

Pennsylvania Residential 4-H Camping Surveys Summary of Results

EXTENSION EDUCATOR SURVEY

Response Rate

Forty-six extension educators responded to an online survey about their roles at and perceptions of 4-H residential camp.

Educators' Roles

Finding:

Extension educators' roles vary at camp. They perform educational roles such as:

- Deliver educational programs (91%)
- Plan camp programs (select or develop curricula) (89%)
- Train camp counselors (80%)

Implication:

Most extension educators have an educational role at camp with both the youth who attend camp and the camp counselors.

Finding:

Other supervisory and organizational roles performed by the educators include:

- Recruit counselors and adult staff (89%)
- Manage camp logistics (72%)
- Chaperone youth (83%)
- Prepare camp for campers (63%)
- Hire camp staff (33%)
- Prepare meals (17%)

Implication:

Most extension educators perform a variety of supervisory, organizational and logistical roles for camp to run efficiently and effectively.

Benefits of 4-H Camp

Finding:

The potential benefits of attending 4-H camp for *campers and camp counselors* were identified by over 75% of the extension educators. Benefits identified include:

- Increased responsibility skills
- Participation in activities
- Increased ability to follow directions
- Increased ability to make decisions
- Taking initiative
- Learning to cooperate
- Increased ability to deal with conflict
- Increased leadership skills
- Having fun
- Making new friends
- Increased self-confidence/self-esteem
- Learning about people who are different from them
- Learning to be responsible for self care

Implication:

Extension educators perceive that youth are learning important life and social skills while attending 4-H camp.

Time at Camp

Finding:

Over 70 percent of the extension educators spend between 5 and 6 days at camp. Time spent preparing to go to camp varies by educator, performing such tasks as hiring staff, processing registrations, answering questions, training counselors and reviewing curricula. The number of days educators spend *preparing* to go to camp follow:

- 1-3 days (11%)
- 4-6 days (27%)
- 7-10 days (23%)
- 11-14 days (27%)
- 15+ days (11%)

Ninety-six percent of the educators felt that the time and effort they devote to the camping program is worth the effort.

Implication:

Extension educators spend about a week at camp and most spend between 4-14 days preparing to go to camp. Educators feel that this time is well spent given the positive learning experience for youth.

Number of Youth, Counselors and Volunteers

Finding:

Eighty-four percent of the counties who responded have between 10-50 campers who attend camp each year. Fifteen percent of the counties have between 51-90 campers attending camp.

Over 75 percent of the counties have between 1-10 counselors who attend camp. Twenty-two percent have between 11-20 counselors.

Seventy-one percent of the educators use between 1-5 volunteers at camp each year.

Implication:

There are not large numbers of youth attending camp from each county; however, camp provides an opportunity to give individual attention/mentoring to a smaller number of 4-H'ers.

There appears to be an opportunity to involve a greater number of volunteers in 4-H camp. There is a relatively low number of volunteers involved in the camping program.

4-H CAMPER SURVEY

Response Rate

59 counties administered the camping survey with their campers.
1,068 youth attended camp in 2004.
835 youth completed the survey for a response rate of 78%.

Demographics

Finding:

The number of 9, 10, 11 and 12 year olds are fairly evenly distributed between 15-18% of the youth who attend. There were over 40% of youth attending camp who were 13 years old or older.

There were 70% girls and 30% boys who attended camp. Ninety-one percent were white, 4 % African American, 5 percent Hispanic, 3% American Indian, .2% Asian and 5.3% Multicultural.

Implication:

The age distribution of youth attending camp does not mirror the general membership of 4-H. Camp attracts older youth and may be a way of retaining youth in the program. Extension educators feel it is a platform for launching youth into leadership roles in their counties; thus justifying the amount of time spent on the program. Extension educators have direct contact with youth at camp allowing them to act as mentors to these older youth. This direct contact may occur less frequently in other programs as volunteers provide the direct programming.

Learning at 4-H Camp

Finding:

As a result of attending camp, youth reported that camp has helped them with each of the following life and social skills:

	<i>Never</i> %	<i>Sometimes</i> %	<i>Usually</i> %	<i>Always</i> %
Enjoy and appreciate nature and the outdoors	1.0	15.6	38.9	45.6
Take care of my personal belongings	2.3	9.0	37.2	57.4
Be a better listener	4.6	21.2	42.9	35.1
Settle disagreements in ways that don't hurt me or others	4.6	19.5	49.0	44.9
Treat people who are different from me with respect	6.0	9.3	28.6	63.2
Spend time with people who are different from me	4.0	15.1	40.1	44.6
Do what is right for myself when with a group	3.2	10.4	43.4	46.9
Admit to mistakes that I make	4.5	18.2	42.8	36.5
Make my own decisions rather than going along with others without thinking	4.8	23.5	40.6	34.1
Think about what might happen because of my decision	5.4	24.2	41.9	33.9
Help others at camp	2.0	13.4	35.6	53.9

- *percentage totals do not equal 100% due to rounding*

Implication:

Youth perceive that they are learning important life skills while attending 4-H camp. Although these skills were not measured prior to youth coming to camp, youth perceive their camp experience as helping to increase their life skill development.

Overall Evaluation of Camp

Finding:

At least 60 percent of the youth rated all of the components of 4-H camp as **excellent** (camp, food, classes, safety, recreation, programs, counselors, leaders and staff.) Seventy-eight percent of youth indicated that they would come back to 4-H camp next year.

Implication:

Youth are enjoying their camp experience.
