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Feature Articles

Implementing a Work-Based Learning Approach to 4-H Camp Counseling

[Article 110604FA001]

Ferrari, Theresa M.; Arnett, Nate

Although camping has been a successful 4-H delivery method, we believed a more intentional approach that viewed camp counseling as a job would allow teen camp counselors to connect skills they were learning with those needed for workforce success. Eighteen Ohio counties participated in a pilot project to test the implementation of this work-based learning approach. 4-H youth development professionals added specific workforce-related topics and made minor changes in their camp counselor training. In addition, they used a performance appraisal process consisting of teens' self-assessment and supervisor assessment. Focus groups were conducted to gain implementation data. Although there were some challenges, this approach took relatively little additional effort, and there were benefits for both counselors and professionals. This intentional approach could be applied to other youth programs.

Scoring On and Off the Field: Examining the Sexual Activity of Adolescent/Emerging Adult Athletes and Non-Athletes Using an Ecological Perspective [Article 110604FA002]

Moore, Sally; Barnett, Rosemary V.; Brennan, Mark A.; Gibson, Heather

This paper highlights a study which used an ecological perspective to explore and identify various risk and protective factors that might influence sexual activity in adolescence and emerging adulthood, with a particular emphasis on the unique experiences of athletes. A sample of 437 undergraduate students completed a questionnaire consisting of the following areas: athletic participation, Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (AIMS), ecological variables, Brief Sensation Seeking Scale (BSSS), sexual activity, and sociodemographics. Results indicate that the link between being an athlete and sexual behavior may not be as direct as previously suggested, but is mediated by the influence of various factors related to the sport participation experience. Factors at the individual, familial, and extrafamilial level were found to affect sexual activity.

4-H Membership Recruitment/Retention Problems: A Meta-Analysis of Possible Causes and Solutions [Article 110604FA003]

Newby, Lynndell; Sallee, Jeff

As the largest youth organization in the United States, the opportunity for 4-H to be a positive influence on America's youth has never been greater. 4-H not only has a mandate to serve the needs and interests of young people today, but to provide a life experience that will enrich their lives and enable them to succeed in whatever path they so choose. 4-H has struggled with recruitment and member retention of certain age groups, especially teenage members. Researchers have sought to determine why youth do not join or drop out of 4-H. This article reviews that literature and summarizes the findings and possible solutions to this important issue. 4-H programs have found simple and innovative methods to retain 4-H members.

The Impact of Beef Cattle Projects on Youth Leadership Life Skills Development

[Article 110604FA004]

Walker, Brandon F.; Morgan, Christian A.; Ricketts, John C.; Duncan, Dennis W.

Highlights of a study designed to determine the leadership life skills development (YLLSD) of youth beef cattle exhibitors and to determine if there is a relationship between YLLSD and participation in the beef project are discussed in this paper. The study was conducted using a correlational, ex post facto design. A sample of 374 individuals was randomly selected from a population of 4,229 national junior cattle exhibitors of the National Junior Angus Association. The population frame consisted of junior members ages 18 to 21. Participants' YLLSD scores ranged from 40 to 90 with a composite mean of 73.02. Significant relationships existed between YLLSD scores and shows per year, hours working with projects per week, and years of beef project exhibition.

Program Articles

Promoting Civic Engagement, Critical Thinking and the Science of Photography through Photovoice [Article 110604PA001]

Tritz, Julie

Photovoice is part of a growing interest in using creative tools with youth groups as a means to increase involvement in the positive development of local communities. The goal of Photovoice is to allow youth to record, reflect and act on issues of importance to them through the production of still photographs. The methodology holds promise for youth development professionals in several ways. It teaches soft skills such as teamwork and critical thinking; fosters civic engagement and engages youth in learning about the science of photography. The article concludes with considerations and ideas for emulating the methodology in a local community.

Implementing and Evaluating the Communities That Care Prevention System in Rural Pennsylvania [Article 110604PA002]

Olson, Jonathan R.

Communities That Care (CTC) is a prevention-planning system that helps community members plan, implement, and evaluate evidence-based prevention strategies that target common behavioral problems among youth. Recent evaluations of the system have indicated promising results. To date, most of these studies have examined broad effects across multiple implementation sites. The purpose of the current study was to determine if such promising results could be replicated in a single rural county that has been implementing the CTC system for more than a decade. The results of this utilization-focused evaluation indicate a variety of positive effects on outcomes among adolescents.

Tooele County 4-H Youth Garden: An Interactive Approach [Article 110604PA003]

Sagers, Stephen; Greenhalgh, Linden; Christensen, Darlene; Sherwood, Terra

The Tooele City 4-H Youth Garden program was designed to provide a non-traditional recreational activity for a growing youth population. Children ages 5-18, assisted by parents and other family members, tend an 8'x 15' garden plot. A small registration fee covers 4-H enrollment. Tooele City provides land, water, employees, maintenance and equipment. Participants provide their own seed and labor, must attend an orientation in the spring, commit to work at least once each week in the garden, and attend periodic club meetings during the growing season. Club meetings cover basic gardening principles and specific issues related to individual garden plots. Approximately 800 youth have been involved since it was first organized in 2002. Many members have "graduated" or gone on to having their own gardens. The youth garden project has been a success due to a combination of dedicated leadership, hands-on learning and tangible, edible results.

Horses – A Natural Fit for Camp Programs [Article 110604PA004]

Galloway, Robin; Names, Chris; Mintken, Melanie

A 4-H Member's Horse Camp allows horse project members to enjoy their equine partner in a non-competitive, outdoor setting. Campers learn about leave-no-trace outdoor ethics, trail riding, maneuvering trail obstacles, equine emergency first aid, and low impact camping. 4-H has long understood that providing opportunities for youth to learn about things that interest them is just one aspect of the program. Project specific content, in this case horses, helps youth in 4-H programs to develop important life skills. In the positive atmosphere at 4-H horse camp, youth may feel a sense of belonging, and are provided opportunities to develop mastery, independence, and a spirit of generosity- which are all essential elements in high quality youth development programs. Horse camps are a natural extension of opportunities for horse project members, and they can be added to existing camps, or create new camping lessons.

Research and Evaluation Strategies

Measuring Physical Activity in Youth Settings: Considerations for Instrument Selection [Article 110604RS001]

Hickerson, Benjamin D.

Increasing physical activity participation has become one of the primary strategies for prevention of early-onset health conditions including obesity and Type II diabetes. Youth programs including summer camps and after-school programs are premium providers of physical activity opportunities, but researchers and administrators of these programs must be able to effectively collect and interpret physical activity data to make program adjustments and communicate results. This article reviews existing methods for physical activity measurement including self-reports and objective instruments and makes suggestions for their applicability. Pedometers are covered in-depth as they may be the method of choice in many youth settings. These devices are unobtrusive, have a relatively low cost, and provide excellent data quality. Proper physical activity measurement in youth settings can provide information about effective intervention strategies and may also encourage on-site participants to increase their physical activity frequency.

Resource Review

Reading Makes Cents Resource Review [Article 110604RR001]

Ashby, Lacie; Gordon, Kathy; Stokes, Shante

In today's economy, it is more crucial than ever to focus our educational efforts on increasing financial literacy. Many young people are unskilled in managing their personal finances, yet this critical life skill will greatly affect their future economic well-being. *Reading Makes Cents*, developed by Penn State University, is an excellent resource to address this need. A reviewed and recommended curriculum by National 4-H, this complete, easy to use curriculum targets youth in grades 3-5 with a combination of financial literacy and reading. The curriculum explores basic money concepts such as spending, saving, and sharing money. Lessons incorporate hands-on activities and children's literature to reinforce lesson objectives. With evaluation questions and family activities included, *Reading Makes Cents* is a perfect guide for educators to easily pick up and teach.