Engaging Older Members within the Local Club
Objectives

1. Identify characteristics of older youth.
2. Define advantages of youth-adult partnerships.
3. Describe levels of youth participation.
4. Share recommendations for successful youth-adult partnerships.
5. Identify ways to engage older members.
Characteristics of Youth Age 15-18

- Want adult leadership roles
- Need strong voices in planning their own programs
- Can consider information and come up with new possibilities
- Can initiate and carry out their own tasks without the supervision of others
- Lose patience with meaningless activities
Youth and Adult Partnerships

• Youth are a resource that often goes untapped.

• The most effective strategy is working *with* youth (instead of doing things *to* or *for* youth).
Advantages of Working with Youth

- Youth recruit other youth much more effectively than adults can.
- Young people tend to have fresh perspectives on problems.
- Young people don't think that things have to be done the ways they have always been done in the past.
- Youth have access to information that is difficult for adults to obtain.
Ladder of Youth Participation

Maximum Youth Involvement/Youth as Partners

- Youth-initiated ideas, decisions directed by youth.
- Youth-initiated ideas, decisions shared with adults.
- Adult-initiated ideas, decisions shared with youth.
- Youth are consulted and informed.

- Youth are informed and assigned tasks.
- Youth are tokens, may be asked for ideas.
- Youth are used as decorations for the program.
- Youth are used to communicate adults’ messages.

Minimum Youth Involvement/Youth as Objects
Consulted and Informed

• Youth are asked what they think and want, but do not really have many choices.

• Adults still tell youth what their role is, but at least they ask first.
Adult-Initiated and Directed

• The ideas of several adults are included.
• The adults consult with and share ideas with young people to make it work for both youth and adults.
Youth-Initiated Ideas, Decisions Shared with Adults

- Youth come up with the idea and initiate adult involvement.
- The two groups work together to share the decision making.
Youth-Initiated Ideas
Decisions Directed by Youth

• This step is when young people initiate and direct a project or program.
• Adults are involved only in a supportive role.
• This is the most meaningful partnership for youth.
Dos and Don’ts for Successful Youth-Adult Partnerships
Adults

• Do involve youth in the decision-making that affects their lives.
• Do listen—really listen to youth and be willing to learn from them.
• Do provide youth with information and training they need to succeed.
• Do plan meetings so that everyone feels welcome.
• Don’t stereotype youth.
• Don’t blame all youth for the actions of one individual youth.
Ask the Expert

• How have you utilized older members in your clubs?
Engaging Older Members

• Publicize 4-H projects and activities

• Recruit new members

• Advise members in preparing exhibits for County Fair

• Assist in program planning
Engaging Older Members

- Assist leader with Share-the-Fun

- Assistant with special 4-H club event (i.e., community service, fund raising, etc.)

- Help leader with club records
Conclusion & Quiz
Sources

