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Feature Articles

Developing a Federal Research Agenda for Positive Youth Development: Identifying Gaps in the Field and an Effective Consensus Building Approach

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Dymnicki, Allison B.; Le Menestrel, Suzanne; Boyd, Michelle J.; Lauxman, Lisa; Oberlander, Sarah E.; Osher, David M.

The field of positive youth development (PYD) is at an important crossroads in terms of defining its scope and directions for future research. This paper describes an effective consensus-building process that representatives from 16 federal agencies engaged in to develop a research agenda focused on PYD and the product that resulted from using this approach. During this process, the representatives identified and refined three research domains (conceptual issues related to PYD, data sources and indicators, and program implementation and effectiveness) and key research questions that could benefit from future research. We share lessons learned from our experience to emphasize the importance of organizational systems change efforts and interagency collaborations. A major contribution of this paper is to provide specific areas for future research in PYD from the federal perspective and to describe future implications for PYD policy and interagency collaborations.

Incorporating Cultural Competence into Youth Programming Design and Staff Development: A Literature Review

[Article 161101FA002].....Page 20
Smith, Julianne; Soule, Katherine E.

The increasing diversity of youth in the United States necessitates a shift in the ways that youth services and programming are designed and implemented. This article examines existing scholarship on developing the cultural competency of volunteers in youth development programs in an effort to improve 4-H YDP protocol. Drawing from a diverse, interdisciplinary range of peer-reviewed, academic articles, this literature review plots out recent pedagogical trends, theoretical concepts, and empirical studies dealing with the cultural competence of service workers and mentors interacting with youth. Based on a synthesis of the findings, this paper presents guiding principles for increasing cultural competence of youth program design through both training and organizational changes.

Self-efficacy and Perceived Organizational Support by Workers in a Youth Development Setting

[Article 161101FA003].....Page 35

Rockow, Sara; Kowalski, Christopher L.; Chen, Kong; Smothers, Anthony

The efficacy levels of workers in the youth development field can significantly impact the work done with youth. These levels may be impacted by workers' perceptions of administrative occupational support at their organization. To date, limited research exists that examines youth work efficacy levels, and no research studies exist analyzing the relationship between youth workers' efficacy levels and perceived organizational support. The current study examined the relationship between self-efficacy and the perceived organizational support felt by workers in a youth development setting. A total of 198 surveys were completed; results indicated that youth work efficacy was significantly related to perceived organizational support. This study is important to enhancing the body of knowledge regarding self-efficacy levels of workers in a youth development setting, as well as understanding motivation and self-confidence of youth development professionals.

Perceptions and Educational Strategies of Louisiana Agricultural Education Teachers When Working with Students with Special Needs

[Article 161101FA004].....Page 49

Stair, Kristin S.; Blackburn, J. Joey; Bunch, J. C.; Blanchard, Leslie; Cater, Melissa; Fox, Janet

A teacher's willingness to accept inclusion has been identified as an indicator of the quality of experience that a student with special needs will have in the classroom. The purpose of this exploratory study was twofold: (1) to describe the overall perceptions of working with students with special needs and (2) to determine how teachers in Louisiana are currently working with students with special needs. A total of 152 teachers attended the Louisiana agricultural education teacher's summer conference with 43% completing a three part survey instrument. Data analysis indicated that teachers are confident in their ability to work with students with special needs and they agree that they can incorporate various areas of inclusion within their programs. However, they disagreed that they have received adequate in-service opportunities related to special education. Regarding educational strategies, teachers in this study identified all of the given inclusion strategies as being used regularly in their programs with the exception of tutoring after school. They also identified these educational practices as being highly effective within their programs. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, additional research is recommended to further investigate the in-service and training needs of teachers in Louisiana.

Program Articles

Positive Youth Development Life Skills Gained at the Iowa 4-H Youth Conference

[Article 161101PA001].....Page 62

Allen, Brenda S.; Lohman, Brenda J.

Research suggests 4-H programs build Life Skills such as leadership, communication, citizenship and learning. However, 4-H programs vary from long-term on-going experiences to shorter, more intense opportunities. This paper discusses a program evaluation articulating the life skill development of participants in a 3-day residential State 4-H Conference on a Midwestern college campus. The Life Skills assessed were in the areas of leadership, citizenship, communication, and learning as part of overall Life Skill development. Participants were youth ages 14-18 years. A retrospective pretest-posttest was used to evaluate skill development and understanding. Analysis, including paired sample t-tests, indicated growth in each of the 12

common outcome measures evaluated. This study supports the importance of purposeful planning and youth engagement in the learning process to achieve desired life skill outcomes.

Lessons of Partnership: Successes and Challenges Associated with the Dissemination of the Not-On-Tobacco Program within Cooperative Extension Service Framework

[Article 161101PA002].....Page 77

Reed, Donald; Jarrett, Traci; Farley, Jeremy; Richards, Tony; McDonald, Deborah; Dino, Geri

Not-On-Tobacco (N-O-T) is a voluntary smoking cessation program for teens. The West Virginia Prevention Research Center (WVPRC) partnered with West Virginia University Extension Service to test a regional implementation model of N-O-T within the current 4-H infrastructure. Directed content analysis was used to allow for pre-determined themes and categories to be assessed by identifying barriers and successes at each phase of model implementation. The project effectively set a foundation of collaboration between Extension and the WVPRC, highlighted the differences between prevention theories and positive youth development ideology and showcased that Extension's efforts are more successful when county based.

Life Skill Development of Youth Participants of the Tennessee 4-H Beef Skillathon

[Article 161101PA003].....Page 88

Harris, Josey M.; Stripling, Christopher T.; Stephens, Carrie A.; Loveday, H. Dwight

The purpose of this study was to examine youth leadership life skill development among Tennessee beef skillathon participants and determine factors influencing their motivation to participate. Youth perceived the skillathon to have a moderate impact on their leadership life skill development. As a result, we recommend the skillathon continue to be an integral part of the overall livestock program in Tennessee. The reasons for participating in the skillathon mainly focused on testing knowledge, future careers, winning an award, fun, friends, 4-H agent or school-based agricultural education teacher, and personal development. Thus, utilizing both short-term and long-term influences during recruitment may increase skillathon participation. Future research should be conducted on a national level to determine youth leadership life skill development and reasons for participating in the skillathon competition.

An Overview of Quality Programs that Support Transition-Aged Youth

[Article 161101PA004].....Page 98

Kalinyak, Christopher M.; Gary, Faye A.; Killion, Cheryl M.; Suresky, M. Jane

This article provides a concise overview of several programs that deliver services to transition-aged youth, ages 14–29. Included are family support, the Assisting Unaccompanied Children and Youth program, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration services, the wraparound approach, intensive home-based treatment, multisystemic therapy, foster care, independent living, mentoring, the Steps to Success program, the Jump on Board for Success program, the Options program, the Positive Action program, the Transition to Success model, and the Transition to Independence Program. Primary focus is placed upon the usefulness of each of the programs in facilitating successful outcomes for transition-aged youth.

Resource Review

Choose Health Action Teens: A Review of a Teens as Teachers Nutritional Education Training Curriculum

[Article 161101RR001].....Page 116

Flesch, Jeffrey M.; Lile, Joy R.; Arnold, Mary E.

This review draws from published research related to the best practices for the utilization of teens as teachers to examine *Choose Health Action Teens* (CHAT), a teen's as teachers (TAT) training curriculum. Research shows that there are various components necessary to build a high quality TAT program. Most of these components fall under four areas in which training is necessary for teens and adults: Teaching strategies, youth/child development, subject matter to be taught, and youth-adult partnerships. These four areas provide a framework to review the *Choose Health Action Teens* (CHAT) (Crosiar & Wolfe, 2013) teens as teachers training program curriculum.

Raise: What 4-H Teaches Seven Million Kids in a Resource Review

[Article 161101RR002].....Page 120

Scholl, Jan

For over 100 years the 4-H Youth Development program has provided countless experiences for youth. This article reviews the recently published book *Raise: What 4-H teaches seven million kids and how its lessons could change food and farming forever* (Butler, 2015). While the book focuses primarily on the California 4-H program, the author also highlights research from historical 4-H documents as well as thoughts from National 4-H program leaders.

Review of the YA4-H! Youth Advocates for Health: Building Successful Youth-Adult Partnerships Training Curriculum

[Article 161101RR003].....Page 123

Flesch, Jeffrey M.; Lile, Joy R.; Arnold, Mary E.

Youth-adult partnerships (Y-APs) are an important aspect of positive youth development programming. Creating effective Y-APs, however, requires training of both youth and adults. This article reviews the *YA4-H! Youth Advocates for Health: Building Successful Youth-Adult Partnerships* (Arnold, & Gifford, 2015) curriculum that is intended for use in trainings with youth and adults to assist in the formation of effective Y-APs. The 80 page curriculum covers five key areas for forming successful YA-Ps: Ice Breakers, an exploration of power, understanding youth-adult partnerships, personal traits, and reflection. The curriculum is laid out in a user-friendly manner, provides background information on youth development and Y-APs, and includes training options ranging from half-day to full weekend retreats. While it was developed for the 4-H program, it is suitable for use in any youth setting. The curriculum is comprehensive, easy to use, and a valuable addition to other published Y-AP training materials.