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Y A 4 - H !

Youth Advocates for Health

Teens as Teachers

Oregon State University Extension Service
College of Public Health and Human Sciences

Oregon State
UNIVERSITY

YA4-H! Youth Advocates for Health Teens as Teachers



Mary E. Arnold, Ph.D., Professor and Youth Development Specialist, Oregon State University

Liv N. Gifford, MPH, 4-H Youth Development, Oregon State University

Mary Katherine Y. Deen, Ph.D., Family and 4-H Youth Development Specialist, Washington State University

Janet W. Edwards, MEd, 4-H STEM Specialist, Washington State University

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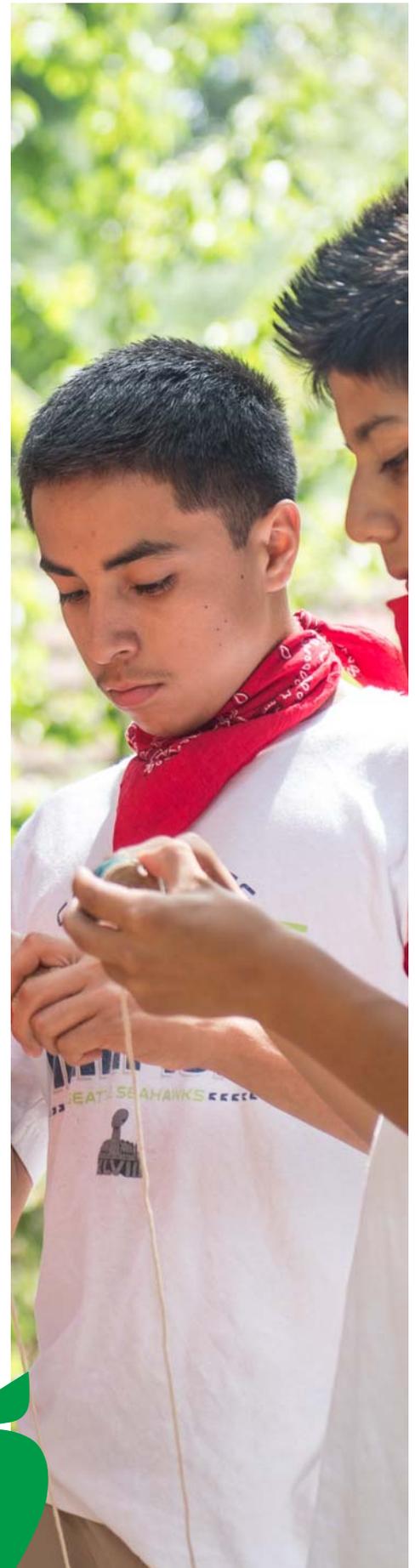


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Introduction to YA4-H!

Teens as Teachers

WHY TEENS AS TEACHERS?

“Why does my foot fall asleep? What makes me sneeze? Why do I need to sleep? Is pollution bad for me?”

Young children in communities everywhere are eager to learn about their bodies, minds, and environments. Health – from nutrition to physical activity to stress management and mental health – is a subject of great fascination for kids, and they can benefit throughout their lives from early instruction.

Gaining skills, knowledge, and attitudes that promote health is critical for children as it sets the stage for the early development of healthy habits that can carry forth into adulthood. At the same time, teen teachers learn and adopt many of the health-related things they are teaching the younger children, thereby contributing to teen health as well.

Benefits of Teens as Teachers Programs

Research suggests that cross-age teaching – having teens teach other youth who are three or more years younger – offers many positive developmental outcomes for both younger children and teens. Successful programs not only provide exciting instruction for kids, but also offer opportunities for adolescents to learn more about the subject they are teaching while engaging in positive youth development (Arnold & Nott, 2010). Benefits to teens can be summarized in three broad categories:

- **Skill Development.** Teen teaching provides youth with an opportunity to develop a set of skills. Teens report gaining a range of new skills by participating in a teen teacher program, including knowledge of program content; team-building, leadership, problem-solving, teaching, and communication skills; empowerment; competency; work habits; public speaking; and role modeling. High-quality programs provide youth with several different opportunities to enhance these skills, each of which helps them to become stronger teachers and teens.

- **Personal Development.** In addition to skills development, teen teaching programs provide youth with opportunities for personal development, especially self-confidence, responsibility, authenticity, enthusiasm, ability to overcome prejudices, achievement, goal-setting, fulfillment, career exploration, and a sense of making a contribution to others.
- **New Relationships and Friendships.** Forming new friendships through a teen teacher program enhances a young person’s social circle, expands his or her network, and provides connections and resources that may be valuable in the future. Creating these new relationships with peers, staff, participants, and local community agencies is a core principle of positive youth development.

What draws teens to teaching opportunities? Teens typically describe several reasons for wanting to become a teacher of younger children, including wanting to expand knowledge, gain experience, build their resumes, improve relationships, and add variety and interest to their lives (Dilek, Vildan, Tolga, & Nilgün, 2012). Making sure that your program gives youth a chance for skill development, personal growth, and social opportunities will help ensure that your program appeals to teens.

Characteristics of Successful Programs

Attention to program quality helps ensure that teen teaching programs are successful. Findings from in-depth research of 14 cross-age teaching programs in a variety of disciplines revealed that successful programs shared these characteristics (Lee, Murdock & Paterson, 2002):

- Teens teach children at least 2 to 3 years younger than they are.
- Teens do all the teaching; they don’t merely assist an adult.
- Teens teach small groups of children, not one-on-one.
- Teens are trained to teach a particular curriculum ra-

Introduction to YA4-H! Teens as Teachers (continued)

ther than offering general homework assistance.

- The curricula taught to younger children are aimed at enrichment rather than remediation.
- Programs are of sufficient duration that teens develop relationships with one another and with the children they teach.

What else can we learn from successful programs? Here are a few tips:

1. Teens can teach!

- Teens can be effective role models – especially when their cultural background is similar to the children they teach.
- Teens who struggle with living in high-risk environments often benefit most from experiences as a cross-age teacher.

2. An effective program director is essential.

- Successful directors establish respectful personal and professional relationships with teen teachers.
- Successful directors maintain relationships with teen teachers long after the program concludes.

3. Teens should be recruited and formally selected.

- Experienced teens are often the best recruiters of new teen teachers.
- Interviews help teens and program directors get to know one another's strengths and weaknesses.
- Using a selection process that includes an application, interview and reference checks help teach teens job application skills.
- Observing other teen teachers helps prospective teens understand what they will be doing.
- Formal agreements or contracts help build teen commitment and professionalism.

4. The type and structure of the curriculum matters.

- Teens are most successful when teaching a subject that matches their own interests.
- A strong curriculum includes at least 5 lessons of 1-1½ hours each.
- Initial lesson plans should be detailed and can become more flexible after teens gain experience with the lessons.

- Teens are particularly effective when using hands-on and interactive learning activities.

5. Pay attention to details!

- Plan for effective communication among all stakeholders: teens, program director, parents, schools.
- Attend to basic needs of teens: food, transportation, rest, etc.
- Train teens to handle potential emergencies.
- Provide some form of compensation – not necessarily money – for teens.
- Involve parents appropriately.

6. Provide initial training.

- At least ten hours of training is recommended as a minimum, but 30-40 hours of training is preferred.
- Training in communication, team-building, and multi-cultural understanding is as important to teens as curriculum training.
- Effective training includes both modeling by trainer and opportunities for teens to practice teaching.
- Teens need and want to understand children's behavior and gain skills in managing groups.
- Include instruction on how to teach.

7. Provide ongoing training and support.

- Provide frequent and regular training throughout the program.
- Include opportunities to debrief teaching experiences and share lessons learned.
- Move teens from basics to higher levels of understanding and ability to problem-solve and think on their feet.
- Give teens increasing levels of responsibilities to build on their training and skill levels.
- Give clear and timely feedback.
- Introduce a new activity or strategy at each session to keep training fun and interesting.

Introduction to YA4-H! Teens as Teachers (continued)

8. Offer team-building opportunities.

- Teens viewed working with other teens as a valuable part of cross-age teaching experiences.
- Team-teaching in pairs reduced teen anxiety, increased confidence and comfort levels, and improved quality of instruction.
- Provide time and/or activities just for teens to do together.

9. Prepare teens for success.

- Regularly express confidence in teen abilities and high expectations for their performance.
- Pay attention to each teen's teaching readiness, and provide teens with incremental increases in responsibility and autonomy.
- Provide flexible curricula that can be revised or adjusted as needed.
- Model the enthusiastic leadership expected from teens.
- Pay attention to teen/child ratios. Too many children can overwhelm teens; too few can flatten the energy of a lesson. An ideal ratio is 2 teen teachers to 6-12 children.

10. Offer recognition and reward.

- Use both material (certificates, notes from children, fun gifts such as toss-able toys, gift cards, etc.) and non-material (thumbs-up, gaining a child's trust and respect) recognition and reward following successful teen efforts.
- Recognition through publicity benefits both teens and the program.
- Working with adults who trust them serves as significant recognition and pride for teens.
- Service to others and making a difference in a real-world activity are rewarding for teens.
- Find opportunities to publicly thank and congratulate teen teachers.

11. Give teens a voice and involve them in decisions that affect their teaching.

- Gradually increase the amount of influence teens have in the program and the level of responsibility they are expected to assume.
- Teens welcome opportunities to plan and pilot activities and train other teens.
- Teens express both surprise and delight at the impact

they have on younger children, and come to see themselves as positive role models and contributors.

- Adults should take on jobs like taking pictures or washing dishes while teens teach so they aren't tempted to interfere.

12. Monitor and evaluate.

- Ongoing reflection and self-evaluation are essential for teen growth and development.
- Give general feedback to the entire teen team. Give specific feedback to each teen individually.
- Feedback is most effective when it's immediate and directed to an individual teen.
- End-of-day de-briefing provides teens with opportunities to express concerns and adjust teaching as needed.
- Ask teens to fill in blanks, "I like the way I ..." "Next time, I will ..."

About Youth Advocates for Health

The Teens as Teachers program is one component of the Youth Advocates for Health (YA4-H!) program. The goal of YA4-H! is to engage 4-H teens in health-related learning and action, with the ultimate goal of preparing youth to lead health-related change in their communities. YA4-H! prepares young people to work in partnership with adults and other teens to engage communities for change, and equips and empowers them as learners, teachers, researchers, and advocates to address critical health-related concerns. Along the way, YA4-H! provides opportunities for teens to develop and practice the skills that will help them as they navigate the transition to young adulthood.

YA4-H! is designed with the developmental needs of teens in mind. Unlike younger 4-H members, who focus on learning content related to their 4-H projects, teens need a different kind of programming; programming that supports the things they are naturally exploring at this stage in their lives, like personal identity, greater autonomy, leadership skills, and career exploration. Developmentally, teens desire to take on more responsibility and leadership. Teens long to contribute their ideas to programs and decision-making, and they are ready to have more freedom and self-determination in 4-H. Teens also have an increasing desire to find their place in the community and to identify ways in which they can make a meaningful contribution to others.

Introduction to YA4-H! Teens as Teachers (continued)

Although they are increasingly capable and independent, teens still need the support, guidance, and mentorship of adults as they navigate the time between childhood and adulthood and practice their emerging skills. Youth-adult partnerships play a critical role for teens during this time!

Research shows that *developmental relationships* between youth and adults (and youth and their peers too!) provide some important things that help youth *grow and thrive* (Search Institute, 2014a). They are:

- Expressing care
- Challenging youth to stretch and grow
- Providing support
- Sharing power
- Expanding possibilities

Components of YA4-H!

1. **YA4-H! Building Successful Youth-Adult Partnerships:** Because the YA4-H! program depends on strong youth-adult partnerships (Y-APs), this curriculum is essential. The other three program components, including Teens as Teachers, are based on the presence of already formed Y-APs, so all YA4-H! programs should begin with this curriculum first. There are options for short (4-hour) or long (up to a day-and-a-half, or a full weekend) training outlines depending on the needs of your group.
2. **YA4-H! Teens as Teachers:** Teens love to teach! And emerging research shows that teens are particularly effective as teachers of younger youth (Smith et al, 2014). Research also shows that teens learn the health-related information they teach, and make changes in their own health behavior too! This curriculum prepares teens to be effective teachers with the support of their adult partners.
3. **YA4-H! Youth Participatory Research and Action:** Teens have great ideas for addressing health-related concerns in their communities, but they often lack skills in understanding the issue they want to change, and don't know how to go about making change happen. This curriculum prepares teens to research health concerns in their communities that are salient to youth and to take action to address them. Research has revealed the powerful effects that youth participatory research and action programs can have on youth as well as the communities that are enhanced by these efforts (Arnold & White, 2013).

4. **YA4-H! Career Exploration:** Most youth can readily identify some health careers—like being a doctor or a nurse. But there are many health-related careers that youth may not even think of! For example, biological researchers, lab technicians, athletic trainers, and community nutrition educators. Developmentally, teens need to strike a balance between being a teenager and thinking about the future. This curriculum address both by engaging teens in an exploration of the vast career options that are focused on improving health in a fun, youth-friendly format.

The Bigger Picture: Health and 4-H Youth Development

In 2014, the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy (ECOP) Health Task Force identified positive youth development for health as one of Extension's six priority areas. This emphasis on a systems-based approach to ensuring health has prompted Cooperative Extension Services across the country to invest more and more in health-related Extension programs. The accredited College of Public Health and Human Sciences at Oregon State University is leading the way with one of the first Public Health Extension programs, of which the Oregon 4-H Youth Development program is a part. But really, 4-H has been about health since its beginning over 100 years ago!

The primary goal for the 4-H youth development program is to help youth develop on a “thriving” trajectory. Research shows that youth who are thriving (Scales et al, 2011; Search Institute, 2014b; Lerner et al, 2011):

- Are open to challenge and discovery
- Have a hopeful sense of purpose
- Possess a spiritual or transcendent awareness
- Have a pro-social awareness
- Have positive emotions
- Can set, change, and achieve goals for themselves

Research also shows that youth on thriving trajectories do better on important things, like school motivation and achievement, reduction in risk-taking, social-emotional well-being, and well... HEALTH!



Introduction to YA4-H! Teens as Teachers (continued)

We hope the YA4-H! curriculum will prepare youth in your community to lead health-related change and become successful young adults. Comments and questions about YA4-H! can be directed to Mary Arnold at Mary.Arnold@oregonstate.edu. We welcome your feedback and wish you success in your Teens as Teachers programs!

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About This Curriculum



The Teens as Teachers curriculum consists of a series of activities that are designed to be participant-led, fun, and engaging for youth and adults alike. Participants learn by doing, which is a hallmark of 4-H.

Training in Youth-Adult Partnerships (Y-APs) is a necessary prerequisite to pursuing the Teens as Teachers training. Once your group has completed a minimum of four hours of Y-AP training from the *YA4-H! Building Successful Youth-Adult Partnerships* curriculum, you are ready to complete the Teens as Teachers training.

This training aims to give teens ample opportunity to learn, practice, and reflect on teaching and facilitation skills, understand child development principles, and lead lessons with confidence and enthusiasm.

Teens should participate in as many activities as possible and give feedback to other teens throughout the training. Teens should experience all lessons, either as participants or as co-teachers.

Contents

In order to prepare teens to be effective cross-age teachers, we have included concepts of culture and diversity, child development, learning styles, facilitation skills, classroom management, action planning, and more in the *Teens as Teachers* curriculum. This curriculum includes the following sections:

- **Culture: Do I Have One?** The experiences we have in our lives and how we respond to these experiences make us unique. Our personal culture shapes our view the world and the people around us. This section helps us become more aware of our own worldview, understand stereotypes and generalizations, and appreciate the many dimensions of diversity teens may encounter as teachers.
- **Getting to Know Your Audience.** To be an effective teacher, it is important to know your audience. This section provides information and tools for understanding the developmental stages of youth the teens will be teaching. These activities offer insight into learning styles, experiential learnings, and how to be an effective facilitator.

- **Teaching Tips and Tools.** These activities introduce strategies for keeping kids focused and attentive, as well as communicating the main point of a lesson even when time is short. This section also emphasizes the point that becoming a good teacher requires lots of practice!
- **Preparing for Action.** This section introduces teens to five critical facilitation skills: Invite and include, energize, encourage, engage and keep it moving, and wait three before me! These activities also explore the idea of professionalism and being a good role model. Finally, because being a teacher takes preparation and planning, teens learn the basics of action planning in this section.
- **Reflection and Evaluation.** Before completing their Teens as Teachers training, teens should pause for reflection and discussion on what they have learned. How will new skills and lessons apply to real-life settings? In addition to group reflection activities, this section also includes written evaluation forms to gather feedback on training sessions and teen teaching experiences.
- **Recruitment Materials.** In order to launch a successful Teens as Teachers program in your community, you first need to find enthusiastic teen participants. Recruitment takes time, effort, and creativity. This section offers sample tools such as a flyer, press release, letter to school personnel, job description, and application to help you get started.
- **Handouts.** The final section of the curriculum includes handouts, lesson plans, and worksheets that correspond to specific activities. When preparing for a training session, take note of what handouts you will need and how many copies you will need. In some cases, you will need to make enough copies to give one to each participant.



About This Curriculum (continued)

Training Agendas

Research suggests that teens need a minimum of 10 hours, and ideally 30 to 40 hours of training to be effective teachers of younger children. This includes training in Y-APs, Teens as Teachers, and the curriculum that youth will be teaching.

Factoring in a few short breaks, the Teens as Teachers curriculum includes approximately 11.5 hours of training. Below are three sample agendas that will help groups plan their training workshops according to how much time they have. In each example, participants learn through games, role play, and other fun, interactive activities designed to create experiential learning opportunities.

Regardless of how you arrange your training sessions, be sure to give teens an opportunity to experience all the activities in this curriculum before they begin teaching.

Half-day workshop (4 hours)

This introductory agenda introduces some fundamental concepts about culture, child development, and the essential elements of a positive teaching and learning environment. If you have time, consider beginning with an ice-breaker from *Building Successful Youth-Adult Partnerships*.

Inside Outside Circles- 30 minutes

Interplanetary Impressions- 30 minutes

Ages and Stages- 60 minutes

15-minute break

It's Essential! - 40 minutes

Learning Styles - 30 minutes

Clover Reflection - 20 minutes

Full-day workshop (7.5 hours)

With a full day, participants can thoroughly explore issues of culture, diversity, and working effectively with children. Teens can also learn the basics of classroom management.

MORNING (APPROXIMATELY 3.5 HOURS)

Inside Outside Circles - 30 minutes

Diversity Wheel - 30 minutes

My View of the World - 20 minutes

Interplanetary Impressions - 30 minutes

15-minute break

Ages and Stages - 60 minutes

AFTERNOON (APPROXIMATELY 4 HOURS)

It's Essential! - 40 minutes

Experiential Learning - 45 minutes

15-minute break

Learning Styles - 30 minutes

Keeping Your Group On Task - 60 minutes

Clover Reflection - 20 minutes

Weekend Retreat Schedule (11.5 hours)

This curriculum can be accomplished in full in approximately 11.5 hours, including regular short breaks. Tackling the full training in one weekend will jumpstart your teens' skills and enthusiasm and bring you closer to launching a teen teaching program in your community!

FRIDAY EVENING (APPROXIMATELY 2.5 HOURS)

Inside Outside Circles - 30 minutes

Diversity Wheel - 30 minutes

My View of the World - 20 minutes

15-minute break

Interplanetary Impressions - 30 minutes

Reflection Circle - 20 minutes

SATURDAY MORNING (APPROXIMATELY 3.5 HOURS)

Ages and Stages - 60 minutes

It's Essential - 40 minutes

15-minute break

Experiential Learning - 45 minutes

Learning Styles - 30 minutes

SATURDAY AFTERNOON (APPROXIMATELY 4 HOURS)

Keeping Your Group on Task - 60 minutes

Getting to the Point - 60 minutes

15-minute break

Practice Makes Perfect - 30 minutes

Great Teens Make Great Teachers - 45 minutes

What NOT to Wear! - 40 minutes

SUNDAY MORNING (APPROXIMATELY 1.5 HOURS)

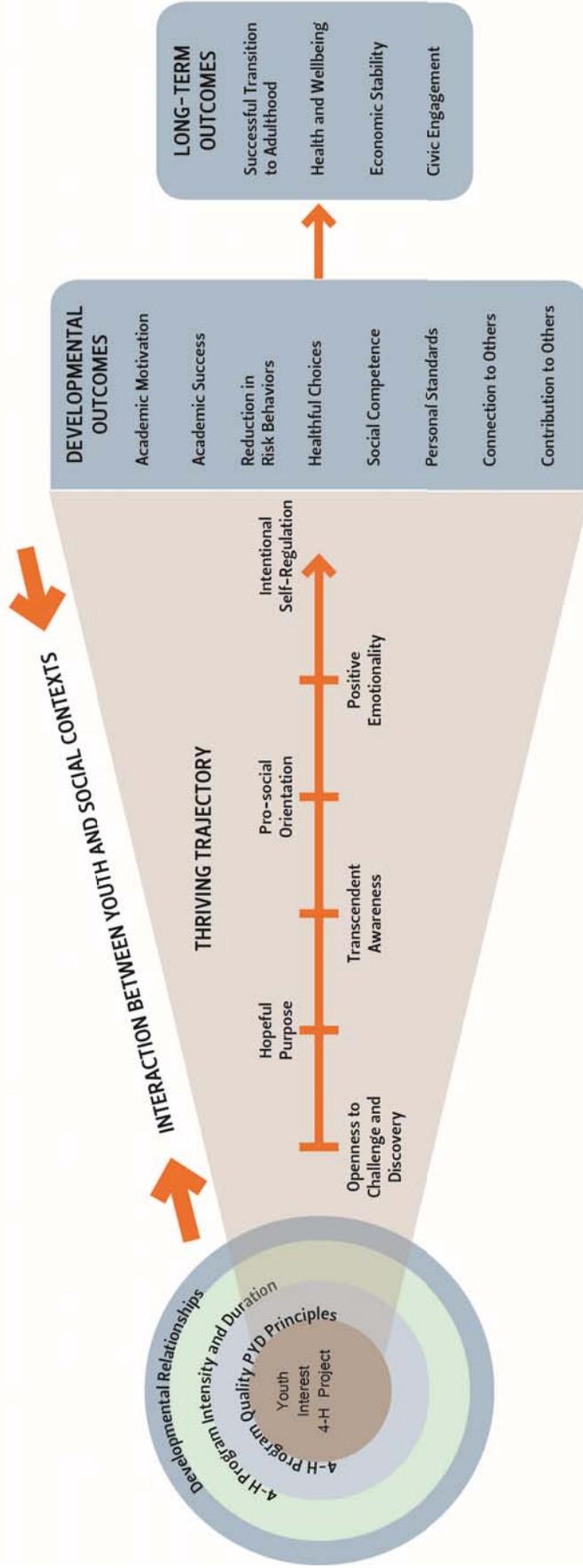
Action Planning - 60 minutes

Clover Reflection - 20 minutes

Training Evaluation - 20 minutes



OREGON 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MODEL



YA4-H! Youth Advocates for Health—Teens as Teachers

Program Logic Model

INPUTS		OUTPUTS		OUTCOMES	
<p>What we have...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YA4-H! Teens as Teachers Curriculum • Teen teachers • Committed adult mentors 	<p>What is done and who we reach...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit teens and adult mentors for a local Teens as Teachers team • Utilize the curriculum to provide training to teams • Provide appropriate program structure, guidance and support for team • Provide curriculum for teens to teach • Provide ongoing training and support to teams 	<p>Short-Term (Learning)</p> <p>Teens and adult mentors learn concepts and develop skills in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Navigating differences • Diversity • Professionalism • Planning • Ages and stages of child development • Experiential learning model • Differences in learning styles • Strategies for effective teaching • Self-confidence • Being a role model for others • Subject matter expertise (based on the curriculum to be taught) 	<p>Medium-Term (Action)</p> <p>Teens and adult mentors demonstrate the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work together to plan a Teens as Teachers program • Commit to sustained involvement in the program • Utilize YA4-H! Teens as Teachers curriculum to prepare for teaching • Practice teaching the curriculum they will be using to teach younger youth • Identify youth strengths for different aspects of teaching • Successfully conduct a Teens as Teachers program with younger youth • Adopt practices from the content they teach (e.g. when teaching about nutrition, youth they are teaching to younger youth) <p>Younger youth:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn content taught by teen teachers • Adopt practices taught by teens • Develop a sense of inclusion through bonding with older youth • Look to older youth as role models 	<p>Long-Term (Social)</p> <p>Teens demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful transition to adulthood • Health and well-being • Economic stability • Civic engagement 	

Culture: Do I Have One?



SECTION OVERVIEW

Everyone has a culture. The experiences we have in our lives and how we respond to these experiences set us apart from other people and make us unique. Our personal culture has a great impact on how we view the world and the people around us. This section helps us become more aware of our own worldview, understand stereotypes and generalizations, and appreciate the many dimensions of diversity. All these things are important to explore before learning specifically about being a teen teacher. Knowing who you are first will help you understand more about the youth you are teaching.

ACTIVITIES

- Inside Outside Circles
- Diversity Wheel
- My View of the World: Learning about Culture
- Interplanetary Impressions: Learning about Stereotypes and Generalizations



Inside Outside Circles

Purpose of Activity

This activity helps break the ice in new groups and allows participants to get to know each other. It also gives participants an opportunity to recognize and share some of the unique cultural characteristics of their families.

Skills Developed

- Communication
- Listening

Room Set-Up

- Move tables and chairs out of the way so that you have space for participants to stand in a circle.
- Place flip chart where everyone can see it.

Instructions

1. Break participants up into two groups, forming one circle within another, with inside and outside circles facing each other.
2. Provide verbal directions and written ones on flip charts. Ask participants to introduce themselves to the person they are facing and then share the answer to the question posed by the facilitator.
3. On your cue, have one circle move by 3 or some other number and face a new partner. Introduce again and answer an-

other question.

4. Repeat the process 4 to 5 times. When done, have them return to one large group.

Suggested Questions

1. What languages do you speak?
2. What music do you listen to? What dances do you know?
3. What foods do you eat at home or with extended family?
4. In your family, what is considered polite and what is considered rude? What manners have you been taught?
5. What do you wear on special occasions?
6. How often do you see your extended family? What role do they play in your life?
7. What holidays and ceremonies are important in your family?
8. Describe something very important to you. It could be a person, such as your parent, sibling, or friend. It could be a hobby or a goal, such as going to college or designing a website.



Questions for Discussion

1. What did you learn about people during the activity?
2. What differences did you note?

Time

- 30 minutes



Materials

- Flip chart
- Markers

Facilitator Tips

This activity is an excellent prelude to the next three activities: Diversity Wheel, My View of the World, and Interplanetary Impressions.

NOTES: