

Ohio State University Extension

An Overview of Youth Workforce Development Programs

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Ohio State University Extension

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Introduction:

Ohio State University Extension is an outreach unit of The Ohio State University. Our Mission is to help people improve their lives through an educational process using scientific knowledge focused on identified issues and needs.

We have long been involved in workplace skill development and other training programs related to workforce development through our four program areas: Community Development, Family and Consumer Sciences, Agriculture and Natural Resources, and 4-H Youth Development.

A partial list of current Extension workforce development programs is given here with brief profiles of each program according to the following outline:

- ***Program Title:***
- ***Program Purpose:***
- ***Program Description:***
- ***Time Frame:***
- ***Potential Audience:***
- ***Outcome and Evaluation***

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An Overview of
Youth Workforce Development Programs

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CAREER QUEST

Program Title:

Career Quest

Program Purpose:

The program model promotes engagement of youth in the learning process through a series of school based and community based hands-on group sessions; teen-parent activity nights; and a Career Institute mini-camp including a field trip to the Ohio State University.

Through *Career Quest*, teens connect with positive adult role models (the staff and volunteers); increase their mastery of skills and information related to career readiness; and exercise self-determination in applying information to personal career goals.

Program Description:

The Career Quest program uses agribusiness as a starting point to help youth develop personal career planning skills.

Adult leaders and teachers receive training in using personal career planning resources with middle school age youth. The activities help youth increase their awareness of career opportunities, assess their personal strengths and interests, set goals, develop career action plans, and become familiar with resources such as a career planning simulation game, computer data bases and web sites.

Career Quest Program outline:

Cycle 1:

Overview and Get-Acquainted Activities
Growing and Protecting our Food:
 How Science and Business Meet
Managing Our Environment:
 Putting Engineering & Technology to Work
Pet Care and Vet Care
Using Information to Develop Personal Career Plans
Developing a Support Team:
 Peers, Parents, and Community Helpers
Evaluation and Wrap-Up
Summer Activity: Career Institute

Cycle 2:

Overview and Get-Acquainted Activities
Getting Food on the Table & Keeping it Safe: Science & Business Working Together
Cleveland Green: How Technology Helps Beautify Our Community
Health Issues: Nutrition, Life Style, Pest Management
Using Information to Develop Personal Career Plans
Using Your Support Team: Peers, Parents, and Community Helpers
Evaluation and Wrap-Up

Time Frame:

This is a nine-month program. Components can be used apart from the complete program.

Potential Audience:

Junior High youth

Outcome and Evaluation:

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DEVELOPING BACKBONE FOR CAREER CHOICES

Program Title:

Developing Backbone for Career Choices

Program Purpose:

Youth are encouraged to research job outlooks, career clustering is addressed, and shadowing is described and encouraged.

Program Description:

This multi-session program is for elementary and older youth. Sessions include: Developing Decision-Making Skills. Setting Goals. Self Esteem. Leadership. Money Management. Entrepreneurship. Conflict Management. Work Ethics. Values. Time Management. Assertiveness. Job Interviews. Teen Employment. Agriculture Careers.

Time Frame:

Single sessions may be conducted in as little as 30 minutes. The notebook contains enough lessons and resources to be used in multiple program sessions over several months.

Potential Audience:

Youth age 9 to 19.

Outcome and Evaluation:

Lessons from Developing Backbone for Career Choices have been shared at statewide agent in-services, and successfully conducted in several counties.

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LEADERSHIP SKILLS YOU NEVER OUTGROW

Program Title:

Leadership Skills You Never Outgrow

Program Purpose:

The purpose of the *Leadership Skills You Never Outgrow* (LSYNO) series is to enable participants to develop leadership knowledge, skills, attitudes and aspirations in seven key dimensions:

- understanding self,
- communicating,
- getting along with others,
- learning to learn,
- making decisions,
- managing, and
- working with groups.

Program Description:

The focus of the LSYNO I (for youth age 9-11) and LSYNO II (for teens) is the development of individual leadership skills. Participants in LSYNO III develop skills for working in groups, and the overall objective of LSYNO IV is to enable participants to develop skills for leading groups.

Participants identify specific personal learning objectives related to the project content, and select several learning experiences to complete over a three month to one year time frame to achieve their objectives. Each level of the project offers a wide range of learning experience activities related to each of the seven key leadership dimensions.

The project may be completed by individual youth working with a helper or volunteer, or by groups of youth working with an advisor.

Time Frame:

Each of the four levels is designed to be completed with a helper or volunteer over a period of one to three years.

Potential Audience:

Level I is designed for pre-teens, and Levels II – IV are designed for teens. Level III (Skills for Working In Groups) and Level IV (Skills for Leading Groups) have also successfully been used with adult audiences, and are especially appropriate resources for the orientation of new advisory groups, program development groups, and committees.

Outcome and Evaluation:

Approximately 1,000 Ohio 4-H'ers enroll in one of the projects each year.

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MOCK INTERVIEWS

Program Title:

Mock Interviews

Program Purpose:

To prepare participants for job interviews

Program Description:

Local schools routinely enlist community volunteers to perform mock interviews with high school students. The students present a cover sheet with resume and dress for the interview as they would for a particular entry-level position. The interviewers critique the resume and interviewee and offer constructive criticism for improving the student's position as an candidate for the workforce.

Time Frame:

Interviews can be performed in 15 – 20 minutes with evaluation discussion following.

Potential Audience:

Youth and/or adults preparing for a job interview

Outcome and Evaluation:

Participants may be video- or audio-taped for referral at a later time. A constructive critique following the interview assists the participant in further preparation.

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TEAM CHALLENGE

Program Title:

Team Challenge

Program Purpose:

To exhibit ways to demonstrate and experience communication methods, cooperative activities and workforce skills in an informal atmosphere.

Program Description:

Team challenge initiatives may be utilized for many objectives - including workforce preparation efforts. Ice-breakers, communication skills, self-awareness, teamwork and team-play are some of the activities which provide a hands-on approach for participants. Simple materials are used to present challenges to varying sizes of groups, followed by processing.

Time Frame:

Activities can range from 15 minutes to two (or more) hours.

Potential Audience:

Youth and/or adults

Outcome and Evaluation:

Informal evaluation may be processed at the time of the activity. Follow-up evaluation may be performed to determine if techniques are utilized in daily life.

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TEEN LEADERSHIP ON THE JOB

Program Title:

Teen Leadership On The Job

Program Purpose:

The *Teen Leadership On The Job* project is for teens who are employed and want to develop leadership to "make the best better" on the job

Program Description:

The project consists of a series of real-life learning experiences which teens complete "on the job" in cooperation with their employer related to the real world of work, attaining goals and objectives, developing a work ethic, stress management, money management, time management, and performance assessment.

Time Frame:

Participants identify specific personal learning objectives related to the project content, and select several learning experiences to complete over a three month to one year time frame to achieve their objectives. The project offers participants a wide range of learning experiences from which to choose. Teen participants who wish to complete all of the learning experiences provided are advised to plan to do so over two or three years of project work.

Potential Audience:

Teens or older entry-level, first-time employees

Outcome and Evaluation:

Approximately 100 Ohio 4-H teens enroll each year in the 4-H *Teen Leadership On The Job* project, and the curriculum is used as a resource in other workforce preparation programs.

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GETTING DOWN TO BUSINESS

Program Title:

Getting Down to Business

Program Purpose:

Getting Down To Business is a curriculum for introducing youth to entrepreneurship.

Through *Getting Down to Business*, youth develop knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspirations needed for success, not only in self-employment and entrepreneurship, but also in contributing to society and the economy of the 21st century.

The major objective of the program is for participants to develop an understanding that entrepreneurship and self-employment are achievable occupational objectives, which they may or may not wish to choose. The enhancement of creativity, adaptability, the development of self-confidence, and the determination to achieve personal goals is the focus of this program.

Program Description:

The *Getting Down To Business* curriculum includes ten lessons:

- Entrepreneurship Basics
- Idea Generation and Product Creation
- Work Ethic and Attitude
- The Business Plan
- Market Research
- Advertising and Public Relations
- Banking and Record Keeping
- Legal Issues and Technical Stuff
- Managing Time Wisely
- Creating and Maintaining Your Image

Each lesson is built around specific objectives and includes information about the topic, experiential learning activities and exercises, and masters for handout materials and other resources. Pre- and post-testing instruments related to the National Education Goals: Goals 2000 and Secretary of Education's Initiatives are also included.

Time Frame:

All ten lessons can be completed in ten two-hour sessions, but can be adapted according to need.

Potential Audience:

The curriculum is designed to be appropriate for use with middle school aged youth, and has also been used successfully with older teen and adult audiences.

Outcome and Evaluation:

As a result of this program, participants realize that although not everyone may wish to be an entrepreneur, the potential for professional and personal success is enhanced through the use of entrepreneurial knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspirations.

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BECOMING MONEY WISE

Program Title:

Becoming Money Wise

Program Purpose:

The purpose of this 4-H money management project is to help pre-teen youth develop knowledge, skills, positive attitudes, and personal goals & plans related to money management.

Program Description:

Youth who participate in the project monitor their personal cash flow and track where their money goes by developing a budget and good records to become a responsible consumer.

Time Frame:

Participants are encouraged to track their personal cash flow over several months, and to devote enough time to the other learning experiences to gain the knowledge and skills for which they are designed. This project is designed as a beginner-level book and may be taken one or two years.

Potential Audience:

Pre-teens and youth with little financial management experience.

Outcome and Evaluation:

Approximately 500 Ohio 4-H youth develop knowledge, skills, positive attitudes, and personal goals & plans related to money management through participation in this project each year.

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REALITY STORE

Program Title:

Reality Store

Program Purpose:

To illustrate to the participants the reality of real world expenses and the need to plan for the future.

Program Description:

Local schools utilize community volunteers to staff stations at the Reality Store. Students are assigned a "job", a marital status (single, married, separated, divorced), a given number of children and a monthly paycheck total. Participants must make various decisions at the stations (after paying taxes) regarding housing, transportation, insurance, education, food, clothing, personal care, entertainment, etc.. A unique station is titled "Life's Little Surprises" where a spin of a roulette wheel or roll of the dice may add or subtract from their available funds. Depending on their individual situations participants may revisit stations to modify their choices or apply for loans.

Time Frame:

Depending on the size of the group and the amount of preparation, the activity can be accomplished in one hour.

Potential Audience: Teens preparing to enter the job market.

Outcome and Evaluation:

Reality Store programs were conducted in Belmont, Brown, Butler, Clermont, Darke, Highland, Lawrence, and other Ohio counties in 2002 and 2003. Evaluations indicated that participation in Reality Store results in teens becoming more likely to continue their education after high school, to delay having children, and to be more knowledgeable in making financial and career decisions.

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TEENS...ON THE ROAD TO FINANCIAL SUCCESS

Program Title:

Teens...On The Road To Financial Success

Program Purpose:

The purpose of this 4-H money management project is to help teens develop knowledge, skills, positive attitudes, and personal goals & plans related to personal financial management.

Program Description:

Participants organize their financial life by analyzing spending, obtaining and managing banking services, making consumer decisions and exploring financial careers. This project is designed to be taken for one or two years.

Time Frame:

Participants are encouraged to track their personal cash flow over several months, and to devote enough time to the other learning experiences to gain the knowledge and skills for which they are designed. This project is designed as a beginner-level book and may be taken one or two years.

Potential Audience:

Teens ages 14-19

Outcome and Evaluation:

Each year approximately 400 Ohio 4-H teens develop knowledge, skills, positive attitudes, and personal goals & plans related to personal financial management through experiences completed in this project.

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