



TEEN LEADERSHIP

A LEADER'S MANUAL

Adapted from Montana State University, Teen Leadership Leader's Manual, July 1996

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Teen Leadership Leader's Manual

Leadership is the giving of yourself in helping others reach a common goal. It is not a mystical trait that one individual has and another does not have. It is learned behavior that you can improve by study and application. Leaders are not born; they are developed, almost completely by their own effort. That's what this Teen Leadership project is all about: developing your leadership potential!

Why a Leadership Project?

To live happy and contributing lives in our society, people need to be able to help themselves (and often others) to achieve their goals. The skills needed to take responsibility for personal action and to work with other people in achieving goals are embodied in what we call leadership skills.

4-H provides many opportunities to help youth explore, develop, and learn leadership skills. Youth learn these skills by observing and listening to others, and by experimenting and practicing leadership behaviors. With guidance from a leader, youth leadership development can take place at all levels of the Vermont 4-H program from the club to county, regional, and state, as well as in schools, civic, and community activities.

Involving 4-H youth in leadership skill development can benefit youth in some of the following ways:

- Increased self awareness
- Better personal decision-making
- Increased sense of control over their lives
- Enhanced self-esteem
- More capable members and leaders of the youth groups they are part of
- Enter adulthood with a head start

Young people can develop high levels of leadership skills if they are first given the opportunity to experience and practice basic skills with guidance from 4-H leaders and parents. They can then move on to do more complex activities when the basic skills have been mastered.

By continuing to help 4-H members try new levels of leadership throughout their

4-H careers, you will help keep them interested in 4-H and, at the same time, help them develop to their fullest potential.

Developing Successful Teen Leader Programs

Research conducted by The Ohio State University has identified five principles of successful Teen Leadership Development. As you work with the teen leadership project, we suggest you incorporate these five principles:

1. Embody high expectations of, confidence in, and respect for participants.
2. Emphasize experiential learning and provide opportunities for teens to exercise genuine leadership.
 - involve teens in collaborative experiences, working cooperatively with their peers
 - help youth develop skills related to leadership (life skills and specific leadership skills)
3. Involve teens in service to others, to their community, country and world.
4. Involve youth in significant relationships with mentors, positive role models, or other nurturing adults.
5. Be developed around stated purposes and goals.

Here's What To Do

This project is designed to be flexible. It is intended to be adapted to meet local and county needs. This manual is designed to help you be more effective as a leader working

with teen leaders in your county. You will be successful in your role if you:

- Review the Teen Leadership member manual for general knowledge and suggested activities.
- Be sure each interested teen is enrolled in the Teen Leadership Project on the 4-H enrollment form.
- Cooperatively decide on areas of leadership focus for each teen. These could include projects, activities and events for the club, in cooperation with other clubs and for the county. Consult with the county 4-H Educator where appropriate.
- Assist each teen leader in completing the Teen Leadership Project Plan. Review the plan and remind each member to turn in copy into the county Extension office by the designated date.
- Assist each member in locating necessary resources. Help connect youth with the community, with resource materials and with others knowledgeable about the project area.
- Meet regularly with each member to assess their progress on the Teen Leadership goals. Help them to understand the need for flexibility and changes as the year progresses.
- Provide a safe, supportive and encouraging educational environment in which young people see and receive recognition for the accomplishments of the teen leader.

Project and Leader Goals

Leaders for the Teen Leadership Project should help members to:

- Learn and practice Vermont 4-H life skills.
- Learn the skills to be an effective resource to club, county, community and beyond.
- Learn to apply the appropriate leadership style to a given situation.
- Enjoy planning and working with others.

- Inspire the interest of younger 4-H members.
- Be a positive role model for others.
- Encourage continued participation of older members.
- Practice and learn skills that will prepare them for future careers.
- Set own goals and pursue individual interests.
- Work with a teacher, mentor or advisor.

Criteria for Teen Enrollment

- Thirteen years of age by Jan. 1 of the current project year.
- Successfully completed at least one previous year of 4-H experience.
- Current enrollment in at least one other project is recommended.

General Timeline Reminders

On the next page is a general timeline for you (the leader) and the teen leader(s) to follow throughout the 4-H project year. Before helping the teen leader(s) fill out the plan, please remember:

- Every teen leader project will be different, so the timeline will vary.
- It is important for the teen leader(s) you are advising to complete a written plan.
- The teen leader(s) should give copies both to you and the county Extension office.
- Dividing the 4-H year into three parts may be a useful way to simplify the planning process.
- Your support as a project leader in planning stages is very important.
- These timeline guidelines are suggestions.

Teen Leadership Project Plan

The plan of action designed for this teen leadership project will be very helpful when completed and followed. The

planning form is flexible (see sample, next page), allowing the teen leader(s) to plan projects according to personal preference and experience. The plan is a leadership tool, not a burden.

Beliefs About Leadership

- **Everyone needs leadership skills.** Leadership skills are required for ourselves, as well as to lead other people. Leadership knowledge is needed in order to be an effective member of a group as well as to direct the activity of a group. No one is a formal leader at all times.

- **Leadership can be learned through experience and practice, just like other skills.** It is not only behaviors or qualities leaders have to know, but also what to do with what they know, that will determine success.

- **Leadership is a relationship**

between people. It is the way that leaders interact with others and their sensitivity to what others need. The skills a leader has are only important when they are used well with people. We can learn leadership skills best by practicing leadership behaviors with other people.

- **Appropriate leadership is determined by the situation.** Different people lead at different times. The combination of the leader, the group, and the goals of the group determine the appropriate type of leadership. The group members must work with the leader to achieve the desired results.

These basic beliefs about leadership are the foundation of the Teen Leadership Project. Through their participation in this project, 4-H members can learn and practice leadership in a comfortable environment. Young people can develop high levels of leadership skills if they are first given the opportunity to experience and practice basic

Suggested Timeline for Teen's Plan of Action

These guidelines are suggestions, and may vary from county to county. Teens may want to use the sample Teen Leadership Project Plan provided (p.5), or they can design their own.

Submit plan to leader by December 1

Plan to county Extension office December 15

Leader reviews progress with teen

First third of the plan February 15

Leader reviews progress with the teen

Second third of the plan May 15

Leader reviews progress with teen August 15

Last third of the plan Records should be compiled

For this project, members will need to fill out a teen leadership project plan. A sample plan is on page 5.

Teen Leadership Project Plan

Name _____ Club _____

County _____ Years in 4- H _____ Years in Teen Leadership _____ Age _____

GOAL	DATES/PROGRAM PLANS What you plan to do	RESOURCES People and Materials	RESULTS

Leader Signature _____

Date Approved _____

County Office _____

Date Approved _____

skills with guidance from 4-H leaders and parents. They can move on to more complex activities when the basic skills have been mastered.

By continuing to help 4-H members try new levels of leadership throughout their 4-H careers, you as a leader will keep them interested in 4-H, and at the same time help them develop to their fullest potential. As a leader, you can help youth learn to apply their new knowledge and skills in helping other club members reach personal and club goals.

The leadership skills developed through this project will be useful to 4-H members in carrying out their other 4-H projects, in participating in 4-H group activities, and in serving in formal club leadership roles as officers and committee chairmen.

They can also use leadership skills outside 4-H, as they work with people at the school, in other youth groups, and in their families. Each of these experiences will increase the members' personal competence and confidence. Development of the various leadership skills can help youth feel good about themselves and help them make difficult decisions about their own lives while they are still young. 4-H members who have the opportunity to learn about and practice leadership will enter adulthood more capable of giving leadership to their communities.

Youth Learning Characteristics

As an adult leader working with youth of different ages, you need to know something about the different ages and stages of youth development. Knowing some general characteristics about different age groups will help you be more effective in your work with them.

The Tween Ages: A Special Opportunity Involving the 11- and 12-Year-Olds

Leadership skills are valuable to preteens as well as teenagers. One of the objectives of this leadership project is that teens will work closely with preteens in a

situation similar to that of a counselor-in-training for camp. In this process, leadership skills of the teens will be enhanced as they assist those in the 'tween years (11- and 12- year-olds) to develop leadership skills, since these skills are valuable to preteens in giving them a sense of worth which will also heighten their interest in another facet of 4-H.

Data in Vermont shows that the largest 4-H drop out rate is at the age of 13. You should strive to involve this age group in helping teen leaders with their activities. Involving them in such ways allows 12- and 13-year-olds to start learning some leadership skills of their own, and allows the teen leaders to use their leadership skills while utilizing the activeness and boundless energy that is so common at the age of 12 and 13.

Start teaching them some different leadership skills while their enthusiasm is at a peak. At this age, they admire and imitate older youth and are easily motivated and eager to try something new. This sense of admiration could provide many opportunities for cooperative work between leaders, teen leaders and younger members.

What is Leadership?

Leadership is a personal and unique trait. Often, it means giving of oneself in helping others. A good leader analyzes him or herself to determine in what way he or she can help others.

How does one develop leadership skills? They are learned by observing and listening to others, and by experimenting and practicing leadership behaviors. Leadership behaviors are the actions used by leaders. Learning experiences can be designed to provide us with opportunities to observe and practice leadership behaviors. At first, we concentrate on performing these actions in specific situations. Later, as we become comfortable with these behaviors, they will become natural to us and part of the leadership skills we use throughout our lives.

12 to 14 Age Group

Characteristics of Age Group	Implications for Learning
Can take responsibility in planning and evaluating their own work.	Allow members to plan activities. Expect follow through. Assist them with evaluating the outcome. Let members have responsibility for group activity.
Are ready for in-depth, longer learning. Avoid tasks that are too difficult.	Encourage deeper exploration of leadership role; encourage more detailed record-keeping. Help members choose tasks in which they can succeed. Encourage members to participate in all tasks. Help them to succeed in solving and participating in difficult tasks.
Can plan their own social and recreational activity.	Form planning committees to plan parties and other social activities. Give experience in working in groups.
Ready made solutions are often rejected.	Assist members in making realistic choices. Question their plans, show alternatives, and help them weigh aspects before making decisions. Leaders who provide supervision without interference will do well with this group.
Desire a sense of independence, yet they want and need their parents' help.	Establish guidelines for group. Give parameters for youth to follow. Involve members in deciding on own group rules. Opinions of peers become more important than those of parents or other adults.
Begin to test values and seek adults who are accepting and willing to talk about values and morals.	Provide self-discovery activities leading young teens to self-knowledge. Justice and equality become important issues.
Infatuations is common. Interest in opposite sex is often shown in contrary behavior-pushing, hair pulling, etc.	Allow for interaction of sexes. Let individuals decide on which partner they would like to be with. Avoid comparing young people with each other, and be careful not to embarrass them.
Peer pressure mounts, first from same sex, then from opposite sex.	Use peer pressure as a positive influence. Use group to influence nonparticipation. Have group give encouragement to others.

15 to 18 Age Group

Characteristics of Age	Group Implications for Learning
Have high social needs and desires.	Make sure members are encouraged by peers. Assist in making a climate which is conducive to encouragement. Acceptance by members of the opposite sex is of high importance. Some may tend to be wrapped up in themselves and their peer group rather than family, teachers and other adults.
Want and need a strong voice in planning their own program.	Allow youth to plan leadership development programs with guidance and support of adults. They can generally initiate and carry out their own tasks without supervision. They can help younger members plan and complete their projects.
Begin to think about the future and make realistic plans.	Emphasize application of leadership life skills to being on your own. Their vocational goals influence the activities they select. Teens set goals based on their own personal needs and priorities. As they master abstract thinking, they can imagine new things in ways that sometimes challenge adults. Adults need to be open to their ideas.
Abstract thinking and problem solving reaches a high level. Can choose purposes, make plans, carry them out and evaluate the results.	Put members into real life problem solving situations. Allow them to discover fully the ideas, make decisions and evaluate the outcome.
Personal philosophy begins to emerge.	Allow time for members to explore and express their own philosophies. Use activities which have members search for experiences which will allow them to identify their philosophies.
Widespread feeling of inferiority and inadequacy.	Counter the feelings of inferiority and inadequacy, be encouraging, and help members to see their positive worth.
Are developing community consciousness.	Encourage learning activities involving the community.

It is very difficult for anyone to develop leadership skills unless he or she has a chance to try the behaviors needed for leadership first. Children, especially, have few opportunities for experiences in formal group leadership except in groups like 4-H.

The best leader can also be the one who is seldom seen. He or she is always around, always helpful and cooperative, often encouraging or praising. Effective leaders are rarely out in front, putting on a show themselves. The leader has learned that the best way to get things done is to have everyone help in **choosing, planning, and doing**. The less the leader personally had to organize and direct the activities, the better the job she or he is doing as a leader.

The strongest clubs and groups are those where leadership jobs are divided among all members. Each person takes a responsibility he or she can do best. They all have to help each other because no one of them is leading the group alone. It takes time, patience and cooperation to develop shared leadership.

Types and Styles of Leadership

What style of leadership is best? What type of leadership works better with young people? The truth is that there is not one style or approach that works with all people or in all situations. You need to find the style that is right for you and the group with whom you're working.

Leadership is a skill that can be learned. Effective leaders are not born, but made by their own efforts. People can become more effective leaders by examining their own views on leadership, how they respond to the help of others, and watching how successful leaders work with people and interact in groups. Good leaders share leadership, recognition, satisfaction, and the feeling of power that accompanies teamwork.

No one approach is right for all leaders. Likewise, there is no one style of leadership that will work in all situations. The most effective leadership techniques

combine aspects of several approaches to leadership.

Rather than embracing any one particular approach or theory of leadership, you will want to find the leadership style that works best for the age and maturity of those youth with whom you work. Everyone's style of leadership is unique and is influenced by many factors. If you keep the goal of youth development in mind, you'll choose an approach which is right for each group of young people.

Your Role in Youth Group

There are many benefits from working with teen leadership project members as a group. Members can work with and help one another learn as peers. Research with youth shows they prefer to learn in this kind of informal, non-competitive setting. In such settings, they can share ideas, encourage and motivate each other. They can also learn social responsibility. Group work makes learning more fun and more relevant for youth.

As an adult leader, your role is to help young people develop a sense of autonomy and personal responsibility. Why is autonomy so important? A sense of autonomy enables youth to make decisions for themselves. Autonomous young people are not subject to the whims and fancies of others but are self-directing. But autonomy is not synonymous with complete freedom to do as one pleases. Empowered, autonomous youth take into account relevant factors in deciding the best course of action for all concerned. Young people develop a sense of moral responsibility and personal accountability by being engaged in real life situations, by exchanging viewpoints with others, and by respecting the opinions of others even when they are wrong.

Thus, your role as a leader in this project is critical. You can help your members develop individual plans of action. Once common goals are identified, group learning activities can be planned. Adult leaders then have opportunities to provide guidance and encouragement. As goals are

completed, a leader can assist with evaluation.

Letting Go

As an adult leader for this project, your role is to help youth develop to their fullest potential. As a leader, you need to “let go,” to stand back and watch teens practice leadership skills without interference.

In the beginning, very young children have to be taught how to do things. Once they begin to understand how to perform the basic motions, they must be guided and assisted until they are able to do the lesson on their own. This is when adults can hand the responsibility over and allow the teens to teach what they have learned. This is described as “letting go.”

The “letting go” philosophy deals with adults standing back. At times, you must allow teens to strike out on their own and develop their leadership skills and views on leadership. Once they have learned some of the skills, they must be allowed their freedom and not be constantly told what to do. This is the point at which the adult needs to develop a coaching attitude and offer encouragement, praise, and constructive criticism. As one person put it, your goal is-

To be the guide on the side, not the sage on the stage.

Adult leaders must give encouragement and offer suggestions at certain times but “let go” of their personal need for recognition and glory and allow teen leaders to earn the respect and recognition of others.

Your Role As a Leader

The 4-H teen leadership project has been designed to provide an environment where youth are encouraged to practice leadership skills. Before teens can practice leadership skills, however, the leader must make certain that the environment is safe. One way that leaders can be assured is to

analyze their own attitudes towards working with young people.

Research in Montana on adult leadership styles has revealed some clear messages about desirable approaches for working with youth. This research has shown that leaders create effective learning environments when they encourage young people to develop a sense of personal responsibility and to help youth assume more roles even when mistakes are made.

Youth who participate in these kinds of groups demonstrate higher levels of satisfaction than youth in other kinds of groups. In addition, youth in these kinds of empowering environments learn more life skills and develop more practical skills than youth in other environments.

In contrast, more control-oriented leaders tend to experience more rebellion, more acting out, more non-attending behaviors, and youth are more dissatisfied with their 4-H experience than youth in autonomy-oriented groups. Youth in control-oriented clubs tend to learn fewer life skills and think of 4-H as less fun than other groups. Ironically, the more a control-oriented leader tries to exert control over youth, the more young people rebel and the more chaos is likely to result.

Your role as a leader for this project is to provide the mature guidance necessary for youth to feel a sense of ownership and influence yet to experience risk-taking in a safe environment. Some have referred to this approach as “firm yet flexible.”

Research suggests that teens are looking for activities and programs which permit them to interact with others with a moderate level of supervision but not a formal format, a program where they can control most of this action.

Assessing Your Views of Young People

As a leader, you will work with youth a great deal. Your relationship with these young people is critical to your success and to the members’ success as youth leaders. William A. Lofquist, a nationally known expert in youth

development, has identified three distinct ways that adults can relate to young people. Leaders can do things: 1) to youth; 2) for youth; and 3) with youth.

Youth As Objects. If leaders do things **to** youth, they treat them as objects. The basis of this attitude is that one person or group of people knows what is best for another person or group of people. Adults who share this perspective see young people as the objects of their good intentions. Within this attitude there is little room for a consideration of what young people think about the design of the program or activity. According to adherents to this view, it is the responsibility of the young person to take advantage of the opportunity as it is designed by adults.

Youth As Recipients. In this view, adults still believe they know what is best for young people, but they “give” youth the opportunity to participate in decision-making because it will be good for them and will help them develop for the **future**. But the leader does not see them as having much to offer any group. Thus, youth are supposed to receive the benefits of what the

adult gives them. This relationship cannot be reasonably described as a true adult/youth partnership although there is some opportunity for the building of a sense of youth ownership in the outcome of the decisions that are made. However, the adult is still well in control of the conditions under which youth participate.

Youth As Resources. This attitude is based upon respect for the contribution that young people can make to the planning, operation, and evaluation of a youth organization in the **present**. If leaders do things **with** youth, they treat them as partners. Leaders need to respect youth for having something unique to contribute to the group. This means that both young people and adults need to learn the skills necessary for shared decision-making. In this view, youth are viewed as resources rather than as problems.

If we believe in democracy, which way should we treat youth? In 4-H, we believe in working **with** youth. Youth are a viable and vital human resource. They have much to offer each community, including yours.



Additional Resource Materials

As you serve as a project helper for teen leadership, you may find some of these resources valuable to give you ideas, provide inspiration, or give guidance to your efforts to work constructively with young people. Most are available through local libraries or in bookstores.

Bennis, Warren. (1989). Why leaders can't lead: The unconscious conspiracy continues. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Covey, Stephan R. (1989). The seven habits of highly effective people: Restoring the character ethic. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Glenn, H. Stephen & Nelsen, Jane. (1988). Raising self-reliant children in a self-indulgent world. Rocklin, CA: Prima Publishing & Communications.

Godke, M.S. & Munson, M.K. (1986). Leadership skills you never outgrow. Vols. 1-4. Urbana, IL: University of Illinois-Urbana Champaign.

Hersey, P.G. & Blanchard, K.H. (1982). Management of organizational behavior: Utilizing human resources, 4th ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Kohn, Alfie. (1993). Punished by rewards. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.

Lofquist, W.A. (1983). Discovering the meaning of prevention. Tucson, AZ: Associates for Youth Development.

Nelsen, Jane. (1996). Positive discipline. New York: Ballantine Books.

Palmer, D.E. (1996). Taking charge

Appendix

As you work with teens in this project, you may find it helpful to have a list

constructively: A framework for personal empowerment. Tucson: Development Publications.

Weisinger, Hendrie & Lobsenz, Norman. (1981). Nobody's perfect: How to give criticism and get results. New York: Warner Books.

Video Tapes

The following video tapes can be found either at libraries or online stores like Amazon.com. They may serve as good resources for you or your teen leaders.

Glenn, H. Stephen. (1990). Introduction to Developing Capable People (30 minutes)

Glenn, H. Stephen. (1990). The Greatest Human Need. (30 minutes)

Glenn, H. Stephen. (1990). Developing Healthy Self-Esteem. (30 minutes)

Glenn, H. Stephen. (1990). Empowering Others: Ten Keys to Affirming and Validating People. (30 minutes)

Penrod, Kathryn. (1990). I'm OK, You're OK: Building Self-Esteem in Youth. (19 minutes)

Waldren, Deryl & McFarland, Marcia. (1993). Decision-making in Youth Groups. (30 minutes)

of possible leadership activities in which youth can become involved. This list is just meant to be suggestive, not definitive.

Possible teen leadership activities:

Club organizational leadership

- ❑ Work with the adult leaders to help plan the club's agenda for the year-represent the members' interests.
- ❑ Serve as an officer or committee chair.
- ❑ Explain the responsibilities of each officer to all members before elections are held.
- ❑ Work with one or more club officers to help them understand their duties better.
- ❑ Be the advisor to the officers-help them develop an agenda for each business meeting and help them keep on track.
- ❑ Coordinate and run a phone tree for meeting reminders, change of plans, etc.
- ❑ Develop a club schedule of events and maybe a club newsletter to keep all members informed.
- ❑ Recruit new members for the club.
- ❑ Help new members learn the 4-H pledge.
- ❑ Be a big brother/sister to a new member to make them feel part of the club-introduce them around, welcome them at the first few meetings, make sure they get actively involved in club activities, check to see if they are enjoying their 4-H membership, etc.
- ❑ Assist younger members with their record-keeping.
- ❑ Explain the various county, regional, state and national 4-H events to club members.
- ❑ Be in charge of inviting a different parent to each meeting.
- ❑ Coordinate refreshments for meetings (assign members and remind before meetings).

Club activity leadership

- ❑ Help the social/recreation chairman or games leader plan games and

other social recreational activities for the club.

- ❑ Help members plan and organize a community service project.
- ❑ Help members plan and organize a club fund raising activity.
- ❑ Help plan and conduct special activities or programs (such as a skit, demonstrations, singing, refreshments, etc.) for a club family night.
- ❑ Help plan a club exhibit for Regional Day or the county fair.
- ❑ Create and make a 4-H window display and arrange to put it up during 4-H week.
- ❑ Invite a guest speaker to talk to the club and introduce him or her.
- ❑ Help leaders plan a field trip or tour, or coordinate project visits to members' homes.

Club project work leadership

- ❑ Help new and/or younger members select projects.
- ❑ Help members plan a presentation or show-and-tell relating to their project.
- ❑ Help members with project book work and record-keeping.
- ❑ Give a presentation on a project.
- ❑ Supervise the project work of a younger member and assist/teach when necessary or appropriate.
- ❑ Teach/lead one lesson at a project club meeting.
- ❑ Serve as a project leader for a small group of younger members.
- ❑ Be a leadership project helper for a younger member.
- ❑ Organize a judging experience for project club members.
- ❑ Help get equipment and supplies ready before meetings.
- ❑ Work one-on-one with members with special needs

County, regional or state leadership

- ❑ Become an active member of county/teen council.

- ❑ Serve on a committee to plan and conduct a county program or event (state day teen board, teen congress teen board, etc...)
- ❑ Serve on a county/state program committee.
- ❑ Be a camp counselor.
- ❑ Be a 4-H “storyteller” or ambassador-help spread the word about 4-H via radio newspapers, talks to civic groups, displays and exhibits.
- ❑ Help at county fair-be a judge’s helper, work at registration booth, etc.
- ❑ Visit other clubs and give a presentation on some topic of special interest to you, such as how to do a presentation, explain some regional and state events, etc.
- ❑ Ask your Extension Educator about other possible opportunities.
- ❑ Design your own leadership project.

School, civic and community leadership

- ❑ Be an officer or active member of a school club or another youth organization.
- ❑ Serve in student government.
- ❑ Do volunteer work with some social service organization.
- ❑ Volunteer to help with the fund drive for some charitable organization.
- ❑ Share some skill by demonstrating or teaching it at a summer recreational program, day care center, senior citizens home, youth center, or other place.
- ❑ Learn about your community’s resources so that you can find out about other possibilities for leadership roles outside of 4-H.