

Building Capacity in Virginia 4-H State Cabinet Leaders



Dr. Tonya T. Price

Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist, 4-H,
Virginia Tech

Mrs. Billie Jean Elmer

Senior Extension Agent, 4-H, Surry County

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Virginia 4-H State Cabinet

- Elite teen leader group
- Represents the needs of over 173,000 4-Hers
- Called upon to enhance understanding of 4-H
- Elected by peers at State 4-H Congress



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Introduction to Research

- Research showed 4-H youth self reported that 4-H was effective in development of leadership skills (Astroth, 1996)
- Focused on 19 of 25 teens on the 2009-2010 Virginia 4-H Cabinet

“To what extent does the Virginia 4-H State Cabinet provide an opportunity for leadership life skill development beyond the local 4-H programming efforts?”



Literature Review

- 4-H rooted in four essential elements: belonging, mastery, independence and generosity
- 4-H alum have increased leadership skills
- Improvement due to non-formal delivery approach
- Perceived leadership skills are more advanced in 4-H youth versus non 4-H youth
- Regardless of how active, leadership skills are gained



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Methodology

- Mixed method of data collection: observation, self assessment, focus group discussions, and parent telephone interviews
- Data was collected over five meetings during a 12 month period
- Data collections methods included a mixture of quantitative and qualitative observations and questions



Results

- Developed skills in accountability, decision making, problem solving, public speaking, responsibility, communication and a better understanding of diversity
- 100% reported that their skills improved as a result of their experience on Cabinet
- Parents had a hard time identifying if skills were acquired from Cabinet or from overall 4-H experience



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Implications

- Cabinet participation had a **significant** impact on their leadership life skills
- Youth can benefit from other statewide leadership teams: FBLA, Skills USA, TSA, FCCLA, FFA, SCA/SGA, BETA/NHS (local coaching and teacher preparation opportunities)



Further Research

- Follow up telephone survey of the 2009-2010 youth participants (2012-2013) for longitudinal perspective
- Same study replicated with the 2012-2013 Virginia 4-H State Cabinet



Summary

- Members recognize value of serving on a statewide leadership team
- Developed and enhanced leadership skills
- Enhance and sustain program effectiveness
- Questions?

