



Protected Under  
18 U.S.C. 707

# 4-H Teen Leadership



4-H Youth Development  
Children, Youth & Family Programs  
Michigan State University Extension  
Bringing Knowledge to Life

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**  
**EXTENSION**

# 4-H Teen Leadership

## Contents

### Welcome to 4-H Teen Leadership:

• What is a leader? .....	1
• What is a 4-H teen leader? .....	1
• Overall objectives of 4-H teen leadership.....	1
• What does a 4-H teen leader do?.....	1
• How is being involved in a 4-H teen leadership project different from just being a 4-H teen leader? .....	2
• What is a 4-H teen leadership project? .....	2
• How can a teen in 4-H get involved with leadership? .....	2
• What can teens get out of being involved in 4-H teen leadership? .....	2
• 4-H teen leadership resources .....	3
• Acknowledgments.....	4

### 4-H Teen Leadership Resources:

• 4-H Teen Leader Guidelines.....	5
• 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio .....	7
• 4-H Teen Leadership Project Description.....	16
• 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide.....	19
• Developing Your 4-H Teen Leadership Plan or Project .....	27
• Examples of 4-H Teen Leader Activities and Long-Term Projects.....	29
• Resume Writing Tips for Teens .....	31
• For 4-H Advisors and Leaders Working With 4-H Teen Leaders .....	34
• 4-H Teen Leadership in Michigan — Survey Response Summary .....	38

**MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION**  
Bringing Knowledge to Life



**4-H Youth Development  
Children, Youth & Family Programs  
Michigan State University Extension**

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.

Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Thomas G. Coon, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824.

This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned.

The name 4-H and the emblem consisting of a four-leaf clover with stem and the "H" on each leaflet are protected under Title 18 U.S.C. 707.

# Welcome to 4-H Teen Leadership

## What is a leader?

Leadership is the ability to motivate, inspire and create an environment for each individual to pro-actively participate in family, community and citizenship affairs for the betterment of the family, community and world. Leadership skills can be learned and developed by anyone. Leaders use their personal knowledge, skills and influence to establish relationships with people and help others meet their goals.

Leaders need to understand varieties of leadership styles, skills and qualities and know in which situations to use them. Ideal leaders are able to lead and teach leadership at the same time. Leaders become effective by modeling the skills and characteristics they seek to pass on to others. They acquire trust by being a person of good character and they achieve power by empowering others.

Leadership is something you believe in, but also something you put into action! A great way to learn about leadership is through developing leadership skills. 4-H offers youth the opportunity to learn about leadership skills and practice them at the same time. Deciding to be a teen leader in 4-H means looking at your involvement in your club and community and changing the way you participate by kicking it up a notch! By learning leadership skills, teens can take on new roles, and more effectively put their ideas into action.

## What is a 4-H teen leader?

For the purpose of using the 4-H Teen Leadership materials, a 4-H teen leader will be defined as a young person who is:

- Between the ages of 13 and 19 years old.
- Learning and developing leadership skills.
- Using his or her knowledge, skills and abilities to help others meet their goals.
- Practicing leadership skills through various activities and reflecting on the leadership experiences.

Though a 4-H teen may be learning and develop-

ing leadership skills, to be a 4-H teen leader, the young person also needs to be practicing what he or she has learned and reflecting on the leadership experiences. First-time activities should be designed so that the teen can gain confidence in his or her skills and abilities. Experiences should become more challenging as the teens develop their leadership skills.

## Overall objectives of 4-H teen leadership

The overall objectives of 4-H teen leadership are to:

- Achieve a broad understanding of the meaning of leadership and the qualities of a leader.
- Understand and practice ethical character.
- Participate in team building by working in groups. Encourage involvement by every individual.
- Develop follow-through and responsibility.
- Improve written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills.
- Gain self-confidence and self-respect.
- Practice and acquire leadership skills.

## What does a 4-H teen leader do?

A 4-H teen leader is a youth between the ages of 13 and 19 who is interested in developing and practicing his or her leadership skills. Teens can become a 4-H teen leader in two general ways: by developing their personal leadership skills and/or by completing a 4-H teen leadership project.

Teens can develop their leadership skills in lots of ways and places. They can attend Kettunen Center workshops, regional events like Leadermete, statewide events like 4-H Exploration Days or 4-H Capitol Experience, or national events like Citizenship Washington Focus. Teens can participate in Web-based learning, like Teens Reaching Youth through Innovative Teams (TRY-IT).

Most importantly, teens can personally develop

leadership skills in their community and club by putting what they have learned into action. 4-H teen leaders take the time and commitment to develop leadership skills. Commonly, teen leaders take on more responsibility in their club, work closely with adults and 4-H staff, serve on committees or counsels, and/or help younger 4-H'ers in their project area. Annually, 4-H teen leaders choose to complete at least two teen leader activities. (See Examples of 4-H Teen Leader Activities and Long-Term Projects for suggested examples of teen leader activities.) At the most basic level, 4-H teen leaders will generally be expected to regularly attend club meetings, reflect upon their experiences with the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio, assist younger 4-H'ers and assist club leaders with meetings. Through 4-H teen leadership, teens gain practical skills by achieving set goals they have defined.

## **How is being involved in a 4-H teen leadership project different from just being a 4-H teen leader?**

An excellent way for 4-H'ers to discover what makes a leader successful is to become involved with a 4-H teen leadership project. 4-H teen leaders doing a 4-H teen leadership project can choose to take on a leadership role defined by themselves and their chosen adult advisor, which involves more responsibility, time and work. 4-H teen leaders who have been involved in developing their leadership skills for some time can expand their experience by taking on a specific project. The 4-H teen leadership project allows teens to actively participate in project planning, become involved in leadership tasks, and help younger 4-H members learn by example. 4-H teen leaders who are involved in a 4-H teen leadership project have different requirements and complete the 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide, which allows teens to discuss and reflect upon their project plan and project goals.

## **What is a 4-H teen leadership project?**

A 4-H teen leadership project is a community

service-learning activity (such as designing and implementing a community service event, leading an existing volunteer project or identifying and addressing a community issue). The 4-H teen leadership project takes place over the course of the 4-H year. The project includes one activity or series of activities that benefits an individual or group outside of the teen leader's local club. Teens completing a 4-H teen leadership project are encouraged to be involved in 4-H as a teen leader at least one year prior to taking on a leadership project. 4-H club leaders, 4-H staff members, parents and community members advise and work with teen leaders to complete the specific project. An advisor should consider the personal goals and abilities of the teen leader and also the needs of the specific 4-H club and the community. The advisor and teen should work closely to decide what the teen leader's responsibilities will be.

## **How can a teen in 4-H get involved with leadership?**

- Be a youth mentor.
- Take full or partial leadership of a specific project.
- Be a peer helper.
- Be a peer educator.
- Join county, state and national committees.
- Organize, implement and evaluate community service projects.
- Be active in 4-H teen leader clubs, teen clubs and service clubs.
- Be a camp counselor.
- Take on junior and senior leader roles as defined by the county.
- Be a club officer.
- Become a youth member of the 4-H Council.
- Attend leadership training.
- Address community and statewide social issues.
- And many more!

## **What can teens get out of being involved in 4-H teen leadership?**

Teens can gain a lot from learning about and acting

in leadership roles!

- Learn new skills.
- Feel involved in the community.
- Take on new responsibilities.
- Receive expressions of appreciation from other members and adults.
- See 4-H grow!
- Achieve personal growth and development.
- Receive individual recognition through possible scholarships, state and county level awards, banquets, pins and certificates.
- Develop youth and adult partnerships.
- Bond closely with advisors who may serve as references in the future.

## Examples of leadership skills teens learn and practice as a 4-H teen leader

- Visioning
- Communicating
- Decision making and problem solving
- Resolving conflicts (negotiating)
- Thinking critically
- Advocating ideas
- Developing ethical character
- Gaining self-confidence
- Building coalitions among groups
- Developing job skills

(Above examples of leadership skills adapted with permission from Ohio State 4-H Youth Development, *Teen Leadership: Background, Leadership*, 2005)

## 4-H teen leadership resources

- **4-H Teen Leader Guidelines**  
4-H Teen Leader Guidelines describes the expectations and requirements of being involved in 4-H teen leadership in Michigan. It discusses some common characteristics of leaders.
- **4-H Teen Leader Portfolio**  
Teens who are involved in developing their leadership skills and who are considered teen leaders are strongly encouraged to keep track of all their involvement and activities through

the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio. Teens work with an adult advisor to set and follow through with goals using the Leader Portfolio as a guide and also as a document of progress. The 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio includes a cover page, a 4-H Teen Leader Activity Chart, the Teen Leadership Reflection Guide: Steps 1-3 and the Teen Leadership Resume Template.

- **4-H Teen Leadership Project Description**  
The 4-H Teen Leadership Project Description is an in-depth discussion of the requirements and expectations of the 4-H teen leadership project. It describes the benefits and rewards of being involved in a 4-H teen leadership project.
- **4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide**  
4-H teen leaders who would like to become involved in a specific leadership project should work closely with their adult advisor to complete the Leadership Project Guide. More involved in tracking the progress of your specific goals for the leadership project, the 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide is more advanced and requires a bit more work than the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio.
- **Developing Your 4-H Teen Leadership Plan or Project**  
This handout gives 10 steps to focus on when deciding to start a 4-H teen leadership project. These steps can help guide your planning — in your decisions of what responsibilities to take on, how to obtain needed resources and how you would like to achieve your set goals.
- **Examples of 4-H Teen Leader Activities and Long-Term Projects**  
Part of the requirements for 4-H teen leaders is to complete at least two teen leader activities. Included in this section is a list of activities that have been completed by previous teen leaders. Consider these examples when deciding on what teen leader activities you might like to take part in. In addition, 4-H teen leaders taking on a 4-H teen leadership project can check out the examples of long-term projects to help guide them in knowing what is required through the project and how the teen leadership project is involved in the community. These examples can help with planning and brainstorming about

what unique project the teen leader would like to do.

- **Resume Writing Tips for Teens**

Combined, the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio and 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide involve tracking hours and involvement through a leadership resume. Writing resumes can be confusing at times! Resume Writing Tips for Teens provides information about the general expectations and rules for a professional looking resume. The tips can be helpful when teens fill out the Teen Leadership Resume Template that is included in the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio.

- **For 4-H Advisors and Leaders Working With 4-H Teen Leaders**

This guide to working with teens gives information about what can be expected of adults who work with 4-H teen leaders. The adult advisor plays an important role in the success of a teen's leadership development and leadership projects. Check out the information to gain insight into the philosophy of working with teens.

- **4-H Teen Leadership in Michigan — Survey Response Summary**

In 2005-2006 a statewide survey was completed by more than 73% of Michigan 4-H county staff. Counties provided information, knowledge, and opinions about the Michigan 4-H teen leadership programs and how they could be improved. The State 4-H Office completed a summary of this feedback that is provided in this document.

## Acknowledgments

Authors who contributed to document:

- Monica Borgman, 4-H Program Associate and Natural Helpers State Coordinator, Isabella County
- Michelle Neff, 4-H Extension Educator, Clare County
- Cyndi Mark, Ph.D., Program Leader, State 4-H Office
- Amy Rosechandler, Collegiate Program Assistant, State 4-H Office
- Kathy Walters-Surratt, 4-H Extension Educator, Barry County

An Overview of 4-H Teen Leadership was adapted from:

- Calhoun County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1999). *4-H leadership project area: Project description*. Marshall, MI: Author.
- Ionia County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.). *Ionia County 4-H teen leader project guidelines and project book*. Ionia, MI: Author.
- Kent County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1997). *Kent County 4-H teen leader project*. Grand Rapids, MI: Author.
- Ohio State 4-H Youth Development. (2005). *Teen leadership: Background leadership-A component of 4-H Youth Development, 4-H Youth leadership development program basics*. Retrieved June 30, 2006, from [http://www.ohio4h.org/youth/teen\\_leadership/tl17.html](http://www.ohio4h.org/youth/teen_leadership/tl17.html)
- St. Joseph County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.). *St. Joseph County 4-H teen leadership project report*. Centreville, MI: Author.
- Washtenaw County Michigan State University Extension Program. (2002). *4-H teen leadership portfolio information and requirements*. Ann Arbor, MI: Author.

# 4-H Teen Leader Guidelines

## General expectations of the 4-H teen leader program:

- A 4-H teen leader must be between the ages of 13 and 19 by January 1<sup>st</sup> of the program year.
- A teen leader must have completed at least one year in the project area in which they desire to lead.
- A teen leader should be used as a resource person and an example for younger members.
- Club leaders and club members will give consideration to ideas shared by the teen leader.
- A teen leader should have an increase in responsibilities with each additional year in the leadership role.
- A 4-H teen leader will share experiences, skills and knowledge with others in the club.
- A 4-H teen leader will have the desire to develop leadership skills.
- A 4-H teen leader will attend trainings and workshops available to teens to increase leadership skills.

## Requirements of the program:

- **Complete 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio.** The 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio is a way for teens to keep track of all the work they have completed as a 4-H teen leader. The 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio can be made into an “organized scrapbook” and teens are encouraged to include photos, newspaper clippings and other personalized information. The 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio contains a cover page, a 4-H Teen Leader Activity Chart, a three-step reflection guide (My 4-H Teen Leader Plan, My 4-H Teen Leader Progress and My 4-H Teen Leader Evaluation) and a Teen Leadership Resume Template.
- **Choose an adult advisor to assist with leadership goals.** An adult advisor meets regularly with the teen leader

to answer questions and look over the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio. Working closely with the adult advisor, teen leaders can follow through more carefully with their goals for leadership skills development.

- **Regularly attend club meetings and programs.** The 4-H teen leaders must be present at most or all club meetings for their project areas. 4-H teen leaders work with adult advisors and peers to find programs, trainings and events to further develop leadership skills.
- **Assist with planning and leading club meetings.** Teen leaders can work with the club leader and other 4-H teen leaders to take an active role in the leadership of club meetings.
- **Be interviewed by a 4-H club leader or advisor.** Talk and meet regularly with the 4-H club leader and/or adult advisor throughout the year to discuss the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio. A more formal interview can occur for the final step of the reflection guide in the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio, “My 4-H Teen Leader Evaluation.”
- **Document number of community service hours.** Through the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio, keep track of all volunteer and leadership activity hours.
- **Work with younger 4-H members.** Assist the 4-H club’s younger members at meetings and spend extra time getting to know them and set an example for them.
- **Complete two or more teen leader activities.** Teen leaders choose from the provided list

**“You can learn and practice the knowledge and skills required to act like a leader, but to truly be a leader, you must know yourself, your core values and your basic beliefs. You must ask yourself, ‘What do I believe about working with others to get something done? How do I want to treat others, and how do I want them to treat me in return?’ When you’ve answered these and other important questions, you have started an exciting leadership journey...”**

—Safrit, R.D. (2005). *NC 4-H TRY-IT: Teens reaching youth through innovative teams. Module: Individual and shared leadership.* Raleigh, NC: Department of 4-H Youth Development, North Carolina State University. Retrieved June 23, 2006, from [http://www.nc4h.org/try-it/ldr00a\\_toppg.htm](http://www.nc4h.org/try-it/ldr00a_toppg.htm)

of examples of teen leader activities. Examples of 4-H Teen Leader Activities and Long-Term Projects include being a teen member of the 4-H Council, providing leadership for a 4-H fund-raising event or serving as a club officer.

## 4-H teen leaders work with:

- 4-H project/club leader
- 4-H administrative leader
- 4-H staff
- 4-H adult advisor
- Younger 4-H'ers
- Community members
- Other youth-serving organizations
- Other teen leaders and peers
- 4-H camp staff members

## Some characteristics of leaders

People who are strong leaders generally are:

- **Well Prepared** — They set aside time to prepare for things ahead of time. They practice their skills so they're ready for anything!
  - **Group Minded** — Leaders are guided by the wishes and needs of the group. They listen and understand the ideas of each individual. They pay attention to what the person is saying, not who is saying it.
  - **Understanding** — People have ups and downs, reasons for feeling the way they feel and acting the way they act. Leaders try to read into people, and what they are saying. They understand that things might not always happen the way they want them to.
  - **Poised** — Leaders try not to let little things get to them. They maintain composure.
  - **Responsible** — Leaders live up to their word and potential.
  - **Cooperative** — Leaders know how to work with others, and enjoy working with others.
  - **Fun** — They enjoy the simple things and weave them into their work.
  - **People who have vision** — Leaders help the people in their group learn and think about the future.
  - **Clear** — They express themselves clearly. Leaders know what they want and how to get there.
  - **Neat** — Leaders appear professional in speaking, writing and demeanor.
- **Goal Oriented** — They strive always to achieve their goals and set them high!
  - **Open to advice** — They listen to others' compliments, ideas and criticisms, and then do their own thinking about how to implement them.
  - **Courteous** — Leaders are respectful and polite. They know what is appropriate and when.
  - **Resourceful** — They research opportunities and resources available to their community. Leaders know about people, places and events of interest to a wide variety of needs. Resourceful leaders can suggest things to people that will help them reach their goals!
  - **Creative** — Leaders think about new ways to do things and aren't afraid to challenge something they think needs improvement. They bring their own ideas to the table.
  - **Confident** — They know what they're capable of and play it up! Leaders make it a point to be around others who inspire confidence in them and encourage them to do more of what they are good at.
  - **People who follow through** — Leaders decide on which goals they would like to accomplish and are accountable for following through with their plans. They ask adults and peers to keep them on track with their goals and to evaluate their progress.

### 4-H Teen Leader Guidelines was adapted from:

Calhoun County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1999). *4-H leadership project area: Project description*. Marshall, MI: Author.

Ingham County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1991). *Project guidelines for working with teen leaders*. Mason, MI: Author.

Ionia County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.). *Ionia County 4-H teen leader project guidelines and project book*. Ionia, MI: Author.

Kent County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1997). *Kent County 4-H teen leader project*. Grand Rapids, MI: Author.

Safrit, R.D. (2005). *NC 4-H TRY-IT: Teens reaching youth through innovative teams. Module: Individual and shared leadership*. Raleigh, NC: Department of 4-H Youth Development, North Carolina State University. Retrieved June 23, 2006, from [http://www.nc4h.org/try-it/ldr00a\\_toppg.htm](http://www.nc4h.org/try-it/ldr00a_toppg.htm)

# 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio

**The 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio is a way to keep track of all the work completed as a teen leader.**

To help you start building your 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio, you need to download the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio Template in Microsoft Word format from the Michigan 4-H Youth Development Teen Leadership Web site at: <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/cyf/youth/cls/teenlead-overview.html>

The 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio is a way to keep track of all the work completed as a teen leader. The structure of the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio is designed to help teens develop skills they will use in their future, such as completing a resume and an interview. At the end of a 4-H teen's commitment to the teen leadership program, teens will be able to take away a complete record of what kinds of things they have done and precisely how they have contributed to 4-H! The 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio can be made into an "organized scrapbook" and teens are encouraged to include photos, newspaper clippings and other personalized information. It is strongly recommended that all documents in the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio be typed and that they look as professional as possible.

Teens who have been teen leaders in previous years complete a new cover page, activity chart and reflection guide for each new year of leadership and keep together all materials from previous years. A 4-H teen leader will also create one 4-H Teen Leadership Resume that compiles information from all years completed as a teen leader. Teen leaders should add any previous records up to the current year. As a result, when service as a 4-H teen leader is complete, each teen will have a history and representation of all the learning, work and hours he or she has accomplished through 4-H. The 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio is something a teen can be proud of: a unique representation of the teen and the teen's commitment to 4-H! The 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio includes two major components:

**I. The Teen Leadership Reflection Guide: Steps 1–3:** The Teen Leadership Reflection Guide helps teens develop leadership skills through journaling and discussion with their 4-H advisor. They explore the meaning of leadership and the teen's leadership role. The Leadership Reflection Guide also helps teens set and follow through with their goals for teen leadership. Teen leaders complete the Reflection Guide in three steps, at each step, meeting with their 4-H Teen advisors to discuss the reflection and progress. At the end of the discussion, the teen leader and advisor can make changes or suggestions to the plan, and sign the bottom of the page when finished.

- **Step 1, "My 4-H Teen Leader Plan"** allows the teen to explore the meaning of leadership and the role of people that teens know as leaders in their own lives. Teens should reflect on what they would like to accomplish over the 4-H year as a teen leader.

- About mid-way into the 4-H year, teens can start to complete **Step 2. “My 4-H Teen Leader Progress”** is a time for teens to reflect upon and assess their work so far. 4-H teen leaders look at the goals they first set, and decide what further action needs to be taken to complete those goals.
- **Step 3, “My 4-H Teen Leader Evaluation,”** is completed at the end of the 4-H year. Teens reflect upon what they have learned through developing leadership skills and what they would like to accomplish in the future. Teens also evaluate the completion of their goals as teen leaders, and get final feedback from their advisors about how to be more effective in accomplishing future goals.

**2. The Teen Leadership Resume Template:** The Teen Leadership Resume Template is an opportunity for teens to learn more about how to write a resume and how to keep track of their accomplishments as 4-H teen leaders. Teens use the template provided and add in their personal information. Teens will complete one resume, adding additional information over any multiple years they have served as 4-H teen leaders. Teens should keep in mind some tips for resume writing while adding their own information to the resume. Resume Writing Tips for Teens gives helpful suggestions. For more help completing a resume, use the Career Services and Placement Fill-In Resume. Teen leaders can consult their 4-H advisor to get help with the resume, and to have their resume critiqued when complete.

Together, the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio includes a cover page, 4-H Teen Leader Activity Chart, the Teen Leadership Reflection Guide: Steps 1-3 and the Teen Leadership Resume Template. The Teen Leadership Portfolio should be typed and will look professional. It also documents the teen leader’s experience through pictures, newspaper clippings and other personal information to make the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio unique!

## 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio Instructions

The *4-H Teen Leader Portfolio* is a way to keep track of all the work you completed as a teen leader. It includes the following:

- ❑ Cover page
- ❑ 4-H Teen Leader Activity Chart
- ❑ Teen Leadership Reflection Guide: Steps 1-3
- ❑ Teen Leadership Resume Template

Keep in mind:

- ❑ You can download and save this entire portfolio to your own computer or to a disk or other media to work on. Because you will be making revisions as you go, you may wish to save your updated files with a new name that indicates the date of revision (for example: *4-HPortfolio1-1-08.doc*).
- ❑ Complete each step of this portfolio, and meet with your 4-H leader or advisor to have each of the steps signed after completion. Meeting with your advisor is an opportunity to get input about your work and gives the advisor a chance to see what you are doing!
- ❑ You can think of this portfolio as an “organized scrapbook” which includes photos, newspaper clippings and other personalized information. It is strongly recommended that all documents in the *4-H Teen Leader Portfolio* be typed and that they look as professional as possible.
- ❑ Every new year you are involved as a teen leader, you will need to complete a new cover page, activity chart and reflection guide. Keep together all materials from previous years. You will also create one *4-H Teen Leadership Resume* that compiles information from all years completed as a teen leader. Add any previous records up to the current year. As a result, when service as a 4-H teen leader is complete, you will have a history and representation of all the learning, work and hours you have accomplished through 4-H.
- ❑ Use the many resources available to you, both in 4-H and in your community. There are more resources on the 4-H Teen Leadership Web site to help you. (Visit <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/cyf/youth/cls/teenlead-overview.html> for more information.) Explore your resources and make use of them. Don't forget to ask for help if you need it.

Your *4-H Teen Leader Portfolio* is something you can be proud of — a unique representation of you and your commitment to 4-H!

## 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio Cover Page

Name:

Club:

Address:

E-mail:

4-H Age as of January 1, 20\_\_\_\_:

Number of Years as a 4-H Teen Leader:

4-H Club Leader, 4-H Advisor, other people who helped me with my leadership development:

## 4-H Teen Leader Training Chart

Use this chart to record the leadership trainings, conferences and workshops that you attend in which you learn about leadership or acquire other information that prepares you to be a teen leader. Add rows or columns to the chart as needed.

Type of training, conference or workshop you attended	Date of the activity (day, month, year)	Name of session(s) you attended	Number of hours of training	Briefly describe what you learned.

## 4-H Teen Leader Activity Chart

Use this form to help you with your 4-H Teen Leader Resume. Add rows or columns to the chart as needed. This chart can help you keep track of all the activities you do while you are a teen leader. Do not record meetings and events where you were not involved in leadership development or in a leadership role.

Type of Activity (meeting, clinic, workshop, provided service)	Date of Activity (day, month, year)	Leadership Role/Assistance Provided	Number of 4-H Members Assisted	Number of Hours Dedicated

**Teen Leader Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Teen Leadership Reflection Guide**

### **Step 1: My 4-H Teen Leader Plan**

Why do I want to serve as a 4-H teen leader this year?

What would I like to do in my club this year as a 4-H teen leader?

What preparation will I need to reach my goals?

What specific skills do I already have that will help me with my leadership development?

How much time per week can I give to meet my goals?

What is my view of leadership?

Who is someone I know who is a leader and why are they a leader?

Why is leadership important to a community?

Why is completing this reflection an important part of developing my leadership goals?

**Teen Leader Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Teen Leadership Reflection Guide**

### **Step 2: My 4-H Teen Leader Progress**

What are my responsibilities as a 4-H teen leader?

What I am doing in this club year and/or in my project areas as a teen leader?

What are some of the goals I have reached so far?

What are some of the skills I have gained so far and how will I use these skills in the future?

How am I an example of a leader?

Write a story about your experiences as a 4-H teen leader. Include the following in your story:

- Who are some of the people or groups affected by my leadership work?
- What has been an example of a time when I really handled something well?

**Teen Leader Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Teen Leadership Reflection Guide**

### **Step 2: My 4-H Teen Leader Progress**

What are my responsibilities as a 4-H teen leader?

What I am doing in this club year and/or in my project areas as a teen leader?

What are some of the goals I have reached so far?

What are some of the skills I have gained so far and how will I use these skills in the future?

How am I an example of a leader?

Write a story about your experiences as a 4-H teen leader. Include the following in your story:

- Who are some of the people or groups affected by my leadership work?
- What has been an example of a time when I really handled something well?

**Teen Leader Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Teen Leadership Resume Template

My Name  
My Address  
My Telephone Number  
My E-Mail Address/My Web Site Address

## 4-H Teen Leadership Objective

*Tell about your goals in a few short sentences. What are the reasons you are interested in 4-H Teen Leadership?*

## My 4-H Club Experiences

Date

*List any of the most important experiences you've had with 4-H clubs and put down the dates of those experiences. Make a list using bullet points that tells more about the experience if needed.*

Example:

4-H Teen Club	October 2000-October 2002
▪ Mentored younger 4-H youth through a reading program	
▪ Committed two hours of community service per week	

## My Teen Leadership Experiences

Date

*List important leadership roles you have taken in your teen years. Did you serve on any 4-H committees? Did you help plan an event? List any important leadership roles, both in and outside of 4-H if applicable.*

Example:

4-H Teen Club Secretary	October 2001-October 2002
School Board Teen Member	January 2002-May 2002

## My Teen Leader Activities

Date

*List the specific activities you carried out for your 4-H Teen Leadership development or for your teen leadership project if applicable. Provide bullet points stating the skills you learned from those activities.*

Example:

4-H Photography Club Youth Mentor	October 2005-May 2006
▪ Assessed needed resources for children	
▪ Developed and carried out a lesson plan	

## My Honors and Awards

*List any honors or awards you may have received through school, 4-H or others and their dates.*

Example:

4-H Teen Award	October 2003
4-H Communication Days Award	February 2004

## Reference Contacts

*List names and contact information of people who helped you with your development and who would be willing to give a positive report of your work if needed. Think of people who witnessed your growth in leadership, and know about your strengths as a leader.*

# 4-H Teen Leadership Project Description

## What is a 4-H teen leadership project?

A 4-H teen leadership project is a more in-depth activity that teen leaders do after they have completed at least one year as a 4-H teen leader. It is an excellent way for 4-H'ers to discover what makes a leader successful and to continue to practice the skills they are learning.

4-H teen leaders who want to complete a 4-H teen leadership project are taking on a new step in their personal leadership development. Teens completing a leadership project are strongly encouraged to be involved in 4-H as a teen leader at least one year prior to taking on a leadership project. The 4-H teen leadership project allows a 4-H teen leader to go a step further by developing, documenting and taking action in a specific area. A 4-H teen leadership project is a community service-learning activity (designing, implementing and evaluating with a group of youth in a community service project or identifying and addressing, with a group or a community issue). The 4-H teen leadership project takes place over the course of the 4-H year or more. The project includes one activity or series of activities that benefit an individual or group other than the teen leader's local club. The project allows teens to actively participate in planning and to practice leadership tasks. Through the project, the teens become role models for younger members and make a difference in their clubs, communities and world. They practice citizenship skills that they can use now and in the future.

4-H adult volunteers, staff, parents and community members advise and work with teen leaders to complete the specific project. An advisor should consider the personal goals and abilities of the teen leader and also the needs of the specific 4-H club or group and the community. The advisor and teen should work closely to decide what the teen's responsibilities will be. The advisor becomes a

mentor to the teen as the young person works on his or her leadership skills.

## General expectations of teens involved in a 4-H teen leadership project:

- Be a registered 4-H member between the ages of 14 and 19 by January 1st of the 4-H program year.
- Be enrolled as a member for at least one year.
- Identify an adult volunteer, club leader or 4-H staff member to serve as a project advisor/mentor.
- Be willing to develop leadership skills, set goals and develop plans to reach those goals.

## What will 4-H teen leaders involved in 4-H teen leadership projects be required to do?

- **Choose an adult advisor to assist with goals of the teen leadership project.**  
A teen leader should ask to meet with the adult at the start of the 4-H year to establish program needs and expectations for the year.
- **Regularly attend club or committee meetings and programs.**  
A teen leader must do work to assist the club or committee leader(s) and/or project leaders as needed and assigned through the year. The 4-H teen leader should be present at most or all meetings for his or her interest area. The 4-H teen leader works with adult advisors, volunteers and peers to find programs, trainings and events to further develop leadership skills or learn information about the area of interest for the 4-H teen leadership project.
- **Complete a community service-learning project.**  
4-H teen leaders must lead an activity or series of activities, which benefit an individual or group outside the local club. For a list of examples of

past teen leadership projects, see Examples of Teen Leader Activities and Long-Term Projects.

- **Complete a 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide.**

The 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide is used to keep track of all the work completed during a 4-H teen leadership project, and during the time spent as a teen leader. Teens work with the adult leader or 4-H staff members to complete each of the steps throughout the guide. The teen leadership project is complete after the teen has met with 4-H staff to perform the project evaluation and share his or her completed guide.

- **Document community service hours and project planning hours.**

Teens need to complete two pieces, the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio, which is an ongoing record of their work and a 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide. The 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide also includes appropriate photos and other materials showing their work and progress.

- **Be interviewed by a 4-H volunteer, club leader or advisor.**

Teens must talk and meet regularly with a 4-H adult advisor throughout the year to discuss the 4-H teen leadership project at each of the three steps (Project Plan, Project Progress and Project Evaluation). A more formal interview can occur for the final step of the guide.

## **Other possible suggestions:**

Teens may interview with 4-H staff members or others in the community to share what they are doing, ask for input and discuss what they are learning. They may present their final guide to the 4-H club that they are involved in. They may obtain a letter of recommendation from the adult advisors (who assist them with their project goals).

## **What will 4-H teen leaders get from doing the project?**

4-H teen leaders will gain a wide variety of skills to help them become leaders that are more successful in communication, teamwork and organization.

Teens will need the kinds of skills they can gain through the 4-H teen leadership project in their future education, employment and community membership.

At the end of the 4-H teen leadership project, teens will have a thorough example of their past and present work with 4-H through the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio and the 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide. Teens complete a Teen Leadership Resume, interview and Project Evaluation — all skills teens will use in the future when seeking employment. Teens also establish important adult mentors through the advisors they work with during the project. The advisors could likely serve as references and mentors for many years into the teens' future. Teens have the ability to impact the lives of younger 4-H members, and be seen as role models. Teens are also formally recognized in a variety of ways. Teens can receive recognition at 4-H banquets, with scholarships, certificates or leadership pins. Teens are also often recognized in newsletters and on Web sites for their work.

## **So, how can I start a 4-H teen leadership project?**

First, make sure you meet the project's requirements. Look over the expectations for a 4-H teen leader. Check out the materials provided for teen leaders — like the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio and 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide. Look at Developing your 4-H Leadership Plan or Project. Second, identify whom you will work with during your project. Decide who will be your advisor throughout the project and approach him or her with the idea. After you have secured an advisor, set a meeting in order to determine the goals of your project. Use the forms and materials available. The first step in your 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide is entitled "Community Needs Assessment." Go over the project plan with your advisor and discuss the needs of your club and your community. Talk about your project goals and the specific actions you will take to accomplish those goals. At the end of your discussion, have your advisor sign this section of your portfolio and talk about when you will meet again. Continue to meet

with your advisor throughout the project, and ask for help whenever you need it.

## 4-H Teen Leadership Project

### Description was adapted from:

- Calhoun County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1999). *4-H leadership project area: Project description*. Marshall, MI: Author.
- Cass County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.). *Responsibilities of a 4-H teen leader*. Cassopolis, MI: Author.
- Ionia County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.). *Ionia County 4-H teen leader project guidelines and project book*. Ionia, MI: Author.
- Isabella County Michigan State University Extension Program. (2005). *Isabella County 4-H teen leadership project guidelines and evaluation forms*. Mt. Pleasant, MI: Author.
- Kent County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1997). *Kent County 4-H teen leader project*. Grand Rapids, MI: Author.
- St Joseph County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.). *St. Joseph County 4-H teen leader self-evaluation form*. Centreville, MI: Author.
- St. Joseph County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.). *St. Joseph County 4-H teen leadership project report*. Centreville, MI: Author.
- Washtenaw County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.) *4-H teen leadership guidelines and portfolio requirements*. Ann Arbor, MI: Author.
- Washtenaw County Michigan State University Extension Program. (2002). *4-H Teen leadership portfolio information and requirements*. Ann Arbor, MI: Author.

# 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide

**The 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide helps teen leaders build planning and organization skills.**

To help you start building your 4-H Teen Leader Project Guide, you need to download the 4-H Teen Leader Project Guide Template in Microsoft Word format from the Michigan 4-H Youth Development Teen Leadership Web site at: <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/cyf/youth/cls/teenlead-overview.html>

## Introduction

The 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide helps teen leaders build planning and organization skills. It shows teens some of the common practices leaders use to help organize and develop their thoughts into action. The 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide will help the teen leader and adult advisor work through steps to completing a project, facilitating communication within the team. Teen leaders doing the teen leadership project will be expected to:

- Complete the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio (including completing three steps and updating the Teen Leadership Resume).
- Complete the 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide (with five steps and cover page).

It is encouraged that all documents in the 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide be typed and that they look as professional as possible. Charts included in this guide can be adjusted if needed (add or take away columns or rows), printed and filled out with pen. Teens who have been teen leaders in previous years, or who have completed other teen leadership projects, should complete a new 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide and 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio for each new year of leadership, but should keep all materials together from previous years. Add any previous records up to the current year. That way when your service as a teen leader is complete, you will have a history and representation of all the learning, work and hours you completed through 4-H.

## The Teen Leadership Project Guide — Steps 1 to 5:

After filling out the cover page to the project guide, teen leaders complete the guide in five steps, meeting with their 4-H adult advisor to discuss the reflection and progress. At the end of the discussion, the teen leader and advisor can make changes or suggestions to the plan, and sign the bottom of the page when finished.

These are the five steps included in the 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide:

- **Step 1, Community Needs Assessment:** Teen leaders should look at the needs of the community and decide how to address those needs with their project. Teens fill out a flow chart and answer two short questions.

**4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide was adapted with permission from:**

Mark, C., Chang, B., & Reiter, M. (September 2003). *Community Based Service Learning 101* [online course]. East Lansing: Michigan State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development.

Mark, C. (2000). *YEA (Youth Experiencing Action): A Community Service Learning Guide*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Extension, 4-H Youth Development.

- **Step 2, Project Planning:** Teen leaders should reflect on what they would like to accomplish over the 4-H year while completing their teen leadership project. The goal chart is used to write overall and specific goal steps along with dates and resources needed for each goal.
- **Step 3, Implementation:** This section asks questions for the teen leader to consider while their project is in motion. After some initial goals have been completed, teen leaders assess how the original goals are being implemented and what progress has been made.
- **Step 4, Project Evaluation:** The evaluation should be completed at the end of the project year. Teen leaders reflect upon what they have learned through their leadership project. Teens also evaluate the completion of their goals, and get final feedback from their advisors about how to be more effective in accomplishing future goals.
- **Step 5, Celebration:** Teens are encouraged to look back at their successes and growth as teen leaders. Celebrating our accomplishments when finishing a project can help us identify why doing the project was worthwhile, acknowledge those who helped us, and can push us to continue in our future efforts.

# 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide Instructions

The *4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide* is a way to help you organize and put into action your leadership project. There are five steps to this leadership project guide. Each step is intended to be a brief thought-engaging activity that should help you plan and carry out your project. The steps are:

1. Community Needs Assessment
2. Project Planning
3. Implementation
4. Project Evaluation
5. Celebration

Keep in mind:

- You will need to complete the *4-H Teen Leader Portfolio* (available at <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/cyf/youth/cls/teenlead-overview.html>) in addition to this project guide.
- You can download and save this project guide (available in Microsoft Word format at <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/cyf/youth/cls/teenlead-overview.html>) to your own computer or to a disk or other media to work on. Because you will be making revisions as you go, you may wish to save your updated files with a new name that indicates the date of revision (For example: *4-HProjectGuide1-1-08.doc*).
- Answer the questions with one or two short sentences or a short statement.
- Take time to yourself to contemplate the goals for your project and why they are important to you.
- Remember that you may have many previous obligations, and though you may want to spend many hours doing your project, you might not have a lot of time. Set a specific amount of time per week to spend on your project. Learn to manage your time and manage your stress.
- Complete the charts with careful thought. You can adjust the charts on the following pages as needed by deleting rows or columns, or printing the charts for practice.
- Don't forget to meet with your 4-H club leader or advisor to have each of the steps signed after completion. Meeting with your advisor is an opportunity to get input about your work and for the advisor to get a chance to see what you are doing!
- Use the many resources available to you, both in 4-H and in your community. There are more resources on the 4-H Teen Leadership Web site to help you. (Visit <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/cyf/youth/cls/teenlead-overview.html> for more information.) Explore your resources and make use of them.
- Don't forget to ask for help if you need it.

# 4-H Teen Leadership Project Guide Cover Page

Name:

Club:

Address:

E-mail:

4-H Age as of January 1, 20\_\_:

Number of Years as a 4-H Teen Leader:

Year in Project:

4-H Club Leader, 4-H Advisor, other people who helped me with this project:

## Step 1: Community Needs Assessment

<b>Community Needs:</b>
<p>What are some issues being faced by most of the people in the community where I live? (Hint: Check out your town or school newspaper!)</p> <p>How could I address some of those needs with a project?</p> <p>Community Needs:</p>

After you think about these questions, try to address some of the smaller groups in the community who are facing these community needs you thought of. Can you name three of those groups? What about your school, your place of worship, a certain age group, or a group with a special interest or particular need, such as "children with free time after school?"

	<b>Community Group 1: _____ (Insert Name)</b>	<b>Community Group 2: _____ (Insert Name)</b>	<b>Community Group 3: _____ (Insert Name)</b>
<b>Specific Community Group Needs:</b>			

Now you can list some of the specific needs each group may have, keeping in mind how these interests relate to the larger community issue. Place specific group needs in the space provided above.

Why did you want to do a 4-H teen leadership project this year?

What are (at least three) specific skills that I have to help me serve the community through my 4-H teen leadership project?

**Teen Leader Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Step 2: Project Planning

### Project Goals Chart

Goals for project	Specific tasks for each goal	Date for task to be completed	Materials/Resources needed for each task
<b>Example:</b> My year's project: to make a more eco-friendly school. <b>Goal:</b> Start a recycling program at my school	Get permission from school officials and staff.	9/25/2006	*person to meet with and call the school staff *letter formally asking permission
	Locate a recycling center in our region who is willing to work with our school	11/15/2006	*Someone to call the recycling centers in our area *Someone to drive us to meet the manager of the recycling center
	Obtain recycling containers to place in locations throughout the school	1/15/06	*people to research where we can get the containers *money to possibly buy containers if they can not be donated
Goal 1:			
Goal 2:			
Goal 3:			
Goal 4:			
Goal 5:			

**Teen Leader Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

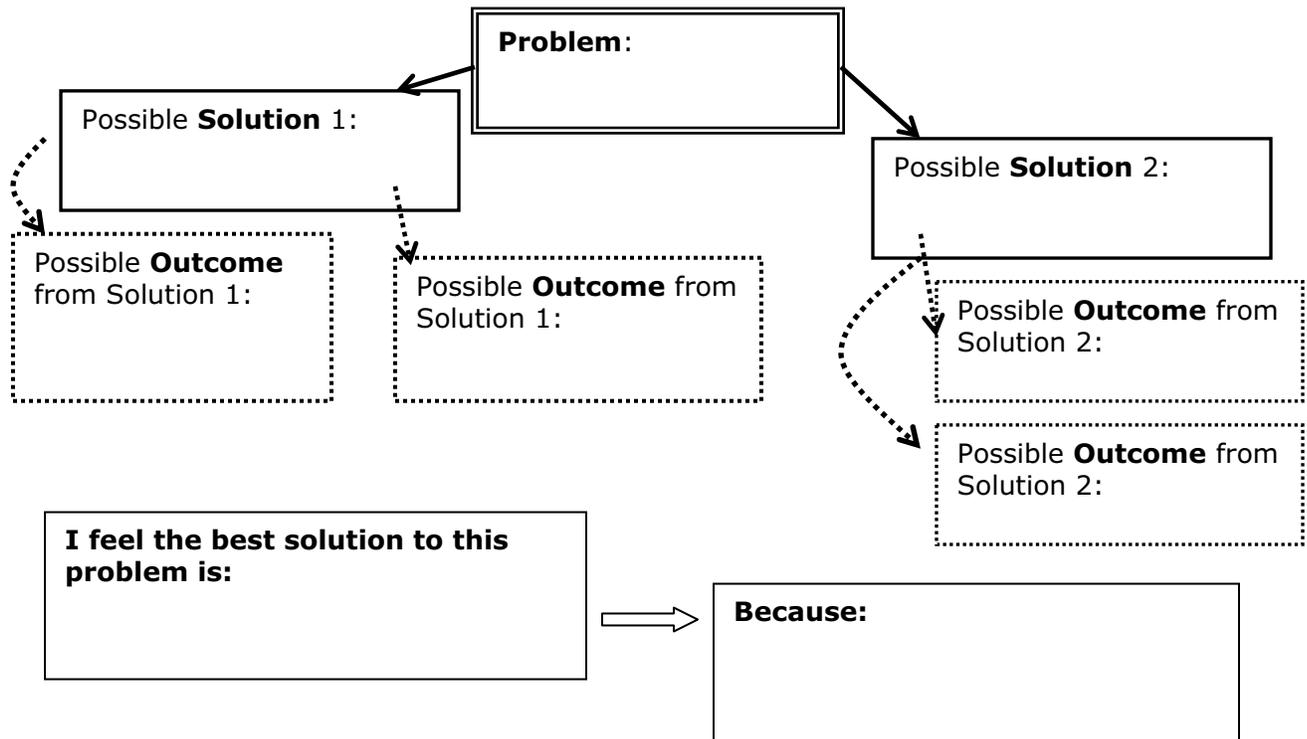
## Step 3: Implementation

What responsibilities have I taken on so far in the Teen Leadership Project?

What are some of the goals I have reached so far with my project?

Who have I helped with this leadership project and how have I helped them? You can write, draw, or paste a picture showing who you have helped?

What are some of the mistakes or problems that I have been having? How might some of these problems be resolved? If you run into problems, try this to help you map out a solution:



What will motivate me to finish the project and follow through with my goals?

**Teen Leader Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Step 4: Project Evaluation

Do you feel that you completed all or most of your leadership project goals?

What/who has been helpful to you when completing your goals?

How has your leadership project helped you to develop leadership skills?

Are there other community service projects that you identified that could be done as a result of this project?

## Step 5: Celebration

Now that you have concluded your project, it is important for you to consider your accomplishments, no matter how big or small. It's important to recognize and commend these accomplishments, your growth as a leader, what you have learned and those who have helped you.

- Think about planning a party or get-together for those people or groups that you helped during your project, your peers who helped you to carry out the project and the adult advisor who helped you with each step.
- Ask yourself and others how they feel overall about the project and the experience.
- Ask the people you worked with throughout the project to write down some comments for you. Read and keep those comments as a record of your project.

**Teen Leader Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Advisor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Developing Your 4-H Teen Leadership Plan or Project

Careful planning is necessary to make a leadership experience worthwhile. If you invest time in an experience, the knowledge you will gain will benefit you in the future. No matter what you're spending time doing, it is important that you use your time wisely to be as effective as possible.

## Reflect upon the following steps:

- 1. Determine needs** — Look within your club, at the community and within yourself. Decide what issues, concerns or interests could be met.
- 2. Explore resources** — List all the help available from people, organizations and printed materials. Also, it is very important for you to look at your past experiences and knowledge, and search for what special ideas you can give. Perhaps you have an experience that has really impacted your life in a way that lets you see the world in a different light. You might know about a special need in the community or a problem that needs to be addressed. Or, perhaps you have a special quality or talent that could be used. Are you awesome at painting? What about teaching a younger 4-H member who has an interest in learning how to paint, or who just needs a painting partner? Are you funny? What about setting up an entertaining skit to teach your peers about an important issue? Talk with your family members and friends to help you identify some of your positive traits. Ask them what they think you could do, and tell them what you have been brainstorming about. Search for your unique qualities and use what you know to impact 4-H and your community. The possibilities are endless!
- 3. Choose resources and plan** — Determine which of the resources (from step 2, above) will be used. Develop an action plan that will enable you to meet your final goal. Make sure to contact the people who you might access as resources. Talk with them about what you might do, and see what they think. Ask yourself if the resources you will use are up-to-date, and accurate, available and within your budget.
- 4. Set goal or goals** — Define exactly what you would like to achieve. Be realistic. If you are a busy person with many other obligations for your time and energy, determine what is feasible for you to accomplish within your given time period. Make a short list of steps or goals that are possible. If needed, you can include in the list the things you might like to do, but may not have time to do right now. Maybe in the future these things will become possible.
- 5. Pursue learning opportunities** — Challenge yourself to gather as much knowledge as you can about the resources and options available to you. Take advantage of leadership skills

## **Developing Your Leadership Plan was adapted from:**

- Calhoun County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1999). *4-H leadership project area: Project description*. Marshall, MI: Author.
- Ionia County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.). *Ionia County 4-H teen leader project guidelines and project book*. Ionia, MI: Author.
- Kent County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1997). *Kent County 4-H teen leader project*. Grand Rapids, MI: Author.

trainings in your area, throughout the state and nationally. Find out if you can job shadow or get advice from an adult leader in your community.

- 6. Share learning** — This is your opportunity to gain from the experiences of others by telling them what you have done and what you plan to do. To be most effective, you can share your activities throughout the entire process so that you will have continuous feedback. You may learn new information from others that will cause you to make changes in your plans.
- 7. Listen to feedback** — Your club leaders and advisors are an important resource. Ask questions and ask for help if you need to. Also seek input from your peers, and listen to the comments and needs of younger 4-H'ers.
- 8. Evaluate** — Measure the progress you make as you meet your goals.
- 9. Re-assess needs** — Look again at your club, the community and yourself throughout your project and development as a leader. What have you gained? What still needs to be done? Was it worthwhile? What changes could be made in the future?
- 10. Have fun while learning!**

# Examples of 4-H Teen Leader Activities and Long-Term Projects

**This section includes examples of activities and projects that you might consider to develop and practice your leadership skills. The first group is designed to get you started in doing activities and the second group is composed of more in-depth projects that require more time and resources. Both will give you ideas to get started.**

## **Examples of 4-H Teen Leader Activities and Long-Term Projects was adapted from:**

- Calhoun County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1999). *4-H leadership project area: Project description*. Marshall, MI: Author.
- Isabella County Michigan State University Extension Program. (2005). *Isabella County 4-H teen leadership project guidelines and evaluation forms*. Mt. Pleasant, MI: Author.
- Kent County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1997). *Kent County 4-H teen leader project*. Grand Rapids, MI: Author.

## **4-H teen leader activities designed for first- and second-year 4-H teen leaders**

Taking on an activity is a big decision. It means that you are going to practice the leadership skills that you have and refine and develop more. As a new 4-H teen leader you might want to start small and move up to larger activities. It is much easier to continue with something if you have success with your first project. The activities listed below will give you some ideas to get started. Also, use the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio to help in the process.

- Help a 4-H leader plan and conduct special activities or programs for a family night.
- Work with a 4-H leader and help club members plan and organize a community service project. For more than 250 community service ideas, visit the Michigan 4-H Web site at: <http://web1.msue.msu.edu/cyfl/youth/commserv/commserv-ideas.html>
- Work with an older 4-H teen leader, to help a group plan and organize a club fund-raising activity. Brainstorm creative ways to get the funding a group needs.
- Teach a skill at a 4-H afterschool program, 4-H workshop, summer recreational program, day care center, teen center, senior citizens center or another place that welcomes volunteers.
- Promote 4-H to local schools, community organizations and media. Work with your 4-H club and leader to make displays, give demonstrations and help others learn how to give effective demonstrations.
- Explore printed resources available to teens about an issue you are concerned with. Write a booklet or information sheet and ask the library to put it out or show it at the 4-H fair.
- For more ideas, explore the Web site <http://www.4husa.org/> Designed for and by young people, it changes regularly to give you new ideas about projects and what others are doing in 4-H.

## Examples of teen leadership projects

Teen leadership projects are in-depth and long-term activities in which you (the 4-H teen leader) develop and practice leadership skills. They require you to lead a group and also to work independently to get the job done. The 4-H adult leader will work closely with you as a coach to help you in becoming more responsible for getting the activities and project done.

As you plan these activities, as a 4-H teen leader, work with your 4-H advisor or coach to help you think through the steps of the project, decide who else to involve and what it will take to get the job done. These projects will take longer to do and give you a chance to practice your leadership skills. It is suggested that the 4-H teen leader attend additional training on leadership, teaching, facilitation or project skills before or during the time working on the activities.

- Investigate the needs of a community center. Organize a 4-H club to plan and conduct special activities or programs for a family night at the center based on one of those needs.
- Determine what is needed in a community and organize club members to plan and organize a community service project.
- Based on the club's budget needs, help a group plan and organize a club fund-raising activity. Brainstorm creative ways to get the funding a group needs.
- Design and create a small discussion group of teens close to your own age. Match each older teen with a younger youth and invite those younger youth to meet with the discussion group. Meet twice a month or more to talk about issues that are important to you. Find funding to allow your group to meet in places that are fun, and for your group to do a few fun things together during the year.
- Look around your community and organize a series of community speakers to educate or promote awareness in the community about an issue you are interested in, or help to promote 4-H by centering the topic around one of the 4 "H's" in the 4-H pledge: Head to clearer thinking, Heart to greater loyalty, Hands to larger service and Health to better living.
- Be a big brother or a big sister to a younger youth or new 4-H club member. Introduce them to others, welcome them at meetings, involve them in club activities, be sure they are enjoying their 4-H membership, and most of all, develop their skills and help them to explore their interests. Help them find resources — places, people and information — to strengthen their skills.
- Become an active member of a county or teen council, youth advisory committee or other group outside 4-H. Find a creative way to share your experiences with other 4-H members.
- Send letters to elected officials about a topic that concerns you. Organize an event to raise awareness of this topic to generate energy and action. Present your findings to a local governmental board.
- Do volunteer work with a social service organization. Help get other youth interested in volunteering with the same organization so that you can ensure further volunteer involvement after your service is completed.
- Organize 4-H club members to teach projects or skills at a summer recreational program, day care center, teen center, senior citizens center or another place that welcomes volunteers.
- Lead other club members in promoting 4-H to local schools, community organizations and media. Try getting the word out about the benefits, accomplishments and experiences of 4-H through newspapers, radio, TV, school or window displays. Develop a Web page to promote local 4-H activities.
- Explore printed resources available to teens about an issue you are concerned with. If there is a need, develop a creative way to get your message out. Organize and involve other club members in creating a booklet, organizing a small newspaper or magazine, developing a Web site or exploring other media outlets.
- Be creative and insightful; design your own project based on the needs of your community and resources available to you.

# Resume Writing Tips for Teens

A lot of information is available for help with writing a resume. The truth is it can all be a little overwhelming! You may have had experience writing a resume before or currently be required to work on a resume for school. If you have not, you probably will need to work on a resume some time in the near future. The following tips should help you learn about writing a resume. The Teen Leadership Resume Template is provided in the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio to guide you, and your 4-H advisor is also available to give you advice and feedback about completing it. Before you get started adding in information about you and your experiences as a 4-H teen leader, be familiar with these tips about resumes in general.

- Resumes are about reflecting your work and your experience, but not necessarily your personality. There are many representations of who you are, however, your resume lets the “professional you” shine through.
- Though there are many rules about what a resume is supposed to look like, it is the information that counts!
- The way your resume looks can show that you have skills with computers, that you understand how to use software like Microsoft Word, and that you know how to portray yourself in a positive and professional light. Take this into account as you are working on your resume.
- Gather all of the information you will need to complete your resume first. Get the information about hours of service you have completed, the dates you completed them, the leadership roles you have taken, who you helped, and what adults could reference your positive qualities. Look at the Teen Leadership Resume Template in the 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio to check that you have all the information before you start.

## Some technical points:

- Keep your resume to one page.
- Never use more than one typing font when writing your resume. It is okay to bold and use bigger font size to emphasize important information but you want your resume to look consistent.
- Choose an easy-to-read font size. Use no smaller than 11-point type for smaller style fonts. For larger style fonts, you may use a 10-point type.
- Use readable font styles. Common font styles are Times New Roman, Arial, Palatino, Tahoma or Verdana.
- In describing what you do in 4-H teen leadership, use present tense verbs (Assist 6- to 10-year-olds with computers) for jobs you currently do, and past tense verbs for jobs you used to do (Participated in Leadermete, 2003).
- Use bullets instead of paragraphs.
- Use one-inch margins.
- Avoid italics and underlining.
- Use all caps and bold to make important words stand out.
- Make headers and contact information larger.
- It is important to double check for spelling and grammar. Have someone else read your resume to make sure it reflects your very best.

The Michigan State University Career Services and Placement Fill-In Resume can also be used to help you gather your information for your Teen Leadership Resume Template.

# Career Services & Placement

## FILL-IN RESUME WORKSHEET



**Contact Information:** Name \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Web site \_\_\_\_\_

**Address**  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

**Objective:** To obtain a \_\_\_\_\_ position in \_\_\_\_\_  
Example: Seeking an entry-level position in retail sales

**Education:** **High School Name, City, State, Zip**  
Graduation expected \_\_\_\_\_ (Month and Year)  
Overall GPA: \_\_\_\_/4.0  
Related coursework: (Optional)

Include GPA only if it is a 3.0 or better. If you've been on the Honor Roll you can include the time frame, example: Honor Roll, average GPA 3.4, 2005-present

Example: Holt High School, Holt, MI 48842  
Expected to graduate June 2007  
Computer Courses: PCs with Windows, Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel

**Experience:** *Job Title* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Employer* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Employer city & state* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Dates of employment (mo/year - mo/year)* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Description of accomplishments:*

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

*Job Title* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Employer* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Employer city & state* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Dates of employment (mo/year - mo/year)* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Description of accomplishments:*

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

*Job Title* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Employer* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Employer city & state* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Dates of employment (mo/year - mo/year)* \_\_\_\_\_  
*Description of accomplishments:*

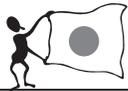
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



Describe your work experience using active verbs to focus on your accomplishments & skills.

Here's an example:

- Retail Clerk  
7-Eleven Store, Holt, MI  
June 2005-present
- Responsible for store maintenance, customer service, cash management.
  - Prepared weekly invoice orders.
  - Trained new employees.



### Skills:

Skills are something you do well.  
 Example:  
 Hardworking and work well with others. Proficient in Microsoft Office and Internet applications. Fluent in Spanish, learning Japanese.

Soft skills (part of your personality):

Hard Skills (technical):

### Activities:



Activities demonstrate your leadership and community involvement.  
 Examples:

- President, Ingham County 4-H Club, 2005-present. Member 1999-present
- Volunteer, Harvest House, Holt, MI, 2000-2003
- Captain, Holt High School Debate Team, 2005

Your role \_\_\_\_\_  
 Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dates (year - year) \_\_\_\_\_

Your role \_\_\_\_\_  
 Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dates (year - year) \_\_\_\_\_

Your role \_\_\_\_\_  
 Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dates (year - year) \_\_\_\_\_

Your role \_\_\_\_\_  
 Organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Dates (year - year) \_\_\_\_\_

### Honors and Awards:

Examples:

4-H Junior Scholarship,  
 Michigan State University,  
 2004



Outstanding Service  
 Volunteer, Harvest House,  
 Holt, MI, 2003

Award or Scholarship \_\_\_\_\_  
 Granting organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date (year) \_\_\_\_\_

Award or Scholarship \_\_\_\_\_  
 Granting organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date (year) \_\_\_\_\_

Award or Scholarship \_\_\_\_\_  
 Granting organization \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date (year) \_\_\_\_\_

Career Development Center  
 6 Student Services  
 East Lansing, MI 48824-1113  
 (517) 355-9510 x.335  
[www.csp.msu.edu/cdc](http://www.csp.msu.edu/cdc)  
[csp@msu.edu](mailto:csp@msu.edu)

MICHIGAN STATE  
 UNIVERSITY

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer.

Modified by Laura Allen, MSU 4-H Youth Development, May 2006

© CDC, 2004



# For 4-H Advisors and Leaders Working With 4-H Teen Leaders

**The adult advisor plays an important role in the success of a teen's leadership development. At times they are a coach, at times, an advisor and at times, a mentor. The working relationship between the adult and teen is as important as the completion of the "activity" that the teen leader chooses. Teens need the support of a caring adult who challenges and supports their activities and guides them in the process. The 4-H advisor or leader plays a critical role in the 4-H Teen Leader program.**

## Why do we have teen leaders?

Teen leaders are important because they:

- Can relate well with their peers and with younger 4-H members.
- Can learn leadership by practicing.
- Have fresh ideas and lots of opinions to share.
- Can be valuable resources.
- Have the time and energy to increase the number of club activities and events.
- Are capable of and willing to accept responsibility.
- Are enthusiastic, positive and creative.

## What are the goals of 4-H teen leadership?

The goals of 4-H teen leadership are to:

- Encourage older youth to remain in 4-H.
- Provide older youth with an opportunity to demonstrate and practice their skills.
- Instill positive self-image in teens.
- Develop job and life skills in teens.
- Realize the importance of community service.
- Assist youth in developing and carrying out a plan to reach a goal.
- Provide opportunity for older youth to work in teams and with their peers.
- Create new volunteers for community interests.
- Develop citizenship skills to create citizens for a better society.

## Responsibilities of the adult leader or advisor to the teen leader

- I. An advisor should first consider the jobs to be done, and the competencies and wishes of the teen leader. Then the teen leader and adult leader(s) should jointly decide on the responsibilities and leadership activities that the teen leader will carry out. Together they can set goals and develop a plan for providing leadership in the 4-H youth program. It is advisable to start small and then add to the responsibility if the teen leader has proven that he or she can do more. Varieties of opportunities exist for teen leaders and responsibilities can increase with ad-

ditional years in the position. It is important that very specific responsibilities be outlined and agreed upon. That way, the teen and leader are sure of what is expected and responsibilities can gradually increase as the teen exhibits increased ability.

2. Helping the teen leader set goals and developing a plan of work should be done early in the project season. Set a meeting time to discuss the needs of your 4-H club and community, and help determine the greatest needs of the 4-H teen leaders, the club, the members and the community. Assist the teen leader in filling out any primary materials for their 4-H Teen Leader Portfolio.
3. Keep the teen leader informed throughout the year of club, county, district and state events in which he or she may participate. Encourage him or her to attend any meetings, workshops, clinics or other events, which have a bearing on his or her responsibility.
4. Set meetings to encourage the teen leader to carry out and follow through with each step of his or her project plan or leadership goals. Communicate often with the teen leader, offer suggestions when appropriate, and discuss making changes from the original plan of responsibilities, if necessary. Help equip the 4-H teen leader with the necessary leadership skills and make the teen leadership project a great learning and sharing experience for the teen.
5. Make sure the teen is aware that you are available to answer questions and help to provide needed resources for the project or leadership goals.
6. Always be sure to communicate with other advisors or adults working with the 4-H teen leader on his or her specific leadership requirements.
7. If there are several teen leaders in the county, see if it is possible for the teens to come together and share ideas. Help orchestrate meetings and communication for teens, so they can work together. Help connect older

teens with younger teens who are working toward similar leadership goals.

8. Encourage participation in exchange trips and statewide activities.
9. If appropriate, nominate and/or encourage the teen leader to participate in the teen awards programs. Secure awards information from the county Extension office and encourage your teen leader to participate in awards and recognition programs that best fit his or her interest and achievements.
10. Teens look to their adult leaders for information on career planning and ways to further their interest in certain project areas. Career planning is a subject of intense interest to older 4-H members. If you do not feel competent in providing information, you may wish to refer them to their school guidance counselor or 4-H Youth Extension Educator. Referral services may be one of your strongest assets. Be knowledgeable about resources available to teens in a wide variety of areas. Be ready and willing to refer teens when they may have problems or needs in which others may have expertise.

## Tips for success in working with teens

Effective youth leadership programs encourage high expectations and confidence in youth and demonstrate respect for youth. Having someone who respects and believes in them is an excellent motivator for enabling young people to develop the confident attitudes and aspirations, which are characteristic of successful leaders. Those who work with youth leadership development programs should convey and demonstrate with every action, word and deed that they respect, have confidence in, and have high expectations of each program participant. While programs may do this in various ways, they can only do it if they embody a genuine respect for young people: for what they know, for who they are as individuals and for their potential. (Ohio State 4-H Youth Development, *Teen leadership: Background, Leadership*, 2005)

Regardless of whether adults or teens have more control in the relationship, there are some “tips for success” for adults to be effective in working with teens. Caring, respect, enthusiasm, high expectations, fairness, guidance and encouragement, ability to meet teen needs, responsibility, confidence and openness are all very important.

(Ohio State 4-H Youth Development, *What Makes Teens Special*, 2005)

### Teens are unique

Teens have special needs and are different in many ways from other age groups. Young people aged 13 to 19 gradually become more independent, mature and opinionated. Each individual varies in his or her abilities and maturity. Teens are already leaders in many ways and feel they should be respected and treated as such. Teens see themselves as young adults and want to take on new responsibilities and acquire new knowledge. Keep in mind these tips when thinking about how to relate to teens. Form your own philosophy about how teens should be supported.

- Be available to listen.
- Affirm independence and interdependence. People need each other.
- Find out what teenagers care about and advocate for their causes.
- Ask teenagers for their opinion or advice.
- Continue to show teens you care by spending time with them – even if you’re not doing or talking about anything special. (Search Institute, *How You Can Build the Support Assets*, 2005)
- Expect young people to experience ups and downs of self-esteem during these years, and expect self-esteem to increase as they get older.
- Avoid comparing young people with other young people.
- Let teenagers know that you are proud of and excited by their talents, capabilities and discoveries.
- Support teenagers as they struggle with issues and questions of identity.

- Let teenagers know that you are willing to listen if they want to talk about their sense of purpose in life, including their ideas about how they would like to contribute to the world. (Search Institute, *How You Can Build Positive-Identity Assets*, 2005)

### Additional Resources

For additional training and information about working with teens, visit these two Web sites: The TRY-IT Web site ([http://www.nc4h.org/try-it/ldr00a\\_toppg.htm](http://www.nc4h.org/try-it/ldr00a_toppg.htm)) is an online leadership-training program for teens. It is designed for teens to develop a leadership portfolio. It can compliment face-to-face training offered.

The Search Institute (<http://www.search-institute.org/assets/individual/>) provides materials, videos and other resources that 4-H leaders and volunteers can use to develop their skills and knowledge about working with youth.

For 4-H Advisors and Club Leaders Working With 4-H Teen Leaders is adapted from:

- Calhoun County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1999). *4-H leadership project area: Project description*. Marshall, MI: Author.
- Cass County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.). *Responsibilities of a 4-H teen leader*. Cassopolis, MI: Author.
- Ingham County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1991). *Project guidelines for working with teen leaders*. Mason, MI: Author.
- Ionia County Michigan State University Extension Program. (2003). *Ionia County 4-H teen leader evaluation*. Ionia, MI: Author.
- Ionia County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.). *Ionia County 4-H teen leader project guidelines and project book*. Ionia, MI: Author.
- Isabella County Michigan State University Extension Program. (2005). *Isabella County 4-H teen leadership project guidelines and evaluation forms*. Mt. Pleasant, MI: Author.
- Kent County Michigan State University Extension Program. (1997). *Kent County 4-H teen leader project*. Grand Rapids, MI: Author.

- National 4-H Council. (2005). *Teens as volunteer leaders: Recruiting and training teens to work with younger youth in after-school programs*. Retrieved March 27, 2007, from [http://4-hafterschool.org/uploadedFiles/AfterschoolDocuments/4HAS\\_Guide5.pdf](http://4-hafterschool.org/uploadedFiles/AfterschoolDocuments/4HAS_Guide5.pdf)
- Ohio State 4-H Youth Development. (2005). *What makes teens special: Implications for leadership development, Working with teenagers*. Retrieved June 30, 2006, from [http://www.ohio4h.org/youth/teen\\_leadership/tl16.html](http://www.ohio4h.org/youth/teen_leadership/tl16.html)
- Ohio State 4-H Youth Development. (2005). *Teen leadership: Background, Leadership—A component of 4-H youth development, 4-H youth leadership development program basic*. Retrieved June 30, 2006, from [http://www.ohio4h.org/youth/teen\\_leadership/tl17.html](http://www.ohio4h.org/youth/teen_leadership/tl17.html)
- Search Institute. (2005) *How you can build the support assets*. Retrieved June 30, 2006, from <http://www.search-institute.org/assets/individual/support.html>
- Search Institute. (2005) *How you can build the positive-values assets*. Retrieved June 30, 2006, from <http://www.search-institute.org/assets/individual/values.html>
- St. Joseph County Michigan State University Extension Program. (n.d.). *St. Joseph County 4-H teen leadership project report*. Centreville, MI: Author.
- Washtenaw County Michigan State University Extension Program. (2002). *4-H teen leadership guidelines and portfolio requirements*. Ann Arbor, MI: Author.

# 4-H Teen Leadership in Michigan — Survey Response Summary

In December 2005, the 4-H Citizenship, Leadership and Service Priority Team, 4-H Teen Leadership Subcommittee designed and conducted an e-mail survey asking 4-H staff members about their county's involvement in leadership programs for teens ages 13 to 19 years old. The goal of the committee was to strengthen and develop resources, guidelines and standards for staff, volunteers and teens.

Fifty counties responded to the survey out of eighty-two county offices. Contacted via e-mail and telephone calls, staff members responded to a series of questions to understand what was available to teens interested in becoming 4-H

teen leaders, what training existed and ways teens carried out their roles. In addition, staff members were asked to send the State 4-H Office any teen leadership definitions, guidelines or materials used in training. Twenty-two different documents were gathered from sixteen counties. Some counties who did not complete the survey did send in materials. The committee also gathered information from six other states' 4-H teen leadership programs, finding that the programs from Ohio and Pennsylvania had the largest amount of information available about teen leadership in 4-H on the Web. Below is a summary of the key points from responses gathered through surveys.

---

## Key points

### 1. How does your county involve teens 13 to 19 years old? Please list or give examples.

- Involve as members or teen officers of 4-H Council (48 percent mentioned 4-H Council)
- 4-H teen leaders within each club help with organization and logistics of meetings (42 percent)
- Serve on countywide developmental councils and committees that plan and conduct program activities (40 percent)
- Involve in community service and citizenship (38 percent)
- Do a teen leadership project (28 percent)
- Mentor and assist younger youth (26 percent)
- Serve in officer positions in club (22 percent)
- Counties who specifically noted lack of/no involvement with teens (12 percent)
- 4-H Ambassadors host events and take on special events and activities.

### 2. How do you identify teen leaders in 4-H?

- Identify by 4-H club leader or administrator (57 percent)
- Self-identify — natural next step that teens take on (36 percent)
- Fill out an application or write essay (15 percent)

### 3. How does your county define 4-H teen leadership?

- No definition of teen leadership (52 percent)
- Most who answered this question had a working or tacit definition involving the leader's roles of serving as mentors to younger youth, planning, fund-raising, assisting the 4-H club leaders. (48 percent)

### 4. Do you use the same definition for a 4-H teen leader project? If different, please describe.

- Use the same definition (73 percent of people who had a definition of teen leadership)

**5. Do you have a set of guidelines for 4-H teen leaders? If yes, please send a copy to Amy at the State 4-H Office.**

- No guidelines (76 percent)
- Have guidelines (24 percent)
- Those counties who have guidelines that are outdated (2 out of 10 people who responded)

**6. In what ways are 4-H teen leaders recognized?**

- Certificate (50 percent)
- With a pin (42 percent)
- At a banquet (40 percent)
- No known recognition (14 percent)
- Other gift (5/50)
- Newsletters (5/50)
- Scholarships (college and to 4-H events like Capitol Experience)

**7. What type of training is available for 4-H teen leaders? Is there a teen leadership notebook or other materials used to train 4-H teen leaders?**

- No training available locally (64 percent)
- Teens attend some type of training (not specific to leadership) at Kettunen Center, locally, or at county level (50 percent)

**8. Do teens need to complete a form or a notebook or something else to be considered 4-H teen leaders? If yes, please send Amy a copy.**

- No (64 percent)
- Yes (36 percent)

**9. What qualities do you hope a 4-H teen will have at the end of the 4-H teen leader project?**

- Self-confidence
- Responsibility
- Communication (public speaking, presentation skills)
- Leadership skills
- Commitment
- Ability to meet and work with new and diverse groups of people
- Ability to facilitate and lead a meeting

**10. What would it take to increase participation in the 4-H teen leader project?**

- More concrete guidelines and materials (41 percent)
- Training (30 percent)
- Dedicated 4-H staff members and volunteers (26 percent)
- More recognition and incentives for teens (22 percent)
- Teen participation (19 percent)
- Funds (15 percent)
- No comment (36 percent)

---

## Recommendations

Through this survey, we learn that 4-H counties are in need of guidelines and definitions of teen leadership as well as training materials and opportunities. It can also be noted that the amount and type of recognition for teen leadership varies. All teens in Michigan who are involved in 4-H teen leadership programs or projects should receive formal recognition. Though there are various roles teen leaders play in each county, there is a need for a statewide outline and expectations of all who work with teen leadership programs. Materials need to be made available for counties who have none existing, but also for counties who want to update or add to their existing materials.

Teens who become involved in leadership need to be willing to challenge themselves and think introspectively about their roles as leaders. Before, during and at the assessment of their leadership experience, teen leaders need be willing to explore and understand the meaning of leadership, the goals of their experience and their experiences working with others. Reflection through writing and interviews with 4-H staff need to occur regularly throughout the teen leader experience. This is why a Teen Leader Portfolio or something that provides reflection components are important. Teens need to recognize that completing it will help them grow as leaders and enhance their overall 4-H experience.

Working closely with adults can serve as a type of training for teen leaders. By communicating and shadowing the club and administrative leaders in their county, teens can learn qualities of leadership by example. By collaborating with 4-H staff members on Teen Leader Portfolios, teen leaders can learn about leadership by following through with their goals as leaders in their 4-H clubs or in their teen leadership projects. Staff members commented in the survey that support materials were needed from the State 4-H Office to guide 4-H teen leaders through learning about leadership.

Training needs to take place at the county level if appropriate, that is, if the number of teen leaders at each city is not enough to hold a training for

each site. If there are enough teen leaders each year to hold training in each town, it is appropriate to do so. Teens prefer to work in groups with others their age and they really enjoy meeting and collaborating with new people who have similar interests. An optimum training and learning experience would involve a fairly small group (10 to 20 youth), with adequate support from a diverse group of adults. Aim for a more intimate experience where teens are allowed to break up into smaller groups, share their opinions and ideas, and feel a sense of equality and reciprocity with adults. Hands-on leadership-building experiences that encourage teens to get active are memorable and exciting to teens. Low ropes courses, problem-solving and team-building activities get youth actively thinking about working together. TRY-IT (Teens Reaching Youth through Innovative Teams) is a Web-based program and a tool that can be used and accessed anywhere. TRY-IT, though still in its developing stages, helps teens interact with knowledge to help them grow as leaders. (<http://www.nc4h.org/try-it/index.htm>)

Above all, training should really challenge teens and their boundaries, and in the end, leave the teens excited and ready to take action and put their ideas to work!

In conclusion, based on the information collected, the 4-H Citizenship, Leadership and Service Priority Team made it a priority to develop guidelines and trainings to strengthen the 4-H teen leader program. During the 2005-2006 program year, based on the information collected, research done and feedback from the committee, the Teen Leader information on the Michigan 4-H Web site was developed and launched.

*4-H Citizenship, Leadership and Service Priority Team, 4-H Teen Leadership Subcommittee members: Monica Borgman, 4-H Program Associate and State Natural Helpers State Coordinator, Isabella County; Michelle Hyde, 4-H Youth Educator, Clare County; Cyndi Mark, Ph.D., Program Leader, State 4-H Office; Amy Rosechandler, Collegiate Program Assistant, State 4-H Office and Kathy Walter Surratt, 4-H Youth Educator, Barry County*

4/25/06