

## MATERIALS

1. PowerPoint slides or posters of:
  - Results of NY research on 4-H Members
  - Definition of High-Context Youth Development
  - Definition of Low-Context Youth Development
  - Definition of a Cloverbud Club
  - Definition of Community Club
  - Definition of Single Project Club
  - How a 4-H Club Fosters Belonging
  - How a 4-H Club Fosters Mastery
  - How a 4-H Club Fosters Independence
  - How a 4-H Club Fosters Generosity
  - Examples of Different 4-H Delivery Methods
2. Copies of Appendix, Lesson 5 handouts if participants are not receiving a copy of the 4-H 101 curriculum

## OBJECTIVES

1. Differentiate between high- and low-context youth development programming
2. Identify the variety of ways 4-H delivers youth development programming

## TIME

1 hour 30 minutes

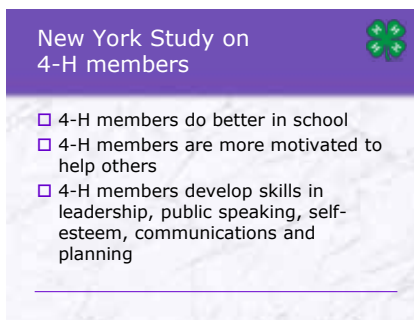
# LESSON 5

## Understanding 4-H Youth Development Delivery

4-H PRKC: Youth Program Development (domain): Program Design (topic)

### WHAT TO DO

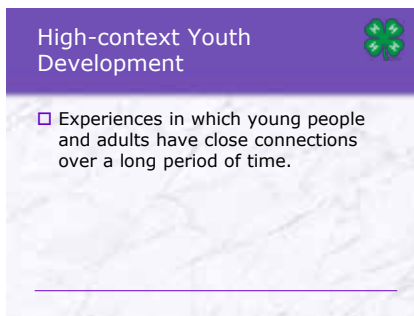
Show PowerPoint slide or poster of the NY Research on 4-H Membership.



New York Study on 4-H members

- 4-H members do better in school
- 4-H members are more motivated to help others
- 4-H members develop skills in leadership, public speaking, self-esteem, communications and planning

Show the PowerPoint slide or poster of the Definition of High-context Youth Development.



High-context Youth Development

- Experiences in which young people and adults have close connections over a long period of time.

### WHAT TO SAY

Research from Cornell University Cooperative Extension in New York shows that youth in 4-H do better in school than other students and are more motivated to help others. They also are developing skills in leadership, public speaking, self-esteem, communication, and planning.

Why does membership in a 4-H club make such a difference for youth?

We already know that if the four Essential Elements of youth development are present in our programs, then we are able to create opportunities that meet young people's needs and build life skills such as the ones mentioned in the research done at Cornell.

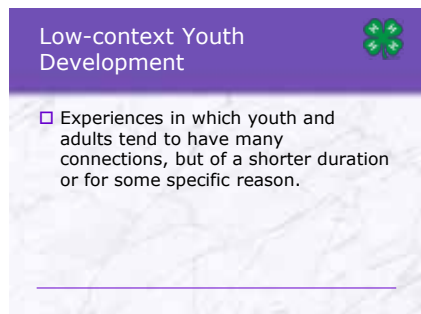
Before we examine 4-H program delivery methods, let's look at high and low context youth development experiences and how these concepts are related to program delivery.

High-context youth development refers to experiences in which young people and adults have close connections over a long period of time. 4-H Youth Development Extension professionals with volunteers and other experts, plan, implement and evaluate a progressive series of educational programs and experiences.

The programs connect young people with caring adults and involve them over an extended period of time. We will look at

## WHAT TO DO

Show the PowerPoint slide or poster of the Definition of Low-context Youth Development.



Show the PowerPoint slide or poster of Approaches to 4-H Youth Development



## WHAT TO SAY

some examples of these programs such as a 4-H community club in a few minutes.

Low-context youth development refers to experiences in which youth and adults tend to have many connections, but of shorter duration or for some specific reason. 4-H Youth Development Extension professionals work with volunteers and other experts to plan, implement and evaluate programs and experiences that have short-term contact with young people in order to meet strategic goals. We will also look at some examples of low-context youth development experiences such as a school enrichment program.

Ideally, the goal in 4-H programming is for low-context youth development experiences to evolve into high-context youth development programs because of the positive development that occurs when young people engage in long-term interaction with caring adults.

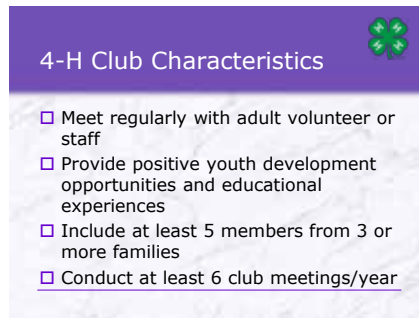
Youth development experiences become transformational when we create high-context environments and provide high-content opportunities for young people to belong, master skills, influence others and learn the meaning of service. Content here refers to the educational experiences we provide youth through our research-based project work.

This slide illustrates how content and context are related to delivery methods. The best learning environment for youth happens when a high-content delivery method overlaps with a high-context experience. The 4-H club emerges as the best place for this to happen.

Let's examine the variety of ways 4-H delivers youth development programs. During this discussion, keep in mind the concepts of

## WHAT TO DO

Show PowerPoint slide or poster of 4-H Club Characteristics.



## WHAT TO SAY

high and low-context youth development programming.

4-H provides youth development opportunities through a variety of delivery methods. The 4-H club is one of these. There are many variations of 4-H clubs. Each state has unique policies governing 4-H clubs but most share many similarities.

In general, 4-H clubs are organized groups of youth, who sometimes but not always, elect officers and are supported by adult volunteer leaders. A 4-H club conducts meetings and activities throughout the year, usually holding at least six official meetings per year, for at least 5 members from 3 or more families.

Club meetings typically include a business portion, an educational program, and a group building or recreational activity. Ideally, all four essential elements are built in to these activities.

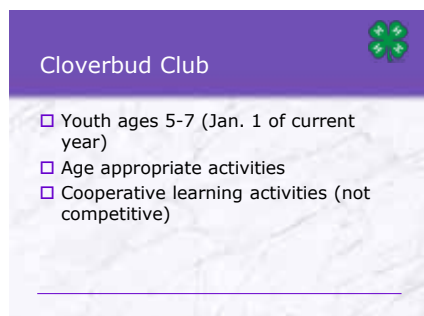
The club frequently offers opportunities for leadership, citizenship, community service and public speaking. It may meet in any location such as community centers, military bases, schools, and places of worship, and is authorized to use the 4-H name and emblem after becoming chartered. We will talk more about chartering in lesson 9.

You can learn more about 4-H Club characteristics by reviewing the “What is a 4-H Club?” fact sheet at the 4-H National Headquarters Web site or referring to the fact sheet in the Appendix section.

Youth ages 8-18 (as of January 1 of the current year) are eligible to be members. Some states may use school grade as a criterion for membership. Check with your state or county 4-H

## WHAT TO DO

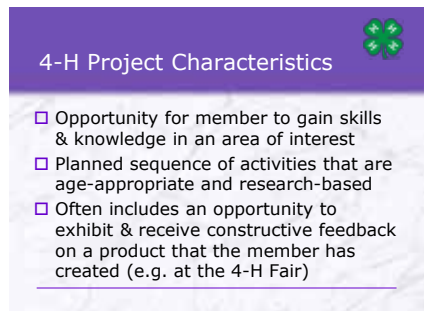
Show PowerPoint slide or poster of Definition of a Cloverbud Club.



**Cloverbud Club**

- Youth ages 5-7 (Jan. 1 of current year)
- Age appropriate activities
- Cooperative learning activities (not competitive)

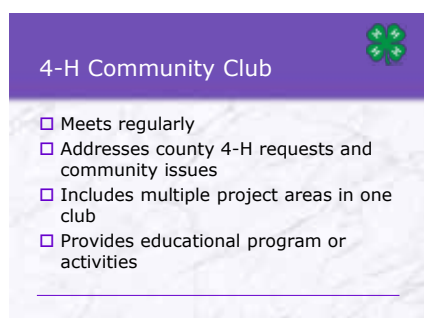
Show PowerPoint slide or poster of 4-H Project Characteristics



**4-H Project Characteristics**

- Opportunity for member to gain skills & knowledge in an area of interest
- Planned sequence of activities that are age-appropriate and research-based
- Often includes an opportunity to exhibit & receive constructive feedback on a product that the member has created (e.g. at the 4-H Fair)

Show PowerPoint slide or poster of Definition of a Community Club.



**4-H Community Club**

- Meets regularly
- Addresses county 4-H requests and community issues
- Includes multiple project areas in one club
- Provides educational program or activities

## WHAT TO SAY

Extension professional for specific membership requirements.

Many states have club options for younger youth. A Cloverbud member (age 5-7) should only be involved in cooperative learning, age-appropriate activities (not competitive events). A description of Cloverbud policies and guidelines is located in the Appendix. States may have different names for 4-H opportunities available to younger youth such as Cloverkids, Mini, or Exploring 4-H.

You'll notice reference to 4-H projects throughout our discussion of 4-H clubs. A 4-H project is an opportunity for a member to gain knowledge and skills in a certain area of interest. It includes a planned sequence of activities that are age-appropriate and research-based. The member often sets individual goals of what he or she wishes to learn and accomplish in the specific project area. An opportunity to exhibit a finished product related to the project area is typically provided, such as at a 4-H Fair. At this exhibit the member receives constructive feedback on his or her project.

A common format for youth age 8-18 is the community or multi-project club. This type of club meets regularly to conduct a business meeting, address county 4-H requests and community issues, provide an educational program or activity and offer a selection of projects. Project meetings or workshops are usually held at different times than the club meeting. This format allows more project choices for 4-H club members but requires more leaders for multiple project meetings.

## WHAT TO DO

Show PowerPoint slide or poster of Definition of Single-project Club.

Single-project Club

- A 4-H club whose members all have similar interests such as dog, entomology or technology club.
- Adult volunteers are highly knowledgeable about the project area of interest.
- Includes youth from wider geographic area

Divide participants into four groups and assign each group one of the the Essential Elements. Ask each group to make a list of ways a 4-H club might foster their assigned Essential Element. Allow about 5-10 minutes for discussion.

After the group has had an opportunity to share their own ideas, show the PowerPoint slide or poster of How a 4-H Club Fosters Belonging.

How a 4-H Club Fosters Belonging

- Encourages youth to
  - form friendships
  - be part of a support community
  - participate in collaborative learning
  - bond with one or more caring adults

Show PowerPoint slide or poster of How a 4-H Club Fosters Mastery.

How a 4-H Club Fosters Mastery

- Provides youth with
  - opportunities for project work
  - opportunities for evaluation and feedback
  - Opportunities for hands-on learning to develop life skills

## WHAT TO SAY

Some clubs whose members all have similar interests might operate as single-project clubs. These clubs focus on educational opportunities related to one specific project area. The club may include youth from all geographic areas that are served by the local 4-H program. Adult volunteers in the single-project club are well-versed in the specific project area.

The format of the 4-H club is its strength because it provides enriching high-context youth development experiences that intentionally incorporate the four Essential Elements that we know to be so crucial to our youth development efforts.

What are some ways that you think a 4-H club might foster the Essential Elements? In your group brainstorm some ways a 4-H Club might foster the Essential Element your group has been assigned. Record your ideas on paper.

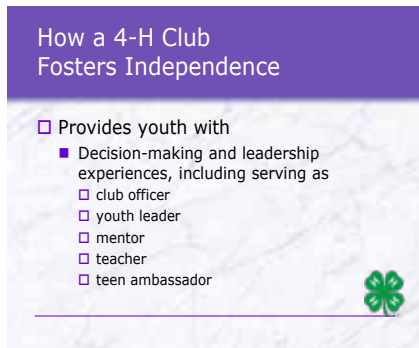
Within the club format the Essential Elements can be fostered in the following ways.

A 4-H club fosters belonging by encouraging youth to form friendships with peers and to be part of a supportive community where collaborative learning is encouraged. Youth also bond with one or more caring adults who encourage and help them grow in positive ways.

A 4-H club fosters mastery by providing many opportunities for project work, evaluation and feedback. Youth develop skills using hands-on learning approaches and learn how to transfer these skills to other life situations.

## WHAT TO DO

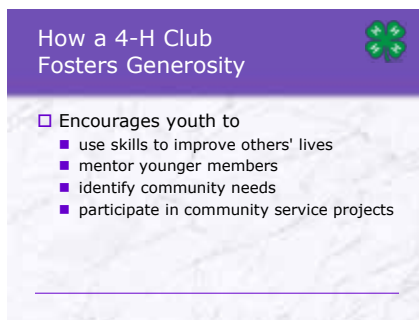
Show PowerPoint slide or poster of How a 4-H Club Fosters Independence.



How a 4-H Club Fosters Independence

- Provides youth with
  - Decision-making and leadership experiences, including serving as
    - club officer
    - youth leader
    - mentor
    - teacher
    - teen ambassador

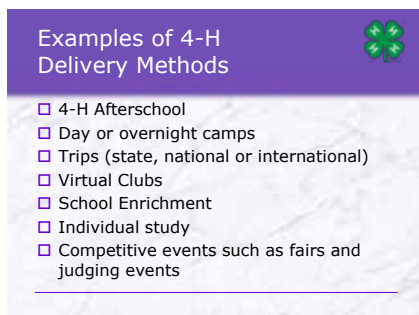
Show PowerPoint slide or poster of How a 4-H Club fosters Generosity.



How a 4-H Club Fosters Generosity

- Encourages youth to
  - use skills to improve others' lives
  - mentor younger members
  - identify community needs
  - participate in community service projects

Show the PowerPoint slide or poster of Examples of Different 4-H Delivery Methods.



Examples of 4-H Delivery Methods

- 4-H Afterschool
- Day or overnight camps
- Trips (state, national or international)
- Virtual Clubs
- School Enrichment
- Individual study
- Competitive events such as fairs and judging events

## WHAT TO SAY

Independence is fostered in the 4-H club setting by providing youth with many decision-making and leadership experiences including serving as a club officer, mentor, teacher, teen ambassador and teen leader, among others.

A 4-H club fosters generosity by encouraging members to use their skills to improve others' lives by mentoring younger members, identifying community needs and participating in community service projects.

4-H delivers programming through many formats in addition to the club.

4-H Afterschool is an out-of-school program administered by the 4-H office or other partner organizations such as military School Age Care facilities. It can meet at a community-based facility such as a church, school, or recreation center, the young people and adults identify themselves as 4-H members and volunteers.

4-H programming is also delivered through camps; state or national trips, for which older 4-H members can qualify through their project work; and virtual clubs, where youth are offered learning experiences via technology.

School enrichment is 4-H programming offered during the



## WHAT TO DO

Allow participants about 10 minutes to discuss this question. Reinforce that it is necessary to create many programming options to reach all youth.

## WHAT TO SAY

school day to support the school curriculum and involves direct teaching by the 4-H staff or trained volunteers including teachers.

Individual 4-H project study is planned learning that occurs independently of a formal group as an individual or family learning effort, such as in a homeschool setting.

Competitive events in 4-H can include fairs and judging events related to project work.

More information about state and national trips can be found in the Appendix, Lesson 15, "Opportunities Beyond the Club" handout.

The reality today is that more 4-H members live in cities than in rural areas and the delivery methods are structured to meet the needs of youth wherever they live. Geographic area is not the only reason for developing varied programming methods in 4-H. The skills needed for productive adulthood and citizenship have evolved over the years, and the ways we help youth prepare for this transition continue to evolve as well.

Why do you think it is important for youth development professionals to offer programming through a variety of delivery methods?

We've talked about why high-context youth development programming is important, but a quality 4-H program needs low-context youth development opportunities too. Low-context programming offers quality learning opportunities to fit the needs of all youth and to serve as a conduit for introducing youth and their parents to 4-H. 4-H programming can be thought of as a continuum of low to high-context experiences that all serve an important purpose.

## WHAT TO DO

Place two pieces of flip chart paper on the wall. Label one High-context Youth Development Experiences and the other Low-context Youth Development Experiences. Give each individual several pieces of sticky note paper. Ask participants to write down examples from their programs that might fit under either category and put them on the corresponding pieces of flip chart paper.

After everyone has placed their sticky notes on the flip chart paper, ask for volunteers to share examples from their programs and to explain why they identified this experience as high or low-context.

Allow about 15 minutes for discussion.

## WHAT TO SAY

Now I want you to think about the youth and adults with whom you are currently working. On the sticky notes you have been given, write down examples of programs and educational experiences from your current youth program. Next, place your sticky notes on one of the flip chart papers located on the wall labeled, "High-context or Low-context Youth Development Experiences" based on where you think that program fits.

We have learned that youth benefit most from a long-term experience with caring adults. Day camps, school enrichment programs and other short-term experiences can be an introduction into a longer-term involvement with 4-H.

It is important to be aware of the many delivery methods that are common for implementing 4-H youth development programming. Now that we have learned about ways to deliver the 4-H program, we are going to spend some time addressing what it is we deliver in the next lesson.

## REFERENCES

Rodriguez, E., Hirschl, T., Mead, J., & Goggin, S. 1999. Understanding the difference 4-H clubs make in the lives of New York youth: How 4-H contributes to positive youth development. Cornell University. <http://nys4h-staff.cce.cornell.edu/4-HClubStudy.htm>

Stone, B. Concept Paper. 2006. National 4-H Headquarters, Washington, DC. Adapted from "A Vision for the Future" by Jo Turner.