



Making the Best 4-H Clubs Better –Version 2.0

Intended Audience:

- 4-H club members

Lesson Objectives:

Club members and parents will:

- Learn the key elements of positive youth development and assess how well the club is meeting each.
- Be active participants in determining the future of the club.

Time: 20 minutes

Equipment and supplies:

- Pencils
- Sticky notes (three of each of two different colors per participant)
- Dots or stickers for voting (three per participant)
- Easel paper
- Markers
- Resource:
 - “8 Key Elements of Positive Youth Development”

Do Ahead:

- Review lesson.
- Gather equipment and supplies.

Club Self-Assessment

BACKGROUND

This lesson will help you work with your club members and parents to assess exactly how your club is doing. What are the best things about the club? What are some areas that could be improved? Taking time to assess where the club is will help you and your club leadership team make plans to get where you’re going, always striving to make the “best” 4-H club even better!

WHAT TO DO

Activity: Strengths and Weaknesses

Briefly review the 8 Key Elements of Positive Youth Development (from handout):

1. Positive Relationship with a Caring Adult
2. A Safe Environment – Emotional & Physical
3. Opportunity for Mastery
4. Opportunity to Value & Practice Service
5. Opportunity for Self-Determination
6. Welcoming Environment
7. To be an Active Participant in the Future
8. Engagement in Learning

Then, challenge club members, advisors, and parents to assess how well your club is doing in each of these areas. A fun way to involve ALL members, parents, and advisors in the assessment process is to use sticky notes and dots. Each participant needs a writing utensil, three sticky notes of one color, three sticky notes of a second color, and three stickers or dots for voting.

- On one set of colored sticky notes, participants should write the three best things about the 4-H club (not about 4-H, but about your club!) They should write one best thing on each of their three sticky notes. When finished, have them post the notes on one side of the room. Writing the best things puts everyone in a positive state of mind and provides positive feedback to the club leadership team!
- On the other set of colored sticky notes, the participants should write three things about the club that could be improved. Again, write just one thing on each note. These are things that



Sources:

- Jens, Jessica. UWEX 4-H Club Management, “Club Self-Assessments,” <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/pubs/showdoc.cfm?documentid=3192>.

Additional lessons in this series can be found online at:
go.osu.edu/bestbetter14.



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the club might improve, such as making new members feel more welcome, having a larger meeting space, or going on more field trips. Maybe these things are already good but could be improved to make the best better. Direct participants to post these notes on the opposite side of the room.

- Ask for some older youth “volunteers” to quickly group the sticky notes into broad categories. Ask these volunteers to list, on separate sheets of easel paper, the most frequently mentioned categories of best things and the most frequently mentioned areas for improvement. They can do this while rest of the group plays a game or has refreshments. Then, call everyone back together, and have the volunteers report the highlights of what they’ve discovered in their grouping efforts.
- Now have the participants use their dots or stickers to vote for the areas of improvement that are most important to them. They can use one sticker or dot per idea or spend them all on the same idea. It’s up to them.
- Tabulate and discuss the results as time permits. Use the results in planning with the club leadership team. Sometimes suggestions for improvements may be about things over which you have no control (i.e. changing a fair rule). Pass these along to those who can make the improvement.

TALK IT OVER**Reflect:**

- Why should clubs take time to assess themselves?
- Why is it important to do something with the information gathered through the club self-assessment process?

Apply:

- What will you and your club leadership team do with the information gathered through the self -assessment process?
- Re-visit the assessment results at the end of the club program year. Was the information used to make the best even better?

ADDITIONAL LINKS

- The University of Wisconsin Extension 4-H Community Club Central website offers many club resources that may help you strengthen your club programming:
<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/clubs/meetings.cfm>

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