

## **National 4-H Recognition Model**

In 4-H Youth Development Education, youth and adults are provided opportunities to develop their unique talents and capabilities. The basis of 4-H is "Learning by Doing." 4-H provides opportunities for both training (learning) and practice (doing). Through this process, young people develop life skills that are relevant now and in the future. Youth who develop life skills become self-directed, productive, contributing citizens.

### **Recognition: Our Vision and Mission**

Recognition is an acknowledgment and affirmation of the personal growth in an individual. It can be public or private. It can be within the individual or provided by others. Recognition in 4-H is the encouragement and support for learning. It comes as a result of participation in educational experiences.

4-H uses recognition as one strategy to help youth become more capable and competent. It does this through recognizing and appreciating each person's effort and providing positive reinforcement to continue participating in learning activities. 4-H'ers experiences must be structured so as to incorporate opportunities to build positive esteem and self reliance.

Recognition must be continually revised to meet the needs of individual participants. Individual progress must be recognized and individual enthusiasm must be encouraged. There is no one way of encouraging and supporting young people. They come from varied backgrounds and with different experiences. They vary in their interests, values, needs, attitudes and aspirations. For some youth intrinsic, or internal, recognition is far more powerful than any extrinsic, or external, recognition.

The national model for recognition provides for a balanced approach. It encourages a variety of forms of recognition to meet the diverse needs and interests of today's youth. It recognizes the use of recognition to motivate, foster self-appraisal skills, and encourage youth as they attempt more difficult tasks. It is based upon the principles that recognition is a basic human need that can be done in many forms and must be structured to build positive self-esteem. Ultimately, the goal is for youth to become self-directed learners.

### **National 4-H Recognition Model**

The Recognition Model is a part of a comprehensive plan which rewards positive learning behaviors in youth and is based on the youth's involvement, participation and/or efforts. Moving from one part of the model to another broadens their experiences, modifying opportunities for learning and raising esteem through other types of recognition. The Model includes five types of recognition. It is important for adults who work with 4-H'ers to provide appropriate recognition to all participants.

### **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. In addition it is a first step in building a positive self concept.

### **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 enables youth to gain experience in goal-setting and realistic self-assessment.

### **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.

### **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.

### **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. This helps prepare youth for living in today's inter-dependent, global society.

The Recognition Model can be used to design a recognition system to meet the needs of all youth. Designing a recognition system involves:

- Looking at the young people: their needs, interests, attitudes and aspirations.
- Understanding differences between people based on background and experiences; difference in behavior in some person; differences between similar types of people.
- Using recognition that encourages and supports learning, and satisfies intrinsic and extrinsic needs. It has to balance recognition for participation, progress toward self set goals, achievement of standards of excellence, competition and cooperation.

This Recognition Model is appropriate and useful at all levels of 4-H. Recognition committees and councils at the local, county, state, and national levels utilize this approach in all recognition programs. Using a comprehensive, recognition program can lead to more youth being recognized and can provide a way to say to every youth: "You are a valued and important member of the 4-H program."



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