



PROGRAMMING PROFILE

Building Capacity for Youth Development Programs

For more than 100 years, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension has been helping people address critical issues, needs and opportunities by delivering the vast knowledge and resources of MSU directly to individuals, communities and businesses. Seeking to improve lives and the state overall, MSU Extension focuses on four key areas of importance: leveraging natural and human assets, enhancing agriculture and agribusiness, improving health and nutrition for Michigan residents, and preparing Michigan's children and youth for the future.

With a goal of ensuring every Michigan child is prepared with the knowledge, tools and skills to lead a healthy and productive life, MSU Extension's children and youth programming uses the experiential learning model through which children learn best. This hands-on, learn-by-doing programming is concentrated in five core areas, one of which is capacity building for youth development programs.

Through this priority area, MSU Extension seeks to provide a variety of capacity-building tools and services to 4-H and other youth development programs across the state. As a result, the people and organizations that support Michigan's youth are better equipped to prepare young people for future educational, career and life success.

Delivered through webinars, face-to-face workshops and other mechanisms, MSU Extension offers a variety of training, curricula and materials to support volunteer managers and youth development staff as well as teen and adult volunteers. Resources in this priority area focus on:

CLUB DEVELOPMENT

Providing safe environments for the long-term engagement of youth is the foundation of every successful positive youth development program. In 4-H, clubs are the primary method for achieving this goal. Clubs provide volunteers and youth with unlimited opportunities for learning, relationship building and fun. To help 4-H staff members, volunteers, parents, community partners and professionals create an environment for positive youth development programming, MSU Extension offers trainings to support and enhance engagement of youth in safe community-based environments. Trainings include 4-H Club 101, 4-H Club 201, Creating an Effective Environment for Positive Youth Development and more.



VOLUNTEERISM

Volunteers are a critical component of any youth development program. To help 4-H programs and other youth development organizations recruit, screen and place volunteers, MSU Extension offers a wide variety of trainings on volunteerism and volunteer

management including Crossing the Gap: Communicating Across Generations, Increasing Cultural Competency, Targeted Volunteer Recruitment, Interviewing Potential Volunteers, Building Communication Skills, Volunteer Academy, Ready to Go: Volunteer Training, Delegation, Recruiting 21st Century Volunteers, Volunteers and Role Descriptions, Dealing with Difficult Volunteers and much more. These trainings are available for volunteers, parents, community partners and professionals.

## MENTORING

All youth need caring, nurturing and encouraging people in their lives. While many youth find these individuals on their own, not all are so lucky. To help meet the needs of those without a caring adult in their lives, MSU Extension supports formal youth mentoring to provide young people with adults who can



guide, support and nurture them. To help build skills in professional staff and volunteers who work in the field of youth mentoring, MSU Extension offers trainings including Ready to Go Mentor Training; Matching, Monitoring and Closure of Mentoring Relationships; Mentoring Relationships; and Setting and Maintaining Healthy Boundaries. These trainings are available for mentors, volunteers, parents, community partners and professionals.

## EMERGING TOPICS

In the world of youth development, the needs of volunteers, parents, community partners and professionals is ever changing. To help ensure youth organizations are prepared to address any new and emerging issues that arise, MSU Extension works to quickly develop training, tools, workshops and webinars on hot-button topics affecting youth development programs. Examples of these hot-button topics include using social media and communicating with professionalism.

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## CONTACT US

For more information about MSU Extension's capacity building for youth development programs, visit [msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/volunteering](http://msue.anr.msu.edu/topic/info/volunteering) or [anr.capacitybuilding@anr.msu.edu](mailto:anr.capacitybuilding@anr.msu.edu).

