Creating Club Guidelines

This handout can be used as a way for 4-H staff to introduce 4-H volunteers to the process of creating club guidelines as a way to create a supportive and inclusive 4-H club. It could also be used by 4-H volunteers to train club officers or older 4-H members to lead the club through the process of creating club guidelines.

Introduction to Activity

Say: In addition to using the Essential Elements checklist as a quick guide to make sure your group is on track to be safe and inclusive, there's an activity you can use to support positive behavior. Some people call this activity setting group expectations or ground rules. It is most effective when the young people themselves decide on the expectations and acceptable behaviors. How many of you already do this in your club or group?

You can help your club officers or older members lead this activity at the next meeting. To see how this works, I need a couple of volunteers. One of you will play the role of a club officer or older club member to lead the group discussion and one of you will record what is said on the flip chart.

Give volunteer playing the role of club officer or older member the script handout.

Script: We want our club to have fun, safe meetings and activities. We also want to make sure everybody feels included in what we do as a group. To help us meet these goals, we are going to brainstorm a group expectations list. This list will guide and help us practice belonging and respect for each other and show good citizenship. This is our club's list – we get to choose what is on it. We also have to make sure we follow what we've decided is important to include. Some things to think about are:
Safety
Respect
Including everyone

Process

Allow group time to respond and process. Try to keep them from making the list too long.

Apply

Say: What are some ideas on how to get the youth who create this list to "own it" and use it to change an individual's behavior if necessary?

Possible idea suggestions: have each youth sign it; post at each meeting; hold each other accountable;

Say: To take this process further, you could use a process to have the group narrow down the list to what is the most important. They could each be given three votes and told to make a check mark next to what they think is most important. After everyone votes, the top three or four vote getters are the clubs expectation list or ground rules. Once you have established the club expectation list or ground rules, remind the members that you are going to keep this group expectation list posted to remind everyone. You can also come back to it later to see if it needs to be modified.

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Script for volunteer

This handout can be used as a sample script for 4-H volunteer, club officers or older 4-H members to use to lead a club or group through the process of creating club guidelines.

Choose a volunteer to play the role of club officer or older member leading the group in setting club/group expectations.

Sample Script:

We want our club to have to have fun, safe meetings and activities. We also want to make sure everybody feels included in what we do as a group. To help us meet those goals, we are going to brainstorm a group expectations list and then choose our top three or four. Making this list and sticking to it will help us practice belonging and respect for each other and show good citizenship. This is our club's list – we get to choose what is on it. We also have to make sure we follow what we've decided is important to include. Some things we should think about to get us started are:

Safety
Respect
Including everyone

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