

New  
Jersey **4-H**

## Leader Training Series



### Working with 4-H Youth in 7th to 9th Grades

Youth in 7th, 8th and 9th grades are generally involved in standard 4-H clubs, as well as special interest programs, county-wide events. In addition, early leadership experiences are offered through teen councils, counselor-in-training programs at 4-H camp, and other special programs designed for these youth. There are also more opportunities for involvement in regional or statewide programs and events.

Listed below are some characteristics of youth in grades 7 to 9. Not all youth in this age group will act in the manner described, but the majority will most of the time. In general, this age group is concerned about their own physical development and are somewhat self-conscious. This is a good time to plan activities which will help youth understand themselves and their values, while developing individual skills.

#### Youth in Grades 7 to 9

Specific Characteristics	Planning a Learning Experience
<p>Are concerned about physical development, being liked by friends.</p> <p>Desire a sense of independence, yet want and need their parents' help.</p> <p>Are self-conscious with many needing help to get over inferiority complexes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage learning experiences related to understanding yourself and getting along with others.</li> <li>• Encourage working with adults and older teens to complete learning experiences and apprenticing.</li> <li>• Concentrate on developing individual skills.</li> </ul>

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<b>Specific Characteristics</b>	<b>Planning a Learning Experience</b>
<p>Like fan clubs, with many having adult idols.</p> <p>Want to go outside of their own community to explore.</p> <p>Are getting over the age of fantasy and beginning to think of what they will do when they grow up, but are often unclear of needs and values.</p> <p>Are interested in activities involving boys and girls.</p> <p>Are interested in sports and active games.</p> <p>Are ready for in-depth, longer learning experiences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to have opportunity to practice leadership roles with coaching.</li> <li>• Encourage working with or apprenticing to older teens and adults. Teen and adult leaders must be well-liked to be effective, and teen leaders should be three or four years older than participants and considerably more mature (must not reject those who they are leading).</li> <li>• Provide learning experiences outside of the community.</li> <li>• Relate what they are doing to career choices.</li> <li>• Encourage learning experiences involving boys and girls.</li> <li>• Encourage active, fun learning experiences.</li> <li>• Tasks may be more difficult and of longer duration. Encourage deeper exploration of leadership roles; encourage more detailed recordkeeping of leadership experiences.</li> <li>• Activities provide hands-on and skill-centered experiences in specific subject matter.</li> </ul>

***Reference:***

*Curriculum Development for Issues Programming, A National Handbook for Extension Youth Development Professionals, Extension Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1992.*

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