

4-H Professional Research and Knowledge Competencies, 2004

DOMAIN: Youth Development

Utilizing the knowledge of the human growth and development process to create environments that help youth reach their full potential.

TOPIC: GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT (5-19 years): The stages youth progress through as they grow physically, cognitively, socially and emotionally.

COMPONENT: Physical development:

- Identifies biological transitions of development
- Articulates how these transitions influence program design and adult-youth relationships
- Understands the affects of nutrition and exercise on growth and development

COMPONENT: Cognitive Development

- Recognizes cognitive stages across age groups
- Facilitates the growth in thinking from concrete to abstract
- Understands how the cognitive stages inform program design and the need for age-appropriate curriculum

COMPONENT: Social & Emotional Development

- Recognizes the changing role of peers
- Creates programs that are responsive to these changes.
- Identifies the stages of identity development
- Provides opportunities for exploration in multiple skill or project areas
- Aware of the signs of emotional and mental stress

TOPIC: YOUTH DEVELOPMENT THEORY

COMPONENT: Positive Youth Development

- Intentionally designs programs to promote positive outcomes for youth through the provision of opportunities, relationships, and supports
- Understands history, changes and trends of the roles of youth in society
- Recognizes transitions and the role of rites of passage in youth development
- Recognizes gender differences in learning and participation

COMPONENT: Ecological Model

- Recognizes the influence of multiple contexts on youth development
- Articulates the impact of these contexts on youth development for specific situations
- Recognizes the cultural and structural differences for various youth within systems

COMPONENT: Resiliency Theory

- Recognizes risk and protective factors
- Maps risk and protective factors
- Designs programs and create relationships that maximize protective factors and minimize risks

New Foundations for the 4-H Youth Development Profession: 4-H Professional Research, Knowledge and Competencies Study, 2004. Conducted in cooperation with the National 4-H Professional Development Task Force. National 4-H Headquarters, NIFA, USDA.

TOPIC: YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PRACTICE: The integration of youth development growth and development and youth development theory into the actual activities planned and implemented in a program.

COMPONENT: Relationship Building

- Creates a positive relationship at all levels with youth, families, and community partners
- Maintains appropriate emotional and physical boundaries with youth
- Understands impacts of adult role models and mentoring, and is aware of community referral and intervention opportunities
- Maintains a mentor-learner relationship with youth and volunteers
- Demonstrates character and models proper behaviors

COMPONENT: Behavior Management

- Sets up environments and programs to promote positive behavior
- Implements personal and group strategies to deal with inappropriate behavior in appropriate and affirming ways
- Demonstrates understanding of conflict management and resolution
- Models positive behavior and provides leadership for others in this area

COMPONENT: Programming for life skill development

- Articulates the relationship between program activities and life skills.
- Ensures activities are intentionally designed to develop critical life skills
- Programs provide meaningful engagement for participants
- Uses or develops programs that allow youth the opportunity to practice life skills
- Articulates the importance of basic life skill development and age appropriate learning

DOMAIN: Youth Program Development

Planning, implementing, and evaluating programs that achieve youth development outcomes.

TOPIC: SITUATION ANALYSIS

COMPONENT:

- Accessing Existing Information
- Knows how to access existing sources of situational data
- Uses and interprets data from various sources
- Uses current research to help identify program opportunities

COMPONENT: Gathering Community Perspectives

- Knows methods and techniques for gathering data from both young people and adults (community forums, focus groups, interviews, surveys)
- Skilled in the use of appropriate methods and techniques for gathering community perspectives

COMPONENT: Setting Priorities and Securing Commitment

- Works with advisory boards and committees to obtain input regarding program priorities
- Determines significance and prioritizes problems and issues
- Identifies potential community partners and collaborators

TOPIC: PROGRAM DESIGN

COMPONENT: Component: Theories of Change

- Understands and applies theories and approaches for facilitating change

COMPONENT: Design Frameworks

- Understands and subscribes to a framework for program planning (logic modeling, TOP, etc.)
- Facilitates program development using a planning framework
- Communicates program plans to relevant stakeholders
- Periodically reassesses program plans

COMPONENT: Curriculum Development

- Knows and applies experiential approaches to learning
- Knows characteristics of quality youth development curricula
- Selects, adapts, and utilizes curricula appropriately
- Develops curricula based on current research and knowledge

COMPONENT: Program Quality Standards

- Knows characteristics of effective youth development programs
- Applies quality standards in program design and delivery

COMPONENT: Evaluation Planning

- Incorporates evaluation planning into program design

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TOPIC: PROGRAM DELIVERY

COMPONENT: Learning Strategies

- Identifies learning styles of participants
- Assesses contextual factors which affect learning
- Demonstrates ability to modify and adapt strategies in accordance with audience needs and other contextual factors

COMPONENT: Instruction

- Utilizes lesson plans or teaching outlines
- Understands and applies appropriate teaching methods
- Facilitates learning using various teaching techniques
- Uses appropriate equipment, devices, and technology in support of teaching and Learning

TOPIC: PROGRAM EVALUATION

COMPONENT: Approaches and Perspectives

- Understands multiple approaches to evaluation
- Understands the difference between process and outcome evaluation

COMPONENT: Evaluation Design

- Develops meaningful evaluation questions
- Specifies appropriate indicators of change
- Selects evaluation methods appropriate for the evaluation question and indicators
- Develops a timeline for evaluation activities

COMPONENT: Evaluation Methods

- Skilled in the use of both qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods
- Knows protocols and procedures for collecting and handling data

COMPONENT: Analysis and Interpretation

- Knows procedures for analyzing quantitative and qualitative data
- Can interpret findings and articulate reasonable conclusions

COMPONENT: Communicating Evaluation Results

- Communicates evaluation results in a manner congruent with stakeholder needs

DOMAIN: Volunteerism

Building and maintaining volunteer management system for the delivery of youth development programs

TOPIC: PERSONAL READINESS

COMPONENT: Philosophy of Volunteerism

- Develops and demonstrates personal philosophy of volunteerism in congruence with professional ethics
- Articulates a belief in the competence of volunteers
- Develops and/or supports an organizational philosophy of volunteerism

COMPONENT: Trends in Volunteerism

- Identifies and engages expanded, diverse audiences as both volunteers and recipients of volunteers' services
- Understands societal trends and adapts volunteer management strategies accordingly

COMPONENT: Advocating for Volunteerism

- Knows role of organizational volunteers and communicate benefits to community, organization, and individuals
- Identifies and nurtures staff/volunteer teams to manage change
- Educates peers and co-workers on the value of volunteerism

TOPIC: ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS

COMPONENT: Climate for Volunteerism

- Creates and supports a positive organizational environment for volunteerism
- Develops and supports staffing structures that align and support meaningful roles for volunteers

COMPONENT: Identifying Needs for Volunteers

- Develops and conducts community needs and assets assessments
- Develops and conducts organizational needs and assets assessments

COMPONENT: Developing Volunteer Positions

- Identifies potential volunteer roles and responsibilities
- Develops written volunteer position descriptions

TOPIC: ENGAGEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS

COMPONENT: Recruiting Volunteers

- Understands fundamentals of human motivation as related to volunteerism
- Understands and implements multiple recruitment strategies based upon position responsibilities and community demographics
- Communicates available positions to the community
- Knows and communicates roles and responsibilities for episodic, short-term, long-term, and virtual volunteer commitments

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- Promotes different levels of responsibilities for volunteers
- Develops and disseminates applications to potential volunteers

COMPONENT: Selecting Volunteers

- Understands the purpose of appropriate selection strategies
- Identifies selection strategies appropriate for the volunteer position based upon the position's responsibilities, organizational policies, and the clientele to be served
- Conducts potential volunteer interviews, reference checks, and criminal background checks
- Identifies and matches individual motivations, skills and time commitment with available roles and responsibilities
- Evaluates and determines the appropriateness of individuals for volunteer position(s) for final placement

TOPIC: EDUCATION OF VOLUNTEERS

COMPONENT: Orientation of Volunteers

- Develops and conduct initial orientation to the organization
- Conducts on-going orientation that reflects organizational changes

COMPONENT: Education of Volunteers

- Provides educational opportunities for volunteers on youth development, organizational operations, personal development, etc.
- Provides educational opportunities for volunteers on relevant subject-matter and organizational leadership strategies
- Provides educational opportunities for volunteers related to organizational policies and procedures

COMPONENT: Adult Development and Learning Theory

- Applies teaching and learning strategies appropriate for diverse adult audiences

TOPIC: SUSTAINABILITY OF VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

COMPONENT: Supervising, & Coaching Volunteers

- Delegates appropriate responsibilities to volunteers
- Supports a positive volunteer esprit des corps
- Motivates volunteers to stimulate creativity and reach potential
- Addresses behaviors not consistent with acceptable standards

COMPONENT: Performance Management of Volunteers

- Conducts and provides regular/routine performance feedback to volunteers
- Implements disciplinary strategies including remediation, counseling, probation, and dismissal

COMPONENT: Recognition of Volunteers

- Promotes and implements appropriate intrinsic and extrinsic recognition strategies for volunteers
- Provides and supports expanded leadership opportunities for volunteers

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COMPONENT: Evaluation of Volunteer Efforts

- Develops and conducts impact assessment of volunteer efforts
- Communicates impact of volunteer efforts to stakeholders

DOMAIN: Equity, Access and Opportunity

Interacting effectively and equitably with diverse individuals and building long-term relationships with diverse communities

TOPIC: Sensitivity

COMPONENT: Personal Readiness

- Seeks out and explores commonalities and differences (expand comfort zone) beyond one's own race/ethnicity, gender, religion, etc.
- Is proud of one's own identity and encourages others to do the same.
- Committed to learning about and working with people from varying backgrounds.
- Builds relationships of trust, safety and mutual respect with the many different individuals and groups.
- Acknowledges "not knowing" when you don't understand
- Committed to lifelong learning of about diverse individuals, groups and communities.
- Exhibits Self-awareness including one's cultural/social identities, assumptions, values, norms, biases, preferences, experience of privilege and oppression, and how they shape one's worldview.
- Displays an awareness of their own communication, learning, and teaching styles; acceptance of others' styles, and willingness to learn new skills to bridge differences

COMPONENT: Dimensions of Diversity

- Is aware of and open to youth and volunteers who are diverse based on Primary Dimensions of Diversity (more permanent, impossible or hard to change) such as: Race/Ethnicity, Gender and Sexual Orientation, Age, Physical Differences and Abilities, Learning Differences and Abilities
- Is aware and open to youth and volunteers who are diverse based on Secondary Dimensions of Diversity such as: Religion and Belief Systems, Socioeconomic Status, Family Structure, Language, Geographic (urban, rural, suburban)
- Exhibits and awareness of varying levels of assimilation or acculturation within groups

TOPIC: Awareness

COMPONENT: Values, Norms and Practices

- Understands their own identities and how they shape your worldview
- Understands differing concepts of time and space and how they communicate meaning
- Understands differing body language, verbal expressions, and how they communicate meaning.
- Understands differing values, norms, practices, traditions

COMPONENT: Pluralistic Thinking

- Recognizes the validity of multiple perspectives
- Thinks openly without prejudging
- Thinks inclusively

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COMPONENT: Power, Privilege and Policy

- Understands the effects of differences in historical power and privilege, including institutional privilege and internalized oppression.
- Knows laws and policies that promote and support diversity and pluralism.
- Knowledgeable of prejudice, classism, homophobia, etc. and the origins of “isms”
- Knows history of diverse groups in America and the effect of historical events on present day behavior.

TOPIC: Communication

COMPONENT: Open Attitude

- Reserves judgment in a cross-cultural interaction.
- Interrupts oppressive behavior (preserving the dignity of all people)
- Applies “mind set” to address conflict in a cross-cultural setting. Mind-set includes recognizing, understanding and knowing how to adapt to communication style differences such as direct and indirect, linear and circular, low-context and high-context.
- Reacts in a non-defensive manner
- Apply cultural knowledge to address conflicts and negotiate common ground

COMPONENT: Speaking Consciously

- Opens and continues dialogue in a non-threatening way.
- Communicates one’s own perspective with clarity.
- Uses non-blaming language to talk about issues of difference.
- disagreeing respectfully
- Demonstrates an awareness of the impact of words and actions

COMPONENT: Active Listening

- Listens in accordance with the cultural context.
- Provides feedback in order to check for mutual understanding.
- Listens deeply and encourages feedback as a means of gaining clarity in intended meaning.

TOPIC: Relevant Programming

COMPONENT: Needs Assessment

- Gains sufficient, meaningful input of diverse communities/individuals to design programs
- Examines root causes of needs
- Expresses an openness to surprises – No predetermined needs
- Listens to individuals and not just data/statistics
- Involves community in the entire process

COMPONENT: Program Design

- Uses appropriate marketing techniques such as personal marketing, relationship marketing and/or ethnic marketing
- Uses applications and activities appropriate for the learner’s needs
- Uses content that reflects the norms, values and preferences of the learners

COMPONENT: Program Implementation

- Considers accessibility, availability, neutrality, language, etc. when implementing programs
- Covers issues/topics on the subject that are important to the learners
- Provides application exercises for applying the ideas that would be interesting to the learner
- Uses examples relevant to the learners' life experiences
- Involves learners as partners in learning

COMPONENT: Collaboration

- Collaborates with diverse communities/individuals to assess their needs
- Engages local, diverse, community-based individuals in advisory committees, volunteer opportunities, etc.
- Engages local, grassroots organizations as equal partners with an equal voice in the programming process

TOPIC: Inclusive Organizations

COMPONENT: Policies and Procedures

- Uses sensitive policies, procedures and practices
- Recruits, supports and retains diverse volunteers
- Fosters an Inclusive work environment where human differences and similarities are welcomed, valued, and utilized at all levels
- Encourages a nurturing environment where all employees have equal access to opportunities for personal and professional growth, recognition and rewards, as well as other opportunities
- Establishes goals and accountability measures to ensure diversity in program participation and program content

COMPONENT: Staffing and Staff Development

- Hires, retains and promotes diversity faculty and staff at all levels.
- Provides training, resources and support for faculty and staff at all levels

COMPONENT: Community Outreach

- Forges constructive alliances with local, grassroots community-based organizations to expand outreach to diverse communities
- Designs materials and information that reflects the needs of diverse communities
- Shows an awareness of existing assets and resources in diverse communities
- Knowledgeable of how to gain sufficient, meaningful input from diverse communities to design programs

DOMAIN: Partnerships

Engaging youth in community development and the broader community in youth development.

TOPIC: YOUTH-ADULT PARTNERSHIPS

COMPONENT: Assessment and Readiness

- Assesses readiness of young people and adults to engage as partners
- Recognizes own strengths and limitations in engaging in youth adult partnerships
- Serves as a role model

COMPONENT: Continuum of Youth Engagement

- Articulates the continuum of youth engagement (objects, recipients, resources, partners)
- Advocates for the engagement of young people
- Can provide examples of how to apply the continuum in youth work
- Possesses values consistent with youth engagement

COMPONENT: Creating Partnerships

- Creates safe, open, accepting environments for both youth and adults
- Fosters development of intergenerational relationships
- Ensures adequate representation of young people in all areas of decision making
- Facilitates dialogue that ensures a youth voice

COMPONENT: Building and Maintaining Partnerships

- Provides opportunities for young people to lead
- Builds youth capacity to lead
- Understands realistic expectations from youth and adults in partnerships
- Builds adult capacity to follow youth leadership
- Provides consistent encouragement for the growth of the partnership

TOPIC: YOUTH ACTION

COMPONENT: Youth Organizing

- Possesses ability to serve as a resource and ally to youth
- Fosters an environment that provides support to youth organizing for community change
- Provides access to resources, systems, and power structures
- Encourages critical thinking throughout community change

COMPONENT: Youth Advocacy

- Models appropriate channels and avenues for youth advocacy
- Speaks on behalf of underrepresented youth

COMPONENT: Youth Leadership

- Facilitates exploration of personal leadership styles
- Structures real world opportunities for leadership training
- Encourages young people to self-reflect on leadership experiences

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COMPONENT: Youth in Governance

- Builds capacity of existing governing bodies to accept youth members
- Builds capacity of young people to serve on governing bodies
- Builds governing structures that incorporate youth voice
- Manages youth-adult interactions on governing bodies
- Models and engages youth in appropriate avenues for education and change in government

COMPONENT: Service Learning

- Develops and demonstrates a philosophy of service learning
- Helps young people identify issues and opportunities for service in local communities
- Supports young people in the process of community change

TOPIC: ORGANIZATIONAL ALLIANCES

COMPONENT: Assessment and Readiness

- Assesses readiness for organizational alliances
- Identifies opportunities for potential alliances
- Understands implications of organizational self-interest
- Understands the mission and programs of other youth serving organizations

COMPONENT: Networking

- Establishes and maintains effective professional networks
- Utilizes appropriate networks to acquire resources and information

COMPONENT: Cooperation

- Understands and respects roles of community agencies and organizations
- Cooperates to ensure efficiency in program delivery

COMPONENT: Partnerships

- Actively seeks out and initiates discussion with potential partners.
- Jointly designs, implements and evaluates youth programs with community partners
- Facilitates group processes to help achieve common goals

COMPONENT: Coalitions

- Organizes or joins community coalitions to address current issues

COMPONENT: Collaboration

- Identifies common interests for which collaborations can be formed
- Develops and sustains long-term relationships among coalition partners

TOPIC: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

COMPONENT: Analysis

- Assesses community assets and needs

COMPONENT: Tools and Processes

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- Utilizes tools and processes which encourage and facilitate community development

COMPONENT: Government

- Understands and applies knowledge of governmental structures, systems, and policies

COMPONENT: Workforce

- Understands the nature of the local workforce
- Helps young people acquire skills and abilities for the workforce
- Helps young people understand and articulate their 4-H experiences as “work” experience
- Articulates to the public how 4-H contributes to career exploration and skill development
- Engages community in career development of young people

COMPONENT: Community Youth Development

- Engages broader community in youth development
- Engages young people in building strong communities
- Understands the interrelationships between youth and their communities

DOMAIN: Organizational Systems

Positioning the organization and its people to work with and on behalf of young people most effectively.

TOPIC: ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

COMPONENT: Knowledge of the Organization

- Understands CES/4-H history, structure and mission
- Displays commitment to CES/4-H/mission

COMPONENT: Strategic Planning

- Uses mission and vision to shape programs and organizational structure
- Uses mission and vision for long-range planning
- Plans, manages and embraces change

COMPONENT: Program Governance

- Establishes appropriate management structures
- Creates governance policies
- Monitors and supports board and committee work

TOPIC: PERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS

COMPONENT: Management

- Sets priorities
- Manages time effectively
- Balances conflicting demands

COMPONENT: Work/Life Balance

- Incorporates wellness practices into personal life style
- Practices stress management and stress reduction

COMPONENT: Interpersonal Skills

- Listens effectively and actively
- Takes others' perspectives into account
- Manages conflicts effectively
- Demonstrates group facilitation skills

TOPIC: COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES

COMPONENT: Diverse, targeted strategies

- Writes and speaks effectively for diverse audiences
- Possesses operational proficiency in use of the technology needed to function effectively in current position

COMPONENT: Marketing

- Develops and maintains public relations efforts

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- Works effectively with the media
- Identifies target audiences and markets programs to meet their specific needs

COMPONENT: Accountability/Impact

- Collects and reports data, enrollments
- Establishes and manages communication flow
- Communicates program impacts to stakeholders

TOPIC: RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

COMPONENT: Budgets

- Develops and manages budgets
- Follows policies and standards for fund reporting

COMPONENT: Resource Development Stewardship

- Develops grants and proposals
- Follows policies and standards for resource development
- Plans and conducts fundraising activities
- Identifies and partners with donors and sponsors
- Integrates reporting and evaluation into resource development
- efforts

TOPIC: RISK MANAGEMENT

COMPONENT: People

- Works with volunteers and staff to assess and plan for potential risks
- Designs and maintains a safe, inclusive program environment for youth and adults
- Plans for special needs of participants
- Engages program participants in safety-awareness and self-protection practices
- Responds effectively to crises
- Understands and follows insurance/liability policies and procedures
- Understands youth legal systems (Child labor laws, community ordinances affecting youth, child protection issues, school policies).

COMPONENT: Property

- Designs and monitors safe physical environments
- Works with volunteers and participants on stewardship and respect for property and resources.
- Provides appropriate care and accountability for physical property of the organization.

COMPONENT: Financial

- Understands and follows policies on fund stewardship
- Facilitates appropriate financial management practices by volunteers and participants when handling program financial matters.

COMPONENT: Goodwill/Image/Reputation Management

- Understands, follows and communicates policies regarding the 4-H name and emblem

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- Understands and judiciously implements program policies and guidelines
- Develops proactive approaches to crisis response and communications

TOPIC: PROFESSIONALISM

COMPONENT: Ethics

- Demonstrates attributes of a positive role model
- Follows ethical standards of profession at all times
- Is accountable and accepts responsibility for actions

COMPONENT: Scholarship

- Applies research and best practices to all aspects of work
- Contributes to knowledge-base of the youth development field
- Provides research-based information to the public and collaborates with other youth development educators and professionals
- Seeks professional affiliations that will enhance the youth development profession and their own professional knowledge base

COMPONENT: Advocacy

- Promotes youth development profession
- Promotes the University
- Is a catalyst for response to needs of youth and family
- Partners and collaborates with other youth organization professionals at the national, state, and local levels.
- Promotes positive youth development to decision maker

