

## **OUTLINE OF TEEN LEADERSHIP PROJECT** **Ingham County 4-H**

### **WHO CAN BE A TEEN LEADER?**

A teen leader is defined as being any teen, 13 or over anytime during the calendar year, who is actively participating in 4-H leadership activities.

### **WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THE TEEN LEADER?**

A teen should decide and select with his/her leader, specific responsibilities and leadership activities that s/he would like to participate in.

Activities include the areas of club leadership and responsibilities, including full or partial leadership of specific projects, and responsibilities at other 4-H activities and events. The teen leadership project involves many different aspects, from leading a club to helping an adult leader with some specific task.

The minimum project requirement for a teen leader is one or more leadership responsibilities within his/her own club, other than being an officer. Responsibilities should increase with additional years as a teen leader. Expansion can include community and county activities.

There is a Teen Leadership class at the Fair for any teen leader who wishes to enter; however, exhibiting at the Fair is not required for completion of a Teen Leadership project.

### **PURPOSE OF TEEN LEADERSHIP PROJECT**

Few 4-H clubs have filled all the leadership spots and responsibilities in their club, and this is where the teen leader fits in. He or she can assist the club and at the same time gain stature by learning and practicing leadership. Teen leadership should utilize the skills of older youth, keep their interest, and enable them to share their talents.

### **TIPS ON TEEN LEADERSHIP**

In teen leadership, emphasis is placed on one's own value to others. Leadership in reality is helping others develop goals and then moving toward the goals. One of the jobs of a teen leader is to help members realize how much they can do. This means encouraging and believing in members and helping them believe in themselves. Provide experiences for members that will give them a feeling of accomplishment and confidence in themselves. Help to discover that there can be fragments of success even with failure. Every member needs to be noticed, to be important, to achieve and to be praised. Be sensitive to their needs and feelings. Usually you will teach them more by example than by words. If a member learns to evaluate what s/he has done and can experience personal satisfaction from it, s/he will strengthen his/her own self-concept.

## **TEEN LEADERS AND THE LOCAL CLUB**

Teen leaders should learn to work effectively with adults. Work with the leaders and members to develop a club program for the year. Help to plan according to the needs and wants of all members. Communicate often with the adult leader.

## **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ADULT LEADER OR ADVISOR TO THE TEEN LEADER**

An advisor should consider the jobs to be done, and the competencies and wishes of the teen leader, then jointly decide on her/his responsibilities and leadership activities. You can start small and then add to the responsibility. The teen leader should be given as much responsibility as s/he is capable of handling and willing to accept. Help the teen leader set goals and develop a plan of work early in the project season. Discuss the needs of your 4-H club and community, and help mesh the greatest needs of the teen leader, the club, the members and the community into the plan.

Keep the teen leader informed throughout the year of club, county, district and state events in which s/he may participate. Encourage him/her to attend any meetings/workshops/clinics etc., which have a bearing on his/her responsibility.

An excellent way to get younger members to participate in activities is for the teen leader to do it first. Most people are more inclined to do what the leader does and not what s/he says! Encourage the teen leader to be creative and adventuresome. Be willing to let him/her be different and give her/him a choice.

Communicate often with the teen leader, offer suggestions when appropriate, discuss making changes from the original plan of responsibilities if necessary. Help equip the teen leader with the necessary leadership skills and make the teen leadership project a great learning and sharing experience for the teen.

If appropriate, nominate and/or encourage the teen leader to participate in the teen awards programs. Encourage participation in exchange trips and state-wide activities. Teens may also look to their adult leaders for information on career planning and ways to further their interest in certain project areas.

## **SOME POSSIBLE TEEN LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The teen leadership project involves many different leadership aspects. Listed below are a few suggestions for possible activities. The ideas are only a partial listing - whatever responsibilities the advisor and teen leader decide on are acceptable.

- Full or partial leadership of specific project/s
- Leadership of a short-term activity or special project
- Assist and train club officers

- Assist others with recreation for the 4-H club
- Assist with training for demonstrations, judging, quiz bowl, performing arts
- Membership relations and recruiting, parent relations, visiting and working with new members
- Serve on the program planning committee
- Assist members with their record books
- Leadership in activities such as club publicity, fundraising, tours, picnics, banquets, outdoor activities, National 4H Week, etc.
- Help members develop goals and assist in evaluation periodically during the year as well as at the end
- Participate in county training programs and attend leader training when appropriate. Encourage others to participate in county activities such as Council, leader committees, etc.

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