

# 4-H Training Topics - Essential Elements

## Background:

Positive youth development builds on children's and youth's strengths. It is development that is healthy and productive for both youth and their families.

Positive youth development occurs when intentional programming provides opportunities, choices, relationships, and the support necessary for youth to fully participate in family and society. Youth development occurs in peer groups, schools, neighborhoods and communities.

## Resource:

4-H 101, pages 9-13,

<http://www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org>

## Materials Needed:

Newsprint  
Colored markers

## Preparation:

Make copies of **Essential Elements of 4-H** PowerPoint slides in *4-H 101*, pages 109-111.

Arrange tables, chairs and materials.

Allow 10 minutes for preparation and set up.



## 1 Opening Activity

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
<p>Have newsprint and markers set out around the room.</p> <p>As participants arrive ask them to begin the drawing exercise.</p>	<p>Welcome! Please find a partner and draw a child or youth who might come to the CYS Services program. Once that is complete list five reasons, along the side of the drawing, why this person comes to the SAS or Youth programs.</p>	7

## 2 Curriculum

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
<p>Show the <i>4-H 101</i> curriculum and post the website where they can find the curriculum.</p> <p><a href="http://www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org">http://www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org</a>.</p>	<p><i>4-H 101</i> is designed to provide a general overview and resource guide for staff who are starting or working with existing 4-H clubs. It is an excellent resource for understanding the fundamentals of non-formal youth development programming.</p>	1

## 3 Staff Introductions

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
<p>Introduce yourself. Ask each person to introduce themselves and ask each group to give two reasons each why they think children or youth come to the program.</p>	<p>Let's take a look at what each group has on the newsprint. We are going to do that by having everyone in the group introduce themselves. Then, each group should share two reasons why children or youth come to CYS Services programs.</p>	7

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## 4 Doing an Activity

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
<p>Distribute PowerPoint slides handout.</p> <p>Using the groups from the opening activity assign each group one of the <b>Essential Elements</b>. (If the group size is small assign pairs more than one Element.)</p> <p>After 3 minutes, stop work and make the next assignment.</p> <p>After 3 minutes, stop work and make the next assignment.</p>	<p>There are many researchers who have studied what is necessary for positive youth development. These studies help to determine what children and youth need to grow up to be productive citizens.</p> <p>In 1999 after completing extensive research, a team of evaluators from National 4-H determined there were eight “critical elements in a 4-H experience.” Those elements were then condensed into the four essential elements of 4-H which are shown on the “handout.” One way to remember these is using the acronym BIG M.</p> <p>Belonging</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A positive relationship with a caring adult</li> <li>• An inclusive environment</li> <li>• A safe environment</li> </ul> <p>Independence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future</li> <li>• Opportunity for self-determination</li> </ul> <p>Generosity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to value and practice service for others</li> </ul> <p>Mastery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement in learning</li> <li>• Learn new skills</li> </ul> <p>Continue working in the same group and this time focus on the <b>Essential Element</b> just assigned. Spend a couple of minutes identifying positive characteristics for the youth the group created. In other words, if the youth’s needs are met in positive ways, list some of the characteristics she might exhibit.</p> <p>Stop working on the positive characteristics and now list characteristics related to the <b>Essential Element</b> that might be expected if the youth’s needs are met in a negative way.</p> <p>Stop working on the negative characteristics and now list what might be expected if the youth’s needs go unmet.</p>	<p>12</p>

## 5 Sharing Ideas

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
<p>Ask each group to briefly share their work.</p> <p>Record responses on newsprint.</p>	<p>Now it’s time to share with the rest of the group. Please keep comments brief and share one positive characteristic, one negative characteristic and one characteristic if the youth’s needs go unmet.</p>	<p>7</p>

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## 6 Applying the Experience

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
Have a brief discussion about how to use the <b>Essential Elements</b> in 4-H programming.	Considering the characteristics that have been identified for all of the <b>Essential Elements</b> , what are some things to consider in making 4-H programming exciting and positive for youth?  Example: Using the characteristic of leadership, which falls under Independence, perhaps the adults in the 4-H club let the youth plan and make the decisions that affect their club.  How can this information be used in planning other programs at CYS Services?	5

## 7 Close

What to Do	What to Say	Minutes
Summarize and close.	The <b>Essential Elements</b> serve as a guide to help plan positive experiences for children and youth. They should be considered when planning all 4-H activities.  Thank you for your interest and enthusiasm.	1

