



Life skills were gained through programs about leadership, public speaking, communication, and citizenship.

Youth Junior Leaders learn leadership skills

Situation:

Finding safe, inclusive, and fun environments in which youth feel comfortable can be overwhelming with the challenges they face today. Teenagers face peer pressure every day and, unfortunately, those pressures start at an early age. The 4-H junior youth leadership project, for youth 13 and older, is one way to address peer pressure challenges and develop positive life skills. Youth leaders learn public speaking skills, responsibility, decision making, fundraising, community service, and the value of youth-adult partnerships.

In Washakie County, two volunteer 4-H leaders and six 4-H parents and the 4-H/Youth educator planned, implemented, and conducted educational activities for 17 youth leaders. The club has developed partnerships with the Ten Sleep Afterschool Club and Worland Youth Learning

Center, Washakie County Museum, Washakie County Fairboard, Worland Community Complex Center, and surrounding county junior leaders. Fourteen activities were planned for throughout the 4-H year. Junior leaders helped plan and implement activities, educational programming, fund-raising, and community service. Junior leaders also taught sessions. Each youth leader spent an average of four hours per activity. According to Volunteering in America, a corporation for National and Community Service, a Wyoming volunteer’s hourly pay is \$18.38; the Washakie County 4-H junior leader club (and volunteers) donated \$25,732 to their communities, which include Worland and Ten Sleep, through educational and community service activities.

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these were provided by the 4-H educator at monthly meetings. Training included teambuilding/ice breaker activities at each monthly meeting, tips for and practicing public speaking, decision making in real-life situations, the importance of community service, and developing youth-adult partnerships. The 14 activities were the 4-H Week promotion, county fair, day camp, clover buds, Showcase Showdown Food Cook-Off, WYLE (Wyoming Youth Leadership Education) Conference, 4-H Camp, officer elections, 4-H Carnival, National Youth Science Day, Culture Fest, phonebook delivery, achievement night, and State Leaders Conference.

Impacts:

Attitudes and communities have been changed with increased community service by junior leaders. Since 2008, the junior leader club increased membership 15 percent.

The following quotes are from informal evaluations:

“Junior leaders has helped me become more involved with my community and prepare me for future leadership roles.” –18-year-old 4-H’er

“I now have better social skills, public speaking and increased my group interaction abilities from being a part of junior leaders.” –17-year-old 4-H’er

“I have learned so many public speaking skills and enjoy 4-H so much I would like to become a 4-H educator.” –14-year-old 4-H’er

“My son has more confidence in himself and able to make decisions after his first year involved in junior leaders.” – Parent

“The youth involved in junior leaders for sure have more leadership and public speaking abilities.” – FFA adviser