

Youth Voices in Community Action and Governance

Youth Voices in Community Action and Governance

V(A). Planned Program (Summary)

1. Name of the Planned Program

Youth Voices in Community Action and Governance

V(B). Program Knowledge Area(s)

1. Program Knowledge Areas and Percentage

KA Code	Knowledge Area	%1862 Extension	%1890 Extension	%1862 Research	%1890 Research
806	Youth Development	100%			
	Total	100%			

V(C). Planned Program (Inputs)

1. Actual amount of professional FTE/SYs expended this Program

Year: 2008	Extension		Research	
	1862	1890	1862	1890
Plan	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Actual	7.3	0.0	0.0	0.0

2. Actual dollars expended in this Program (includes Carryover Funds from previous years)

Extension		Research	
Smith-Lever 3b & 3c 244917	1890 Extension	Hatch	Evans-Allen
	0	0	0
1862 Matching 244918	1890 Matching	1862 Matching	1890 Matching
	0	0	0
1862 All Other	1890 All Other	1862 All Other	1890 All Other
0	0	0	0

V(D). Planned Program (Activity)

1. Brief description of the Activity

The statewide Youth Voices in Community Action and Governance Team provides research-based training, educational resources and experiences with participatory democracy and juvenile justice, engaging youth in community decision-making and community governance, working with elected officials to establish youth positions on public boards and standing committees, councils, and teen courts, and training adults on effectively working with youth as partners. Youth gain understanding of how decisions are made and develop skills to plan, organize and communicate effectively.

With UW-Extension Cooperative Extension guidance, trained middle and high school Teen Court jurors hear cases of other school-age youth cited for first time misdemeanors such as shoplifting, truancy or vandalism. Each youth volunteer attends trainings to identify and practice respectful, non-confrontational questioning techniques that clarify the situation. Trained teen court volunteers in turn train their inexperienced peers. Through this train-the-trainer approach, new volunteers including former juvenile offenders learn the importance of their role directly from youth already participating. Compared with traditional juvenile courts, far fewer of those held accountable by their peers will reappear for later offenses.

Building Support for Youth representatives in Local Government: County issue statements developed across Wisconsin emphasized the need for young people to become active and productive citizens. Stakeholders identified engaging youth in decision-making as a way to tackle community problems and build capacity among both adults and youth to take on leadership roles. UW-Extension county educators and the state 4-H office received many inquiries about models and support for adding youth voices to county boards. In 2007, Kenosha County joined Douglas, Oneida, Washburn, and Waupaca counties in creating opportunities for youth to join county boards and committees and to cast advisory or actual votes. Kenosha County asked for support in evaluating their program quality and implementation.

State 4-H Youth Development specialist Matt Calvert invited county faculty in the five participating counties to help develop an evaluation process. The group selected a mixed methods process to document impact on youth participants, adult board members and communities. Calvert worked with a graduate student and county educators John DeMontmollin, Annette Bjorklund, and Joan Wimme to conduct surveys, focus groups and individual interviews. A report on impacts and suggested program improvements was generated for each county. The Washburn County evaluation report was used in a presentation to Burnett County board members as evidence for the kind of impact they could expect. Burnett County decided to add youth to their board in January 2009. Calvert co-presented evaluation results to the Wisconsin Counties Association with Kenosha County colleagues, and Bjorklund and Wimme presented results to the Northern District Extension staff. Calvert constructed a website to share practical program and impact information: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/yig/research.cfm>

2. Brief description of the target audience

The Youth Voices in Community Action and Governance Team provides research-based education, resources and capacity-building support to youth and adult volunteers. Of 5,316 adults reached through direct teaching methods in 2008, 97.6% were white, 0.8% American Indian, 0.7% African American, 0.5% Asian American, and 0.5% other identities; 65.6% were female and 34.4% male. Of these, 0.4% (22) identified as Latino/a, who may be of any race. In 2007, 8,318 youth enrolled in 4-H Citizenship and Civic Education (most current data). Community partners such as Boys and Girls Clubs and 2,694 trained volunteers made additional teaching contacts.

UW-Extension Cooperative Extension colleagues are connected by email ListServ, online newsletters, shared resources and regular monthly statewide teleconferences to ensure consistent messages. Colleagues and other professionals in this network include 4-H youth development, family living, community resource development and agriculture campus and county educators and 4-H program advisors.

Youth and adult volunteers work together in positions of shared responsibility, making decisions and taking actions to strengthen communities, organizations, coalitions and programs. Youth include middle and high school students trained to serve in Teen Courts hearing misdemeanor cases of their peers, on junior fair boards, dairy and exhibits committees, 4-H boards of directors, 4-H leader councils, school board committees, 4-H after-school program steering committees, community service, trails, triathlon and other city council committees, county boards of supervisors and standing committees, and grassroots community action coalitions such as the 8-county Superior Days delegation.

Community partners include coalitions and government bodies that create meaningful roles for young people in making decisions and sharing governance with adults, such as 4-H clubs and groups, 4-H after-school programs, 4-H leader boards, steering committees and advisory groups, Future Farmers of America, schools, school boards and school districts, city councils, police and sheriff departments, county fair boards and boards of supervisors, service groups, nonprofit organizations that provide volunteer positions for youth, and the 120-member agency coalition Youth as Partners in Civic Leadership.

Educational partners include the Wisconsin Association of County Extension Committees (WACEC), National Youth in Governance Initiative, Wisconsin and National Association of Youth Courts, county juvenile courts and juvenile justice committees, county and tribal health departments, and the 8-county Superior Days coalition. County 4-H Leader Boards also foster youth-adult partnerships, setting direction for 4-H education such as the new 4-H after-school programs.

Ultimate beneficiaries include library patrons, teens using drop-in centers, skaters, dancers, hikers, triathletes, 4-H club and fair participants, after-school program participants, their parents and parents' employers, first-time juvenile offenders, their parents and communities.

V(E). Planned Program (Outputs)

1. Standard output measures

Target for the number of persons (contacts) reached through direct and indirect contact methods

	Direct Contacts Adults	Indirect Contacts Adults	Direct Contacts Youth	Indirect Contacts Youth
Year	Target	Target	Target	Target
Plan	4600	0	7400	0
2008	5316	0	8318	0

2. Number of Patent Applications Submitted (Standard Research Output)

Patent Applications Submitted

Year	Target
Plan:	0
2008:	0

Patents listed

3. Publications (Standard General Output Measure)

Number of Peer Reviewed Publications

	Extension	Research	Total
Plan	0	0	
2008	2	2	4

V(F). State Defined Outputs

Output Target

Output #1

Output Measure

{No Data Entered}

Not reporting on this Output in this Annual Report

Year	Target	Actual
2008	{No Data Entered}	{No Data Entered}

V(G). State Defined Outcomes

O No.	Outcome Name
1	Young people that reflect community diversity work in local groups to make decisions with consequences for the organization, community or public.
2	Communities, organizations, coalitions, and programs are strengthened by the involvement of youth in decision-making.
3	Skilled and experienced youth and adults are available for community decision-making and leadership roles.
4	Community organizations, coalitions, and government bodies improve practices and policies that support youth engagement.

Outcome #1

1. Outcome Measures

Not reporting on this Outcome for this Annual Report

2. Associated Institution Types

3a. Outcome Type:

3b. Quantitative Outcome

Year	Quantitative Target	Actual
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3c. Qualitative Outcome or Impact Statement

Issue (Who cares and Why)

What has been done

Results

4. Associated Knowledge Areas

KA Code	Knowledge Area
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V(H). Planned Program (External Factors)

External factors which affected outcomes

Public Policy changes

Government Regulations

Competing Programmatic Challenges

Brief Explanation

V(I). Planned Program (Evaluation Studies and Data Collection)

1. Evaluation Studies Planned

After Only (post program)

Before-After (before and after program)

Other (Direct observation)

Evaluation Results

Building Support for Youth in Local Government: County issue statements developed across Wisconsin emphasized the need for young people to become active and productive citizens. Stakeholders identified engaging youth in decision-making as a way to tackle community problems and build capacity among both adults and youth to take on leadership roles. County staff and the state 4-H office received many inquiries about models and support for adding youth voices to county boards. In 2007, Kenosha County joined Douglas, Oneida, Washburn, and Waupaca counties in creating opportunities for youth to join county boards and committees and to cast advisory or actual votes. Kenosha County asked for support in evaluating their program quality and implementation.

Response: UW-Extension Cooperative Extension state 4-H Youth Development specialist Matt Calvert invited county faculty in the five participating counties to help develop an evaluation process. The group selected a mixed methods process to document impact on youth participants, adult board members and communities. They also hoped for results that would lead to program improvement. Calvert worked with a graduate student and the county team of John DeMontmollin, Annette Bjorklund, and Joan Wimme to conduct surveys, focus groups and individual interviews. A report on impacts and suggested program improvements was generated for each county. Calvert also worked with this group of agents in providing support to other Wisconsin counties considering placing youth in board positions. Calvert co-presented evaluation results to the Wisconsin Counties Association with Kenosha County colleagues, and Bjorklund and Wimme presented to the Northern District Extension staff. Calvert constructed a website to share practical program and impact information: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/yig/research.cfm>

Results: Impact of youth on boards was documented, including these evaluation results:

Positive Youth Development- 1. Youth build leadership skills and habits of active citizenship 2. Youth build a sense of responsibility. 3. Youth form supportive relationships with influential community members.

Community Improvement- 1. Youth bring new voices to the decision-making process to inform elected officials and strengthen government programs 2. Youth asking direct questions helped all board members build their involvement and understanding. 3. Improved public opinion of youth from public recognition of their involvement.

Civic Development- 1. Youth noted the value of citizen contributions. 2. Youth increased interest in becoming involved in politics. 3. Youth reported improved opinion of elected officials. 4. Youth participants and their schoolmates increased understanding of public issues and government.

Evidence: Focus groups and individual interviews were conducted in three counties with 10 youth board representatives and 21 adults who worked with them. Data was analyzed and interpreted by teams including colleagues outside the county. Sixteen participating youth also completed pre and post-surveys, using a validated instrument adapted by Calvert.

Key Items of Evaluation

Program improvement: As a result of the evaluation, Kenosha County UW-Extension Cooperative Extension added a more significant orientation process. Washburn County educators reported that evaluation results helped them target a more demographically representative group of youth for the program.

Program expansion: Impact reports were used to expand youth representation in local government to another county. The Washburn County evaluation report was used in a presentation to Burnett County board members as evidence for the kind of impact they could expect. They decided to add youth to their board in January 2009.

Evaluation reports for the five Wisconsin counties participating in 2008 including impacts and suggested program improvements are available at: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/4h/yig/research.cfm>

2008 participation: Matt Calvert, UW-Extension 4-H Youth Development Specialist; Jessica Collura, Graduate Student; and county youth development educators John DeMontmollin, Annette Bjorklund, and Joan Wimme.