



Key People in 4-H

4-H Council Handbook Tip Sheet

A team of individuals filling a variety of roles and responsibilities work together to deliver an effective 4-H Youth Development Program.

Volunteers

Volunteers are key to the success of the 4-H program and should represent all segments of the community. The primary purpose of volunteer involvement is to help assure that the program is designed and delivered in a way that best serves the community. The secondary purpose of involving volunteers is so that adults, too, can benefit and learn. All volunteers need to participate in educational updates to assure that they are using current techniques and information.

The activities of volunteers will vary depending upon their assigned roles. In general, volunteer functions can be categorized as policy-making, advisory, and implementation.

Youth also serve important volunteer roles. These roles help the youth develop important life skills while they contribute as mentors to younger members. Youth membership on 4-H Councils and Fair Boards is encouraged.

4-H Youth Development Program Assistants

Some counties employ program assistants who work under the direction and supervision of the 4-H Extension Educator. Job descriptions for these positions are developed locally.

4-H Youth Development Extension Educators

The primary responsibility of the 4-H Educator is to provide educational leadership in carrying out the Extension and 4-H missions in the local community. The Extension Educator is employed by Purdue University, is the leader of the nonformal youth development education program in the county, and serves as the spokesperson for the 4-H program. He/she works closely with the 4-H Council in carrying out the program-planning process. The Extension Educator is responsible for developing and supporting ongoing volunteer leadership efforts that

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strengthen opportunities for youth and adults to learn together in positive, meaningful ways. This responsibility includes a major commitment to adult education.

Extension Educators provide the link between Land Grant University research and Indiana residents by creating innovative learning opportunities that address local issues. Dedicated to helping improve the quality of life for residents, they collaborate with other organizations to provide resources and expertise to the community.

Extension Educator functions include:

- Conduct program planning.
- Lead and monitor audience development.
- Develop and implement volunteer staff development.
- Provide for and promote resource development.
- Ensure resource accountability.
- Guide, assure, and supervise program visibility.
- Manage interagency programming.

Purdue Extension Youth Specialists

Extension Specialists provide statewide leadership for the 4-H program. They work with Extension Educators to determine needs statewide. The specific activities of the specialists vary depending upon their position, but their functions are consistent.

Extension Specialist functions include:

- Teach youth and adults in the 4-H program.
- Design and conduct staff development.
- Conduct applied research that is designed to enhance the implementation of the 4-H program.
- Design and write curriculum for the 4-H program.
- Develop and implement programs and materials which provide for specialized learning opportunities for 4-H youth.
- Evaluate and refine programs based on the identified needs of youth.
- Conduct statewide needs assessments to determine directions of statewide program development.
- Facilitate effective resource development.
- Remain current professionally.

To learn more about Key People in the 4-H Youth Development Program, please visit the section of the Indiana 4-H Youth Development Council Handbook with the same title (<http://bit.ly/Key4HPeople>).