



# Junior Leadership Leader Guide

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## 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/her goals.

4-H 651L

## 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:

- Willing to accept responsibility.
- Gets along with his or her own age group and with younger members.
- Helpful attitude towards the group.
- Plans ahead and carries out activities.
- Dependable.

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

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

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## Teenage Characteristics

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.
- Preference for 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 new experiences; craving action, excitement, and new adventure.
- Learning appropriate masculine or feminine behavior.
- 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 and should not go into the program without training. Older youth must receive careful training in the attitudes and skills of taking on responsibility as leaders. Training should develop sympathetic, caring attitudes and skills in making others feel useful, successful, and important. Youth need reassurance that it's not dumb to ask for help or stupid to receive it.

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

A training workshop should emphasize 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.
- 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 win/win 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/her 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 adult leader approach:

- Create an atmosphere in which the junior leader feels free to express himself/herself.
- 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/her progress first. THEN, if necessary, supplement this evaluation in a constructive manner. Point out to the junior leader where you feel he/she is being overly critical of himself/herself.

## 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/her responsibilities will be.
- Plan regular "conferences" with your junior leader to discuss progress and to help him/her

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/she can make to the 4-H program. Guide him/her in learning leadership skills, in understanding the interests of 4-H members, and analyzing his/her own capabilities. Above all, give the junior leader as much opportunity to make decisions and carry out ideas as he/she 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/she 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.

## **Recognition of Junior Leaders**

Junior leaders should receive recognition as a part of their leadership work.

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

## **Involving the Club Members**

If the junior leaders in your club are to be effective, the other members must understand and appreciate the ways in which junior leaders can help. Take the time to explain to the other members how junior leaders can assist.

Let the members know how the junior leaders can help them.

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 the 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 651R, Junior Leadership Record
- 4-H 0240L, Planning a 4-H Club Program
- 4-H 0242L, Organizing a 4-H Club
- 4-H 0243L, Leadership Skills for Success
- 4-H 0244L, Facts About 4-H



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