
CENTER UPDATE

Newsletter of the 4-H Center for Youth Development
University of California, Davis

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Notes from the Director: The Information Highway has Multiple Lanes

--Marc Braverman

Those of us who work to develop and deliver new programs for youth and families have good reason to be very interested in information. After all, we don't know if a new program is working until we try to evaluate it in some way, either formally or informally. The challenge is that information can take different forms, and it turns out that these forms are more or less convincing to different kinds of audiences. Educators in California learned some lessons in this area from the recent controversy over the state Department of Education's proposal to reform the state testing system. This proposal, the CLAS test, was defeated—some would say prematurely—due to surprisingly intense public debate about how we should learn about what kids know.

With this in mind it was interesting to read an article by Lorrie Shepard and Carribeth Bliem in the November issue of *Educational Researcher*.^{*} These researchers interviewed parents of third-graders in a Colorado school district to see how much they valued four different kinds of information about their child's progress in school. In this era of concern about basic skills, one would expect that parents would treat standardized test scores as the most valuable form of assessment. For example, Gallup Poll results show that the public strongly favors standardized national tests. It was surprising, therefore, that the parents in this district—which was not unusual in terms of political orientation—overwhelmingly judged standardized tests to be the least useful. The ratings of usefulness were: (a) Talking with their child's teacher (77% rated this as "very useful"); (b) Seeing graded work samples (60%); (c) Report cards (43%); and (d) Standardized tests (14%). Even when they were asked which forms would be most useful for evaluating the school itself, parents favored talking to the teacher and seeing work samples over standardized tests, though not by as wide a margin. Ironically, the teachers had reported feeling concerned that they needed to justify their judgments with objective information such as test scores in order to satisfy parents. They must have been gratified to learn that parents considered their expert judgments to be the most valuable form of information of all.

One of the lessons from this study (which would need to be repeated in other locations before we conclude that it reflects a general trend) is that when we present evaluative information to our audiences, we always need to be aware of what kinds of information they will respond to. The answers will vary, and any prior assumptions we make may be illusory. Different kinds of assessment have different strengths: one may be the most rigorous, while another allows for more insight. By being flexible in our planning, we can try to find the best fit between what we're finding out and who is listening.

^{*}Shepard, L.A., and Bliem, C.L. (1995). Parents' thinking about standardized tests and performance assessments. *Educational Researcher*, 24(8), 25-32.

Announcements

--Ella Madsen

Youth Entrepreneur Symposium

The 4th National Youth Entrepreneur Symposium (Y.E.S.) is being organized and hosted by the California Southern Regional 4-H Academic Staff in and around the Lost Angeles Area. It will be held **April 25-28, 1996** at the **Sheraton Hotel, Long Beach, CA.** Y.E.S. is designed for youth, ages 14-19, who are in business or interested in starting a business; youth professionals; business and public leaders; and volunteers interested in youth entrepreneurial programs. In order to maximize the benefits of this symposium for the youth and adult participants, each participating agency is asked to bring an entrepreneur "action team" consisting of six youths to one adult coach. **Fees covering the symposium and some meals are \$100/youth and \$200/adult if registration is postmarked by March 1, 1996.** If postmarked after March 1st fees increase \$25 and \$50 respectively.

Several objectives of the symposium are:

- to prepare and motivate youth careers in business
- to provide technical information and assistance to youth
- to equip professionals and volunteers with technical skills to plan, organize, fund, implement, and evaluate teen entrepreneurial projects
- to demonstrate the viability of youth entrepreneurship as a strategy for workforce preparedness, community revitalization, and economic development.

For more information call (909) 787-5785 or contact Judith Kingston, 1996 Symposium Coordinator, at (213) 744-4865 or William Sirowy, Y.E.S. Marketing Coordinator, at (909) 387-8875.

Evaluation of Center Services 1995

In an effort to more effectively serve 4-H staff in California, we will be distributing an evaluation form at the State Program Coordinators' Conference of January 30-February 1, 1996. This form will be your opportunity to provide feedback and comments on the services provided by the 4-H Center. We appreciate your taking the time to complete and return the form at the conference.

Call For Out-of-State Curriculum for Display

In response to the curriculum survey recently conducted by the 4-H State Curriculum Committee many Advisors indicated that they have obtained and use curricula developed in other states. We would like to organize a display of out-of-state curricula at the State Program Coordinator's Conference. Please contact Ella Madsen to reserve a display space at the conference. Phone: (916)754-8433. E-mail: ermadsen@ucdavis.edu.

1996 4-H CYD Spring Conference

It's time to mark your calendars and reserve June 4-5, 1996 for the annual 4-H CYD Spring Conference. The conference will again be hosted at UC Davis. The format of this year's event will be similar to that of last year's, offering a variety of training sessions and workshop. Further details will be provided in future communications.

Diversity Awareness Training of Trainers

Diversity Awareness Training of Trainers sessions will be offered upon request throughout the year. Yuri Morita, the Diversity Trainer will conduct the session at the counties for advisors, program representatives, and volunteers. Participants will have the opportunity to gain the skills, knowledge and materials necessary to conduct diversity workshops with minimum preparation. To arrange for a training session in your area contact Yuri Morita by phone at (510) 987-0098 or by e-mail: yuri.morita@ucop.edu.

Out and About Around the State...

--Judy Wallace

Regional Projects, Teams, etc.:

Los Angeles After School Activity Program Evaluation Leadership Team, Offices of LA Unified School District (10/11/95):

Marc attends these team meetings which meet approximately quarterly. The Leadership Team oversees and guides evaluation planning issues for the After School Project.

North Central Region Presentation to VP Gomes, San Francisco (11/20/95):

Marc represented the 4-H CYD at this presentation to the VP, where YD Advisors in the NCR counties made presentations on their innovative projects.

North Central Region Youth Research & Development Workgroup, Solano County (12/8/95):

Judy attended this all-day meeting with self-selected 4-H YD Advisors from the NCR. The workgroup's primary purpose is to study theories, research and practices in youth development.

National Meetings:

National Decisions for Health Network Organizing Meeting, Washington, DC (10/19-10/20/95):

Judy attended this National Extension collaborative planning meeting. The goal was to develop, over two days, a plan for establishing a resource network of extension agents devoted to health issues for children, youth, and families.

International Evaluation Conference, joint meeting of the American Evaluation Association & Canadian Evaluation Society, Vancouver, British Columbia (11/1-11/5/95):

Marc presented a paper, "Adapting (and Evaluating) an English-Language Prevention Curriculum into Spanish."

Leaders Conferences:

Southern Region Leaders Retreat, Ventura County (10/7/95):

Judy attended this regional retreat of leaders. In addition to participating in afternoon seminars, she participated on a statewide panel discussion with Steve Mendivil.

Leaders Forum, Asilomar (11/10-11/11/95):

Marc attended this statewide gathering of leaders. He gave one of the keynote presentations, along with Steve Mendivil, and they both conducted two small-group sessions with leaders.

Regional Meetings:

Marc is attending each Region's YD staff meetings this winter and spring. The schedule is as follows:

- *Southern Region 4-H Staff Meeting* (12/7/95)
- *South Central Region 4-H Staff Meeting* (upcoming, 1/10/96)
- *North Central Region 4-H Staff Meeting* (upcoming, 1/96)
- *Northern Region 4-H Staff Meeting* (upcoming, 3/96)

Attention Collaborative Grants Program Recipients!

--Judy Wallace

As you already know, there are a couple of important dates to watch for in this new year! They are as follows:

- Deadline for Midyear Progress Reports: January 12, 1996
- Presentations during State Coordinator's Conference

These will occur on Wednesday, Jan. 31 and Thursday, Feb. 1; each of the 7 recipients will present on their project's progress for 10 minutes and respond to questions for an additional 5 minutes.

Dr. Richard Lerner visits the 4-H CYD

--Anna Sherlock

On October 16-18, the 4-H CYD hosted a visit by Dr. Richard Lerner, Director of the Institute for Children, Youth, and Families (ICYF) at Michigan State University (MSU). In addition to his Director duties, Dr. Lerner is a professor of family and child ecology and psychology at MSU, and a well known scholar on human life-span development. He is the author of *America's Youth in Crisis: Challenges and Options for Programs and Policies*, sponsored by the National 4-H Council and published by Sage Publications. During his visit, Dr. Lerner consulted with staff from the Center and the 4-H Program Office, and with 4-H YD Advisors. Our discussions focused on the potential role the 4-H CYD and its impact on youth programming in California, using the experiences of the ICYF and other centers as models.

On October 17, Dr. Lerner made a presentation to UCD faculty, 4-H YD Advisors, and human development graduate students. In this talk he discussed the importance of participatory research with real-life programs, a field of study called Applied Developmental Science. He also called on universities to become more involved with "outreach scholarship," that is, research activities that directly benefit families and communities, even though such research is notoriously difficult to conduct from an academic point of view. Over 60 people attended the presentation, including approximately 10 4-H YD Advisors.

County Spotlight: An Assessment of a Collaborative Program for "At Risk" Children and Families in an Inner-City Community: An Update from Faye C.H. Lee

--Ramona Carlos

In response to our request for information on county activities, Faye C.H. Lee, 4-H YD Advisor for San Francisco County, wanted to share her results of a recently completed State Critical Applied Research (SCAR)-sponsored program evaluation she conducted. The purpose of her study was to examine the concept of

providing integrated health and human service programs at school sites. She was interested in knowing what kinds of interventions made a difference in improving the lives of low-income children and families. In particular, would an integrated health and human service program at a school site be an effective strategy? To answer this, Faye studied the Healthy Start Program at a school in the southeast section of San Francisco.

Through a series of individual and focus group interviews, ethnographic field notes and examination of existing program documents and records, results indicated that the Healthy Start Program, through the various services it provided, helped children become more successful academically. The program also helped families access other needed resources; in particular, Cooperative Extension's EFNEP and community empowerment programs helped families avoid more serious problems. Indirectly, the Healthy Start Program was also beneficial to teachers and the school. There were reported increases in efficiency by improving access and providing more comprehensive services to families.

Faye found that although the Healthy Start Program focused on the needs of children and employed an ecological, comprehensive approach in intervention, any program model is just one part of a successful intervention. Of equal importance is the context in which an intervention takes place. At this particular school site, there was strong leadership and staff, and the community was uniquely suited to this type of program model. Faye reports that it became clear that the effectiveness of an intervention depends less on the program than on those people implementing the intervention and the context in which it is carried out.

County Spotlight: Ventura County's Curriculum Library: An Update from Rose Hayden-Smith

--Judy Wallace

History

When Rose Hayden-Smith, 4-H Youth Development Advisor of Ventura County, joined

the 4-H program three years ago, she was very interested in curriculum and broad access to it. As an educator and previous librarian, she realized how important easy access to curriculum is, and how undeveloped the system was in her county for identifying and accessing it. Although she was preceded by a program representative (actually a school librarian) who had acquired many materials, no system for cataloging them had been developed. Using graph pads, Rose conducted a quick assessment of what her county office had by 1) cross-referencing materials and 2) indexing them by subject. She knew, however, that a more advanced on-line system would be necessary, in addition to instituting an ongoing, curriculum acquisition process.

Developing the Curriculum Committee

In cooperation with the Ventura County 4-H Leaders Council of Clubs, Rose formed an ad hoc Curriculum Committee of approximately seven members. Two were trained advisors and at least four were community club leaders; together, their expertise ranged from home economics and small animals to science and middle management. This committee had two objectives:

- to put the curriculum on-line
- to figure out what areas lacked curriculum

In response to the second objective, several existing program committees reviewed curriculum already available in Ventura County, recognized "holes" or areas not covered by existing curriculum materials, and identified new items for purchase. Objective #1 involved a more intense research process. Members met in small groups and discussed the following questions:

- How did they want their on-line curriculum library to look?
- How did they want to organize the database?
- How accessible did they want the system?

Developing and Managing the On-line Curriculum Database

In order to facilitate decisions around these issues, the committee surveyed the various computer systems at libraries and schools. They also interviewed computer experts and staff of local bookstores. Rose then hired an assistant to put the curriculum on-line. The position began in the summer of 1995 and will end by February, 1996. At this time, the ongoing responsibility for maintaining and administering the library will be passed on to the county-paid administrative assistant and Rose. On average, the assistant works 8-10 hours per week.

Features of the database are as follows:

- It was designed on *Lotus Approach*, which offers 15-24 pre-set applications software and an inventory system. It was also *customizable* so the committee could decide on important fields and develop *pull-down menus* to make data entry easy.
- It offers a dual-combination cataloguing system. Curriculum are listed by *project category* and also by *clusters*—broad groups of 4-H projects, some of which are used for record-book judging.
- In order for the database to be useful to people both within and outside of 4-H, it offers this information on each curriculum:
 - title, date of publication, targeted age range, quantity of curricula, short description, format (book, video, etc.), supplemental videos, review rating (by various people), other information (e.g., language format).
- Each curriculum has a *code number* for cross-referencing by librarians and users.

At this time, 1,500 records have been entered on the database, not including duplicate copies of curriculum. Records include books, encyclopedias, specialized dictionaries (e.g., of science), notebooks, and pamphlets on subjects ranging from child care to dehorning goats. Most are Cooperative Extension materials from around the U.S.

Users of the database consist of 4-H volunteers, project leaders, and community club leaders; junior and teen leaders; and extenders from other youth serving organizations such as Girl Scouts,

Boys and Girls Clubs, city representatives, and school teachers.

Rose advertises the database by: describing new curricula in a regular monthly newsletter to local youth agencies, community clubs, 4-H families, county supervisors and others; mentioning its availability at various training and 4-H events; and showcasing curricula twice per year at a CE event hosted for extenders.

Physical Location of Materials

All curricula are stored in a library at the Ventura County office. Although this library also functions as a small conference room, it is open many hours during the week, and by appointment, for browsing by people within 4-H as well as other community organizations.

Because many materials can be checked out of the library, the committee developed a *library card* system. Each item has a huge 8 X 11 cardboard library card (with a computer print-out of the material pasted on back) which sits on the shelf next to the item. When it is checked out, the card lists users who borrow the material, keeping track of who has which material.

Funding and Rationale

For every member enrolled in 4-H each year, the Ventura County 4-H Leaders Council of Clubs allocates \$1 toward the purchase of new curriculum. This began in the 1994-95 program year, and has continued to operate into program year of 1995-96. Prior to 1994, Rose had asked the Leaders Council for monetary assistance to purchase curriculum that she felt was needed. In response, they had allocated \$700 in discretionary funds to her. Their rationale, then and now, was simple: if the program could allocate money for activities (e.g., the All Star program), then it should also be committed, as an educationally-based, university-sponsored program, to acquiring curriculum that would ensure the delivery of high quality, developmentally appropriate programs to youth. This philosophy guided the fundraising efforts of the Leaders Council.

By the end of program year 1995-96, the Council will have spent approximately \$1,500

on the purchase of new curriculum. This amount has increased since the 1994-95 program year, when the Council spent approximately \$1,200. The total project cost is estimated at \$1,800-2,300.

Future Plans

Currently, users must come to the library to access materials and the database. However, several plans to improve and expand access are in the works! For instance:

- Bob Davis, with funding from Hansen Trust, is collaborating with George Rendell and John Pusey of Los Angeles County to develop a pilot computer system for the After School Activity Program. This system will also have applicability to the Ventura County project.
- Los Angeles and Ventura Counties will pilot test sending information to leaders electronically and making the database information available via a bulletin board.
- The CE office hopes to be able to respond to phone requests for curricula.
- The CE office hopes to provide new leaders with a printout of available materials so that they'll know what the library has to offer before they arrive.
- Rose and Home Economist Shirley Peterson will be listing on the database some of Shirley's materials in a "Special Collection." This will be available on a special basis.
- The Hansen Trust has Agricultural Literacy curricula which will be entered into the database and merged into the library.

Have news you wish to share? Is something exciting or interesting happening in your county? Are you proud of a particular project and want to tell the state? Has an event occurred in your region that you think others could learn from or should know about? If you've answered "YES!" to any of these questions, please contact Judy Wallace [916-754-8434 or jmwallace@ucdavis.edu] to be featured in our next County Spotlight. We'll conduct the phone interview and write up your story. All you do is the talking. Thanks for volunteering to share!

4-H Older Member Evaluation Progress Report

--Ramona Carlos

Since the last publication of the *Center Update*, all data have been collected, including:

- surveys of members, parents, leaders, and former members from our nine-county sample
- in-person interviews with County Directors, Youth Development Advisors, Program Representatives and older members from each of the nine counties, as well as in-person interviews with Regional Directors and the Program Coordinator
- telephone interviews with representatives from other national youth programs, and
- telephone interviews with national experts in the field of programming and policy for youth development.

We are pleased that we have such a large amount of data. A research assistant and two student interns have been hired to assist with data analysis.

County Annual Reports

--Anna Sherlock

The Center has recently received copies of some counties' annual reports for FY '94-'95. The reports provide a nice overview of activities and programs within the county. If others have similar reports available, please forward a copy to us and add the Center to your current distribution list.

Announcements from the State Program Coordinator's Office

--Jazz Steeves

California State 4-H Horse Leaders Forum

Open to all 4-H Youth Advisors and 4-H Horse Leaders!

January 20-21, 1996

El Capitan Middle School, 4443 West Weldon, Fresno

Call Jazz Steeves at the State 4-H office for information and to confirm attendance: (916) 754-8518.

1996 Statewide 4-H Youth Development Program Continuing Conference: "New Beginnings: Finding Our Common Ground"

Open to all Regional Directors, County Directors, 4-H Youth Development Advisors, 4-H Program Representatives, Coordinators or Assistants and 4-H Specialists!

- January 30: Registration, Welcome, Banquet, Keynote Speaker VP Gomes
- January 31: 8:00-5:00
- February 1: 8:00-12:00 (adjourn)

This is a very important meeting-we really need to rally together to show strength, excitement and true interest in the future of our 4-H Programs to VP Gomes! For more information, call Jazz Steeves at (916) 754-8518. Registration has been extended to Friday, January 19. More information will be faxed, e-mailed and mailed the week of January 16th.

Dates for 1996 California and Washington focus:

- California: June 28-July 2
- Washington (DC/Gettysburg/Annapolis): July 6-13
- Washington (DC/New York): July 13-24
- Washington (DC/Mt. Vernon/Jamestown /Williamsburg/Yorktown): July 20-29

Registration materials are being sent from the State 4-H Office the week of January 16th. Please contact the Statewide 4-H Program Representatives, Glen Gillmore at (916) 754-8519 or Pat English at (916) 754-8520 for more information.

Grantwriting Training Sessions

--Anna Sherlock

On November 28 and 30, 1995, the 4-H CYD hosted grantwriting training sessions in Sacramento and Santa Ana, respectively. Both workshops were presented by local non-profit resource center personnel. Topics covered included tips for preparing a successful grant proposal and locating grant resources. Each

session was attended by approximately fifteen YD professionals. Participant feedback indicated that the workshops were very well received—on a five point scale, the Sacramento session received an overall mean score of 4.23 and the Santa Ana session received an overall mean score of 4.93. As a follow-up to these training sessions, the 4-H CYD is in the process of preparing grantwriting information to send to all counties.

comments or questions so that as a team we can make this a reality.

The CENTER UPDATE is a quarterly publication of the 4-H Center for Youth Development. Please send your ideas, comments and suggestions to CENTER UPDATE, 4-H CYD, Hart Hall, University of California, Davis, CA 95616.

Funding for the California 4-H Foundation

--Cynthia Kawasaki

This is The California 4-H Foundation's 25th anniversary. We're very proud that as a result of our efforts last year, more than \$1,000,000 was generated to support 4-H programs and activities, benefiting 4-H members in every California county!

In addition to the Foundation's statewide fund development work, many Cooperative Extension staff and volunteers are involved in raising money to help fund 4-H programs. It is the Foundation's hope that fund development for 4-H can become an integral part of the 4-H Program planning processes and budgets, coordinated so that together we can access the vast private and public resources available and ensure that 4-H delivers quality education to even greater numbers of children.

As federal, state and county support for 4-H continues to be reduced, and competition for public service funding increases, 4-H's survival will depend on working together statewide in a coordinated way. We need to articulate what we intend to do for California's children, how much it will cost to do the job right and identify University resources available to that end. It seems safe to assume that there will be a budgetary "gap" between what we have and what we need. Once we know what we plan to do, then we can identify funders who care whether or not that job gets done and can cultivate their investment in our programs to ensure the future of 4-H in this state! Please feel free to contact the Foundation's president, Cynthia Kawasaki, at (916) 757-8740 with your