



# Junior Leadership

## Leaders' Guide

### The Junior Leadership Project

The 4-H junior leadership project is designed to give teenage youth, 7th through 12th grade, experience and training under the guidance of an adult leader which will enable them to become effective leaders.

The 4-H junior leadership project is based on the premise that every person has some potential leadership ability. Granted, some youth have more potential, some less; some in one situation, some in another. These abilities must be developed through training, experience, opportunity, and willingness to serve.

The 4-H project in junior leadership is designed to enlist and guide teenage youth to gain the kind of experience and training which will enable them to become effective leaders in 4-H, school, church, or other community groups.

Junior leaders play an important part in the 4-H program because of the enthusiasm, energy, and youthful ideas they contribute.

### Goals of the Junior Leadership Project

The goals of the junior leadership project should be considered in three categories: the junior leader, the 4-H leader, and the 4-H members.

#### Goals for the junior leader

- Help others.
- Develop basic leadership skills.
- Assume increased responsibilities of leadership as skills and knowledge increase.
- Develop ability to work with others.
- Develop self-confidence.

#### Goals for the 4-H leader

- Share skills, experience, and abilities with the junior leader.
- Share responsibilities with the junior leader.
- Be able to concentrate on fewer areas of activity by sharing responsibilities with the junior leader.
- Help the junior leader achieve his goals.

### Goals for the 4-H members and the 4-H club

- Enjoy the wide range of experiences based on members' needs and interests; experiences made possible by the skills and abilities of different age levels of leadership.
- Have available more individualized assistance.
- Challenge the interest of older youth to continue in 4-H through new experiences.

### Role of the Leader

This is an opportunity for adults to assist youth in developing leadership traits in line with the developmental needs and interests of teenage youth.

Since there is a wide difference in the maturity of early teens, you will need to guide the selection of responsibilities toward leadership within the member's ability and interest. Beginners in junior leadership can't be expected to do the same jobs as the more experienced.

Leaders should provide guidance and advice. You will know best when a member is ready to assume extra responsibilities in the club. The following are some indicators of readiness for leadership:

- Willingness to accept responsibility.
- Ability to get along with his or her own age group and with younger members.
- Desire to be helpful to the group.
- Ability to plan ahead and carry out activities.
- Stability of behavior.

While some older members will volunteer to enroll in junior leadership, others will need to be identified and encouraged to participate in the project. You will want to notice helpful attitudes shown by some members and ask them to enroll in junior leadership.

When youth assume junior leadership responsibility, you will want to make sure the junior leader works in cooperation with adults, sharing the leadership.

## Teenage Characteristics

Most beginning junior leaders will have certain interests, desires, and characteristics.

- Changing interests from a primary concern about the world of material things to a growing concern about people. They seek to master social courtesies and skills. They need to learn how to establish more mature relations with others of both sexes from their own age group.
- Continuing to prefer group activities. In social events, girls usually get little or no attention from boys their own age because boys are slower in developing.
- Being quite free of direct adult supervision. They still want the 4-H leader around, but resent adults who "take over." The leader should remember to enforce agreed-upon duties, but not to dictate viewpoints. The latter approach only helps hasten "4-H dropout."
- Testing and trying different things; craving action, excitement, and new adventure.
- Learning appropriate masculine or feminine ways of acting.
- Learning to accept their own physical characteristics and changing bodies.
- Declining physical growth of girls, but still rapid and uneven growth of boys.

## Training

Teenage youth need to be prepared to participate in the junior leader program. Evidence would indicate that members should not go into the junior leader program without training. Older youth must receive careful training in the attitudes and skills of taking on responsibility as leaders. Training for older youth should develop in them sympathetic, caring attitudes and skills toward youth in making them feel useful, successful, and important. Youth need reassurance that everyone needs help, and that it's not dumb to ask for it or stupid to receive it.

Without training, older youth may tend to boss rather than to help younger youth; likewise, younger youth may not feel that the older youth are capable.

A training workshop should be provided for junior leaders emphasizing the basic techniques for planning and teaching subject matter. Training should include the following:

- Responsibilities related to the project and to working with the adult leader.
- Characteristics of the young people with whom they will work.
- Leadership and group process.
- Techniques and methods for teaching.
- Planning learning experiences.

This type of workshop should provide adequate time and experience for setting goals, starting the

development of teaching plans, and identifying ways to measure accomplishments. Additional workshops, or one-to-one meetings, need to be planned in order to see how things are going and where they are headed.

## Leader and Junior Leader Work Together

The relationship between the leader and the junior leader is the key to the degree of success a junior leader may achieve. It is important that a "help-each-other" relationship be established from the start. The following are examples of the teamwork approach.

- Share, do not delegate responsibility. Let the junior leader share in making decisions rather than merely assigning him a task.
- Be sure leader and junior leader understand their responsibilities. A planning conference is an excellent place to start defining the junior leader's responsibilities.
- Impress upon the junior leader that sharing responsibility is a two-way process. Both leaders need to give and take to get the job done.

The following points can serve as guidelines for developing the 4-H adult-junior leader approach:

- Create an atmosphere in which the junior leader feels free to express himself.
- Be concerned equally with individual and group growth. It would be a mistake to let your concern for the junior leader's growth become so great that group growth would suffer.
- Communicate clearly. To use another's ideas requires that one understand those ideas. The junior leader and the 4-H leader must have a clear understanding of their goals.
- Arrange an evaluation-follow up of the junior leader's progress. An evaluation should not be a threatening experience. Let the junior leader evaluate his progress first. THEN, if necessary, supplement this evaluation in a constructive manner. Point out to the junior leader where you feel he is being overly critical of himself.

## Helping the Junior Leader Plan

Teenagers like to plan their own program and set their own goals, but most young people also want adult guidance and advice. Teenagers want adults to enforce the "rules of the game" that have been agreed upon by both the adult and the teen. The following are some helpful guidelines.

- Select a time at the beginning of the project to determine with the junior leader what his responsibilities will be.
- Plan regular "conferences" with your junior leader to discuss progress and to help him think through each job in advance so that a feeling of

confidence and success may be experienced. Discuss the following points for clear understanding:

What is expected to be accomplished?

What steps will be followed to accomplish the job?

What preparations and equipment are needed?

What help is needed?

- Develop and use techniques that produce team work between yourself and the junior leader.
- Spend time in discussing with the junior leader the contribution he can make to the 4-H program. Guide him in learning leadership skills, in understanding the interests of 4-H members, and analyzing his own capabilities. Above all, give the junior leader as much opportunity to make decisions and carry out ideas as he can handle.
- Encourage the junior leader to participate in orientation and junior leader training.
- Recognize the opportunities which can be made possible by the help of junior leaders. Start by making a list of all the things you do as a leader and the experiences you have wanted to offer members but haven't had time to include in your program. Discuss with members their interests and goals. Encourage your junior leader to do the same. Then combine lists and have the junior leader check items he is interested in doing. Then assist the junior leader in writing down his or her plan.
- Follow up the job with a word of encouragement. "How did we do?" "Did we accomplish what we had planned?" "What do we need to remember next time?" Junior leaders need to see their strengths and the places for improvement. 4-H leaders need to know whether they gave sufficient help or hampered growth with too much.
- Never back a junior leader into a corner. Always provide a place for a "save-face." This is as important for the adult as it is for the teen.

### Recognition of Junior Leaders

Junior leaders may receive certain recognitions as a part of their leadership work.

- Opportunity to develop his abilities to share leadership under adult guidance.
- Appreciation shown by all club members and by you who have accepted him for junior leadership work.
- Development of club members he has assisted.
- Satisfaction of knowing he has given help to others.
- Opportunity for self-development in communicating and accepting responsibility.
- Opportunity to be considered for leadership recognition if he wishes.

### Involving the Club Members

If the junior leaders in your club are to function effectively, the other members must come to understand and appreciate the ways in which junior leaders can help. You should take the time and opportunity to explain to the other members how junior leaders can assist.

Let the members know the responsibilities the junior leaders have accepted and how the junior leaders will assist them in their areas.

Encourage your members to seek the help of junior leaders. If all 4-H'ers, including the junior leaders and you, fully understand the value of junior leaders, your club will be a doing and learning club.

### Helpful Materials for Leader

As you plan to involve youth in the junior leadership project, you will want to review these publications:

4-H 651—Junior Leadership

4-H 0216L—0223L—4-H Leader Handbook (nine sections)

4-H 651R—Junior Leadership Record

4-H seeks participation of all youth regardless of race, sex, or national origin.

This publication was developed by Duane P. Johnson, Extension Specialist, 4-H—Youth, in cooperation with the State Development Committee for Older Youth Programming.



---

Extension Service, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Joseph R. Cox, director. This publication was produced and distributed in furtherance of the Acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. Extension work is a cooperative program of Oregon State University, the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and Oregon counties.

---