

The 4-H Recognition Model

The 4-H Recognition Model includes five types of recognition. Recognition of 4-H'ers for participation in educational experiences acknowledges involvement as a first step in building a positive self concept. Recognition of progress toward personal goals enables youth to gain experience in goal-setting and realistic self-assessment. Recognition of the achievement of generally recognized standards of excellence gives youth an external, pre-determined target for their learning experiences. Recognition through peer competition is a strong motivation for some but not all young people. It is not appropriate for youth under age eight. Recognition for cooperation helps youth learn and work cooperatively, preparing them for living in today's inter-dependent, global society.

1. Participation

This type of recognition program emphasizes the importance of acknowledging young people who have been involved in 4-H educational experiences. For some youth, participation in a 4-H learning experience is an accomplishment.

2. Progress Toward Self-Set Goals

Parents and other adults can help youth set realistic goals. Recognition for progress toward self-set goals, no matter how small, is an integral part of this type of recognition.

3. Achievement of Standards of Excellence

Standards of excellence are established by experts in a given area. By measuring personal progress against standards of excellence, youth can gain insight into their own efforts and abilities.

4. Peer Competition

Peer competition is a part of the model for recognition. This type of recognition subjectively identifies, in a concrete time and place, the best team or individual. It is a strong motivator for some youth but is inappropriate for youth under age eight.

5. Cooperation

Learning and working together promotes high achievement. Cooperation may take advantage of all the skills represented in the group, as well as the process by which the group approaches the learning task/goal. Everyone is rewarded.

Using recognition to encourage and support learning, and satisfy intrinsic and extrinsic needs is important. It has to balance recognition for participation, progress toward self set goals, and achievement of standards of excellence, competition and cooperation.

