

Introduction

The *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series* was developed by the NJ Department of 4-H Youth Development Adult Volunteer Training and Support Committee as the result of:

- an expressed need of 4-H volunteers and salaried staff for recruitment and training materials;
- the NJ 4-H Long Range Planning Committee recommendation to strengthen the 4-H Club as a delivery mode;
- a statewide interview of volunteers conducted by the committee;
- a volunteer review of the information sheets;
- and research about working with volunteers with limited experiences and resources.

NJ 4-H volunteers in rural, suburban, and urban settings were interviewed to determine

- 1) what material or help they:
 - a) received as new 4-H leaders.
 - b) wished they had received.
 - c) thought would be useful for a new leader.
 - d) thought would help or be useful for an experienced leader.
- 2) which delivery format for leader materials would be preferred by NJ 4-H volunteers.

Results of Volunteer Input

Throughout development of the series volunteers were asked to review information sheets, as well as to evaluate the first edition. Their suggestions have been incorporated in the final revisions of the sheets.

The information sheet format in looseleaf notebooks was the chosen because of the convenience for:

- a. use of materials;
- b. delivery of information to the volunteer in manageable segments;
- c. ease of updating sheets as current information becomes available;
- d. and the ease of supplementing and adding new materials.

How To Use The *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series* Information for the 4-H Volunteer

The *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series* is designed for you, the 4-H Volunteer, to be able to:

- start and lead a 4-H program with efficiency and satisfaction, whether for youth or adults,
- apply youth development principles to deliver age appropriate learning experiences,
- access both enriching and growth experiences for youth, adults and yourself.
- choose the volunteer role that is best for you,
- change your volunteer role as you learn and grow.

The *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series* is both a training and a reference tool, which you can continue to refer to after basic new leader training.

The index will help you identify the specific area of information you need. Information has been grouped by subject areas and major concepts in an easy to use format. You may wish to add information you gather from training workshops and other resources.

The bottom of each information sheet tells what section the sheet is located in and the specific location in the section. The purpose of this information is to make it easy for you to remove a specific sheet for use, and then be able to return it easily to its proper location. Example:

Section III: Enriching the Club Experience

Often, one information sheet will suggest or refer to another. For example, the text might say, “Refer to *Selecting the 4-H Volunteer Role Right for You.*” The information sheet being referred to will be in italics.

The information sheets are useful for reference and as self-learning tools.

Written by Betty Ann Smith, County 4-H Agent, Middlesex County

How to Use The *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series* Information for Extension Faculty and Staff

Purpose of the *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series*

The *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series* is designed for individuals planning and conducting 4-H Youth Development Programs. These individuals will use the series primarily to:

- train 4-H paraprofessional and volunteer staff who will work directly with youth and/or train other volunteers who work with youth.

Volunteer Training Needs

The *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series*, flip chart, transparencies and text can be used for recruiting, orienting, and training volunteers with varying levels of skills and experiences regardless of the level of experience or resources. Training time involved will vary according to the needs of the volunteer.

Research about volunteers who have limited experiences and resources indicates that:

- minority volunteers with limited resources learn in the same manner as volunteers with a wealth of resources and experiences.
- limited resource people have had fewer educational and recreational opportunities and fewer enriching experiences, because of their struggle to meet minimum needs for shelter, food, and clothing.
- limited resource people have had fewer opportunities to gain volunteer experience, because the majority culture has too often assumed that limited resource clientele do not or will not volunteer.

Training of volunteers varies from county to county, state to state. You, the trainer, will need to develop your methodology for training around the abilities and knowledge of the persons you are training.

How do you gain a knowledge of the abilities of the persons you will be training? One technique is to conduct a needs analysis of your audience(s). A needs analysis can be as simple as a conversation with the potential volunteer. Do not assume, for example, that the traditional 4-H club format will not work in the inner city setting.

Developing A Training Plan

Whatever methodology you use, you will need a plan to facilitate your training of volunteers.
BEGIN BY DEVELOPING A TRAINING PLAN.

- 1) Develop your plan of training delivery based on a survey of your 4-H volunteers' preferred training timeline and locations.
- 2) Training may be conducted in one session or through several sessions, either during the day or evening.
- 3) The location for the training should take into consideration the volunteers' needs and the geographic make-up of the county. Training may be conducted in one central location, or in several areas around the county.
- 4) Plan to train the hard-to-reach volunteer by:
 - a. mailing materials,
 - b. followed with a phone call or a one-to-one contact by a member of the training team.

Note: Be conscious of possible barriers to participation: too far to travel, baby sitting needs, turned off to school setting, too much time involved, language barrier, learning disability, etc. Try to solve as many problems in advance as possible.

Sources:

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Stack, Carol B. All Our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community, New York, Harper and Row Publishers, 1975

Written by Betty Ann Smith, 1990; revised 1994

Volunteer Training Needs: Suggested Training Agenda Items

Interviews with NJ 4-H Volunteers resulted in the following list of needs and wants in leader training:

- need simple information broken into easy to digest sections.
- need techniques for problem solving.
- need and want out-of-county experiences.
- want resources of other clubs and other leaders.
- need information related to age-specific development.
- need “how to” information.
- view experienced leaders as expert enough to advise new leaders.
- want to be kept up-to-date on current & new developments in 4-H.
- want to know how to change 4-H jobs.
- experienced leaders want more training & more opportunities.
- need and want position descriptions.
- need to know who does what at the 4-H office.
- need to know where to get information, materials and help.
- need schedule of events.
- need access to visual aids for project areas, events.
- need project specific training.
- need help in dealing with problem families.
- need to be welcomed into existing committees—great way to learn.
- need enrollment information; forms and directions.
- want contact with other leaders...names, phone #, project areas; want to visit their clubs; want a mentor—someone to call when there is a problem or they need an idea.

Suggestions for Planning a Training Session

- 1) Find out what your volunteers already know. Concentrate on teaching the volunteers how to do the part of the job they find difficult or have identified as a need. This information can be gathered by a pre-training survey, written or phone; or in small groups at the beginning of your training.
- 2) Identify objectives for training session.
- 3) Identify evaluation techniques to be used.
- 4) Incorporate the identified needs expressed by volunteers who were interviewed as a part of the process of development of the *New Jersey Leader Training Series*. (See following page.)
- 5) Provide time for questions.
- 6) Provide the opportunity for the volunteers to practice the responsibility or new skill, example: role play.
- 7) Keep training simple and uncluttered. Reference materials used can be banded together with a sheet on top indicating contents.
- 8) Use a variety of the following teaching techniques that the volunteers can adopt for use in teaching 4-H'ers.
 - a) role playing
 - b) group bonding activities
 - c) visual aids such as projectors, slide and overhead, flip charts
 - d) work sheets
 - e) small groups for sharing experiences; for learning what they already know about the subject
 - f) agendas
 - g) goals, objectives, expected outcomes
 - h) encouraging and stimulating questions.
 - i) use of slides to illustrate events and activities such as club meetings, fair, camp, etc.
- 9) The environment is important to a successful training session. Strive for comfortable chairs, adequate lighting and ventilation. Plan frequent breaks with coffee, tea and some type of food.

Suggested Methods for Distribution of the *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series*

Distribution of the *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series* should take place only at or after an orientation session. It can be given as a whole series or in increments. Distributing the series in small increments would minimize overwhelming the new volunteer.

- A file could be set up for each volunteer to hold the *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series*. Each section could be delivered to the leader at training sessions or as you, the trainer, determine that the volunteer is ready for the information. This system will help you manage what material each leader is getting and whether specific information has been delivered.
- If time and support staff do not allow for gradual distribution of the information, the *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series* can be delivered at the time of volunteer training.
 - Distribute entire notebook at beginning of session.
 - Or, if training is planned to cover more than one session, the notebook cover and one or more sections can be distributed at the first session. Remaining sections can be distributed at other training sessions as the material is covered.
 - Participants will have the note book and total contents plus any additional handouts distributed by trainers by the end of the training.

The First Edition of the *New Jersey 4-H Leader Training Series* was prepared by the following Adult Volunteer Training and Support Committee members: Betty Ann Smith, Middlesex County

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