team meetings and projects. Responsibility includes the planning, conducting, and evaluation of meetings, recreation, projects and programs. Adults serving only as a partner and advisor.
- Communicate regularly with county Extension Educator, club leader, families and members.
- Develop skills for being an effective teacher/instructor.
- Provide a positive educational environment that will enable youth to grow, learn and develop friendships.
- Understand and commit to the 4-H philosophy of “Learn-By Doing.”
- Remain visible and a participant at club and county activities and events.

Life Skills Development:
Character: develop and practice integrity, examine consequences of ethical concern and become involved in causes based on personal values and ethics.

Managing Feelings: flexible or able to change or be changed according to circumstances, able to bend or be bent repeatedly without mental or physical injury

Self Discipline: capable of taking the initiative or the ability to act and make decisions without the help or advice of other people

Decision Making: identifies alternatives; able to choose among a few selected alternatives

Planning/Organizing: capable of developing a strategy for accomplishing a task or project

Communication: communicates ideas using various means

Teamwork: appreciates the contributions of various team members, is able to work effectively in teams and contribute to the group effort

Community Service/Volunteering: service oriented, values contributions to a common good and sees beyond self-interest

Time: Each activity will take between 20-45 minutes

Supplies
- Pencils
- Paper
- Clothespins
- Rubber bands
- Trash bags
- Paper clips
- 100 feet rope
- Spaghetti
- Dots candy or marshmallows
- 4-H Extraordinary Hearts business cards (copy on card stock)– one per person
Activity 1: Seeking Shelter

Objective:
- To emphasize the responsibility in teamwork and the connections everyone plays in accomplishing the group’s goals.
- To allow for observation of team interaction while exploring problem solving, communication skills, cooperation, planning, roles and expectations.

Time: allow 30-45 minutes

Materials needed: Paper and pencils for group processing, clothespins, rubber bands, trash bags, paper clips, 100 feet of inexpensive rope etc.

Do:
Divide the group into teams of no more than 4-6 people.
Explain that the team has been shipwrecked on a deserted island during a rainy season and they have a short time to build a shelter before night fall.
Give each group supplies which have been “gathered from the wreckage.” Each group can be given the same materials or varied slightly. If the materials are varied and the group is advanced, you have the option of allowing the teams to use a trade or barter system for items.
Give the group a specified length of time to build a shelter which will allow all members of the team to get under.

Reflect:
- How did each group go about building the shelter? (Just doing it, brainstorming, plans, assignments, experimenting, etc.)
- What were the pros and cons of the experience? (Supplies, personalities, etc.)
- How could the experience have been improved?
- What were the similarities and differences in each group’s experience? Why do you think these differences exist?

Apply:
- Identify “resources” (supplies, people, time, experience, etc.) Are “resources” important to the success of the experience?
- When presented with a task/challenge what resources do every group starts with?
- How does the way different person approach the same task effect team work?
- How can you take advantage of the individual differences (strengths and weaknesses) in building an effective team?
Leadership Styles

There are many different styles of leadership, all of which have strengths and weaknesses. Each style can be a good leader even though they have very different approaches.

A group with various styles of leaders can overcome different obstacles when they play to each other’s strengths. They can also help teammates adapt personal limitations so each individual becomes a more well-rounded leader.

Styles of Leadership:

**AUTOCRATIC** - A leader who is direct, controlling and familiar with productivity and goals. Their strength lies in getting things done and making quick decisions. They often take authority and go headfirst in solving problems. They like freedom to manage.

**PARTICIPATORY** - A leader who enjoys input from others and wants everyone to have a voice. Tend to make decisions slower than others. They are very good listeners and are cooperative.

**FREE REIN** – As a leader they are perceived as relaxed and supportive, a “regular old Joe.” They are not concerned with details and are comfortable with teamwork.

Each of these styles leads to the question—what is the perfect leader?

There is no specific formula or recipe that makes the “perfect leader.” This is why good leaders are always trying to improve themselves through study, training, education, mentorship, as well as learning from mistakes. There really are no perfect leaders to a “model.”

While there is no such thing as a perfect leader there are skills and attitudes that make leadership more effective: Communication, taking Initiative, Teamwork, Flexibility, Integrity, Service Oriented, Organization and Decisiveness.

A good leader may not possess all of these skills; however, a wise leader will make a conscious effort to develop each skill so they can meet their personal leadership potential.

An effective “leader” also knows when to step out of the spotlight and lets others assume greater responsibility so that they can develop their personal leadership potential.

**Activity 2: River Crossing**

**Objective:**
- To encourage clear communication and the passing of critical information from person to person
- Foster teamwork and cooperation in difficult situations
- To take all ideas into consideration when working toward a goal.
- To consider safety and trust

**Time:** allow 20-30 minutes
Do:  RULES OF RIVER CROSSING:

- Divided into groups of 6 people
- Visualize an imaginary river approximately 5 yards away, with the goal to cross the imaginary bridge going over the river.
- Two ways to conduct the activity:
  1st – No member of the group will be allowed to speak.
  - The group is provided three opportunities/trips to get all members across the river.
  - A “trip” counts as one person setting foot on the bridge. This means the entire team must cross at the same time.
  2nd – One person in the group will be allowed to speak.
  - The group is provided two opportunities/trips to get all members across river.
  - A “trip” counts as one person setting foot on the bridge. This means the entire team must cross at the same time.

Reflect:

- How did you communicate without being able to speak?
- What did your team do to achieve success in crossing the river?
- Was having 1 person able to speak helpful? Why or why not?
- Identify examples where communication was an asset or the lack of communication was unfavorable to the outcome of the activity/project.
- Describe the trust experienced within your team.

Apply:

- Name everyday activities where there may be opportunities to lead a group safely across a “River” or in other words where you may have a challenge to resolve.
- How will you team w/others in working toward a goal when communication (speaking) is minimal?
- How will working together increase productivity?
- How will you use communication in everyday duties to reach personal goal?
- Is trust easy to re-establish once broken? Why or why not?

Team Communications:

As a member of a club or leadership team it is very important to keep in constant communication with members, officers, volunteers and adult leaders. Communication is the key to being one effective team. If the group does not meet often it is extremely important that you remain in contact through various communication methods so a strong bond is maintained. A team that can communicate effectively has better chance of success.

Committee Etiquette:

- A committee is made up of several people--not just one. The success of a committee depends on the contributions every member makes and that their work begins when the committee is appointed.
- Attend committee meetings.
- Participate in decision making process.
- In a timely manner complete duties assigned or for which you volunteer.
Help with the actual project or be at the activity.

**TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE:**

- Smile – a smiling face encourages a smiling voice and invites a positive response.
- Always be polite and friendly;
- Write down in advance what you want to cover and in what order;
- Speak slowly and pace yourself with the other person;
- Within 24 hours always reply to incoming messages from an answering machine, text messaging, voice mail, e-mail, or social network. It is a matter of courtesy.
- When leaving a message start with your name, phone number and the time and date of your call. Speak slowly and clearly or your name, number or both may be lost. Be brief and concise with your message. Note the level of importance. End the message by repeating your name and number.

**E-MAIL ETIQUETTE:**

- Always type a subject line which communicates the messages content.
- Avoid talking in text.
- Think through what you will say before you type it. Organize the message so it is brief yet informative. If it is sensitive do not send the message for 24 hours. Wait and edit the message at a later date.
- Proof for grammar and spelling.

- Reply to everything that you get from a team member that relates to your work on that team even if it is only to say that you received their email
- Forward things only if it is information that the recipient needs
- Choose words carefully, humor sometimes doesn’t always come across as intended. Sender may have a different sense of humor than the recipient.

**INTERNET ETIQUETTE**

- Social Networking sites (Facebook, My-space, Twitter, exc.)

In today’s society we are blessed to have websites that help us reach others and show what 4-H is all about. However, these websites also have the potential to hurt not only your reputation but also the reputation of everything or an organization that you are associated with. As a 4-H member, youth leader and role model you must think before posting something which might be considered inappropriate online.

A posting not only has the potential to hurt reputations, as well as feelings but can also lead others in the wrong direction. Think twice, because what is on the internet can follow you for many, many years.

Privacy settings are always a good, but don’t think a privacy setting protects you from what is posted on a social network site.

Use the Internet to promote the positive things you are doing and avoid posting actions that you will regret later.

---

**Activity 3: Spaghetti Dots Tower**

**Objective:**

- To allow for observation of team interaction while exploring collaboration and competition among groups, particularly in reference to use of resources.
- To explore aspects of teamwork: planning, role assignments and problem solving.
- To explore the dynamics of working with ambiguous goals.

**Time:** allow 20-30 minutes

**Materials needed:** Spaghetti, Dots candy and tables for the groups to work around. Marshmallows can be substituted for Dots candy.
**Do:** Divide into groups of 4-6 people. Each team will be given 10 minutes to build the tallest free-standing tower using only the spaghetti and Dots. Use only the materials provided and it can not be attached to anything (chair, wall, table, floor, etc.). The facilitator will blow on each tower to test its stability. The tallest and most stable tower wins. Begin the activity with everyone allowed to talk and contribute. At 5 minutes, announce that everyone in the group must stop talking except the person designated by the facilitator.

**Reflect:**
- Which half of the activity was the easiest in the construction of the tower? When everyone talked or only one person talked? Was everyone’s opinions/ideas heard? How did you decide which idea/plan was the best? Did everyone agree to the plan? (Was there compromise?)
- Did you team establish a strategy or plan in making the tower? Do you think this contributed to the success or failure of the project?
- What happened when only one person from your team could talk? What did it do to your team?
- Do you think this activity would be easier if we told you what to focus on in making the largest tower? Why?
- How did competition affect the team dynamics?

**Apply:**
- Why do you think a solid foundation was key to a stable tower? How can this same principle apply to your club, leadership team or other aspects of life?
- What are the traits or attributes each of us can attain/develop so we have or maintain a solid foundation in life?
- How can mentors in our life help us establish this foundation? Are mentors always a positive influence?
- Life is full of decisions that only you can make. How could each of you develop a personal strategy for having a solid foundation in life? Will it be easy to fulfill that strategy? What kind of obstacles will there be and will it be easy to navigate the obstacles?
- Who will your competition? (Your personal conscious to stay focused and not be distracted by life’s obstacles.)

As a summary leave the youth leaders with the message contained in the box. Give everyone a copy of the saying that they can keep in a wallet or somewhere it is seen each day.

**References:**
- Teen Action and Growth – a training for Teen Leadership experiences, Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development. 4H.PDL.501
- Building Leaders for Tomorrow - Activities for instilling and developing leadership capabilities in 9-19 year olds, Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development.
- Oklahoma 4-H State and District Leadership Handbook