



C O N N E C T I C U T

4-H



NEWSLETTER

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FOR MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS, LEADERS AND FRIENDS OF 4-H

Effective Behavior Management

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“She expected a lot from all of us, but we were willing to do it because we knew that she cared.” - A 4-H member’s comments about his club advisor.

ATTENTION TO YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

The goal of effective behavior management is to assist young people in making positive decisions about their own behavior and actions. The goal is not simply compliance but joyful participation. Effective behavior management begins by creating a safe, secure, and comfortable setting for the group’s activities. When needs for security, belonging, and recognition are being met, acting out and misbehavior will less likely occur.

A WELL-PLANNED PROGRAM

Effective behavior management is rooted in good program organization and strong leadership. Well prepared, relevant, and exciting programs will capture the imaginations and energy of the participants and will deter disruptive and negative behavior patterns.

Children thrive on new experiences and successful goal achievement. When they are actively engaged, they do not succumb to the boredom or discouragement that leads to negative behavior.

INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION

By observing individual participants in the program, leaders can anticipate problems and look for ways to challenge and involve bored or drifting members. Many discipline struggles are the result of inattention or neglecting to act on small problems. It is a constant challenge to find effective ways to engage each youth when each has varied interests and needs.

WORK AS A TEAM

Group members will commit to group goals and expectations when they have had a part in setting those targets. Members who have chosen the expectations together will be more likely to work cooperatively in achieving the group’s goals.

CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

Uncertainty and confusion add stress to individuals and groups and can lead to acting-out behavior. When norms of group behavior are simple and clear, then members generally respond well. Too many rules, constantly changing expectations, or unclear consequences often set the stage for negative behavior.

RESPOND RATHER THAN REACT

Quick reactions and immediate action are needed when someone is in great

danger. Instinctive human responses and reflex actions save lives in such situations. With most behavior, however, a well thought out response is better than a quick reaction. Leaders who are known for balanced and well thought out responses will gain both respect and authority in leading youth.

REWARD POSITIVE BEHAVIOR PUBLICLY

The best teachers and leaders reward positive behavior with praise and other recognition. They do this in the presence of the child’s peers. Often disruptive behavior is a play for attention, therefore volunteers should avoid rewarding minor misbehavior with attention. As the saying goes, “catch kids doing something good.”

ADDRESSING NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR

Some behavior, however, is either so unsafe or so disruptive that it must be addressed. Responses should be immediate, consistent, and fair. They should also be related to the violation, appropriate to the severity of the violation, and should only be made when the intent is to follow through. Some behavior can be addressed in front of the group and some require a private setting.

Sometimes publicly: Public correction of minor offenses which are likely to be committed by members of the group sets a clear direction for the group. On the other hand, correction should be private when the offense is more serious or when the situation might cause the child to be the object of teasing.

Immediate: If consequences to negative behavior are experienced close to the time of the violation, the connection will be felt and remembered



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for future situations.

Consistent: Leaders gain respect in a group when they treat persons and situations equally. Inconsistency will undermine both group unity and the leader's effectiveness.

Related to the violation: Natural consequences are most effective. For example, being late might result in not being able to participate in a desirable part of the program.

State consequences with the intention to follow through: Follow through is extremely important. Leaders should not try to scare people into compliance with threats of dire consequences when there is no intention or power to deliver the stated consequences.

LEVELS OF CONSEQUENCE

Begin with the least restrictive response. Hopefully the problem will be solved before many levels of response are needed. At each level of consequence, seek to engage the youth in positive choices by reinforcing positive behavior.

The first level of confronting negative behavior can be a simple word of correction, spoken privately to the individual in need of correction. The private and respectful presentation of the correction will avoid embarrassing or belittling the individual in front of the group. One approach might be, "Here is the problem, what can we do about it?"

A second level of consequence might be a "time-out" or separation from the group's activity. A time-out gives the individual an opportunity to feel the consequences of negative behavior and consider future actions. The approach might be, "Sit here for five minutes and then let me know how you intend to participate when you return to the group."

A third level of consequence can be isolation from the group, such as going to another (supervised) location for a significant time. The group will be able to continue and the individual will experience the severity of the problem behavior. This intervention should include a discussion with the leader

of the program regarding the need to make different choices if the child wishes to continue in the program. Return to the next group session would require readiness to commit to the group's norms.

Finally, the fourth level of response may be removing the member from the group permanently or at least until a new beginning is possible.

MONITORING OUR RESPONSE

When dealing with unacceptable behavior, it is important that a leader monitor her/his feelings while confronting or correcting the behavior. The leader's responses are more effective when reason balances the energy or negative emotions like anger, fear, or frustration.

For more information about working with youth and risk management issues in Connecticut, see the Connecticut 4-H Volunteer Handbook along with Risk Management Guidelines for University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension Employees and Volunteers at www.4-H.uconn.edu.



Teen Connection Conference Gives Teens Opportunity to Investigate Careers

The 2008 CSI UConn: Teen Connection Conference was held on the UConn Storrs campus from June 29 to July 1. While the conference has been held since the mid-1990's, this year's event took a decidedly different approach by focusing almost exclusively on career exploration. The CSI (Career Search Investigations) theme gave teens the opportunity to investigate a variety of career opportunities both on and off the UConn campus. Participants had the opportunity to visit the Mystic Marine Life Aquarium, the Culinary Institute in Suffield, the Windsor Animal Clinic, J. C. Penney's, Windham Memorial Hospital, the UConn

Landscaping Department, and more. Conference participants also took part in a simulation called Reality Check in which they chose a career, received a monthly salary and then made lifestyle and budget choices similar to those that adults face on a daily basis. It was an eye opener for some.

One of the main goals of the Teen Connection Conference has been to perform community service during the conference. This year's project had conference participants organize and assemble activity kits for after-school programs. The community service project was funded by a grant from Cumberland Farms in partnership with National 4-H Council. John Babbitts, Cumberland Farms' General Manager for the Northeastern Division, was on hand to speak at the conference closing ceremonies. He emphasized Cumberland Farm's commitment to community service and urged



Participants in the Video Production workshop learned how to use video equipment and created their own video through hands-on studio experience with the UConn Media Design Department.

participants to continue giving back to their communities.

This conference is also more than workshops and career exploration. The 51 participants at the conference had the opportunity to meet other youth from around the state, attend a dinner and dance, try Latin dancing, eat UConn

ice cream, and explore the UConn campus. One conference participant noted, "no one from my 4-H group came, so I didn't know anybody, but my roommate is amazing, and I met at least 10 new people. I thought the conference was interesting, and



Conference participants worked with NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service) staff to assess the agricultural lands at UConn and develop a farm conservation plan.

very challenging." The next Teen Connection Conference will be held in 2010. Mark your calendars for CSI UConn in 2010 - The investigation continues.

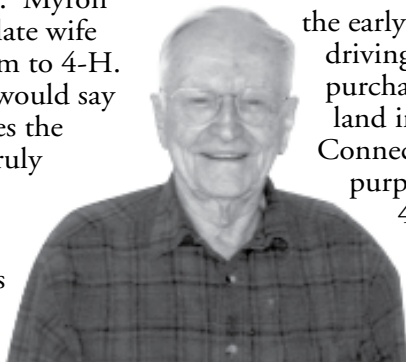


Conference participants who visited the Connecticut Culinary Institute in Suffield had the opportunity to see what it's like to be a Chef and created their own culinary masterpiece.

Myron Baldwin, Jr. Selected as 2008 National 4-H Hall of Fame Inductee

Myron Baldwin, Jr. of Wethersfield, Connecticut was recently named as an inductee into the 2008 National 4-H Hall of Fame. This prestigious 4-H award made possible by the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents' Hall of Fame Committee in cooperation with National 4-H Council and National 4-H Headquarters honors 4-H volunteers, supporters, staff and pioneers who have made contributions to 4-H at local, state and national levels. Myron has worked in support of the 4-H program for over 50 years, bringing his work ethic, character and ability to inspire to countless youth and adults in Connecticut. Myron always said it was his late wife Billie who brought him to 4-H. In Connecticut, we would say that Myron exemplifies the spirit of 4-H and is truly deserving of this national recognition.

Myron, along with his late wife Billie, were



the leaders of The Winding Brook 4-H Club for over 50 years. After his wife's passing in 2004, Myron continued to assist the club as the gardening project leader. The club has consistently had over 100 members who participate in gardening projects, crafts, public speaking, demonstrations, and community service. Myron's ability to make each club member feel special and foster the leadership potential of all youth consistently brought new members and adult volunteers to the club.

Myron has contributed to all aspects of 4-H. While his club involvement has been immense, in the early 1950s, he was a driving force behind the purchase of 75 acres of land in Marlborough, Connecticut for the purpose of building a 4-H camp. With his contractor brother's help, as well as that of

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Windham-Tolland 4-H Camp
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numerous family members and friends, land was cleared and buildings constructed. For a long time, Myron organized volunteers to work weekends at the camp. The camp recreation hall was named after the Baldwin family. Myron was also a dedicated supporter of the Connecticut 4-H Development Fund, the 4-H foundation that owns and operates the 4-H Education Center at Auer Farm in Bloomfield, CT. Myron was a member of the board of directors and an enthusiastic supporter of the Board's acceptance of the gift of the 4-H Farm. For many years he was involved with overall operation of the 4-H Farm and was highly successful with fundraising and seeking corporate sponsors for both the 4-H Camp and the Education Center at Auer Farm.

Myron was an active member of the county 4-H advisory committee and 4-H Fair Association, and has always been active with all county fund raising events. He assisted each year at the Hartford County 4-H Fair as a steward in the vegetable/fruit department, helping 4-H exhibitors

to log in and display their produce, always encouraging them to work hard.

Of special note is Myron's commitment to community service. Winding Brook Club members have always contributed to the betterment of their communities, and the club is actively involved in doing improvement projects for the community nondenominational chapel where club meetings are held. Myron has also been active with Habitat for Humanity, the historical society, and the University of Connecticut. Myron was an outstanding athlete while in college. In 1943 he was awarded the UConn Varsity Club Outstanding Athlete Award for "excellence in scholarship, athletics and citizenship," qualities that over 60 years later still characterize him. He served in World War II as a member of the Coast Guard.

Myron owned a successful insurance business and together with his wife Billie, raised five children who along with numerous grandchildren are all

active in 4-H.

The Baldwins have received numerous awards for their service to the 4-H program and were cited by area legislators for their outstanding dedication and for being excellent role models for youth and adults. In 2002, they received the Second Annual Augustus and Charles Storrs Award, the most prestigious award presented by the University of Connecticut College of Agriculture and Natural Resources. The entire family including grandchildren came for the presentation, illustrating the importance of family to the Baldwins. In addition to all of his time and talents, Myron has given of his financial resources as well. Connecticut 4-H and the world are a better place because of Myron Baldwin.

The induction ceremony for the National 4-H Hall of Fame will take place on October 10, 2008 at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland. You can visit the National 4-H Hall of Fame web site at www.nae4ha.org/hof/.



4-H is a community of young people across Connecticut learning leadership, citizenship and life skills.