Access, Equity and Belonging for All Committee

The 4-H Thriving Model through an Equity Lens

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Youth development professionals play an integral role in the positive outcomes of youth and communities.
Educators have a responsibility to…

✔ employ culturally relevant practices in Extension

✔ identify and engage the perspectives of communities in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs

✔ acknowledge that to remain indifferent to injustice is a form of contributing to injustice
ECOP 4-H Equity Opportunity Statement

4-H, the nation’s largest youth development organization, will embrace the rich diversity of youth, families and communities that comprise our nation. We will grow our organization in ways which leverage that diversity to improve the economic, environmental and social conditions in which people live. At a time when disparities to resources and opportunities are growing for families across the country, the need for 4-H high quality positive youth development has never been greater. Cooperative Extension and 4-H have an opportunity to close the gap in wellbeing and economic mobility as we undertake our bold goal to engage 10 million youth reflecting the diversity of the communities, we serve by 2027. To achieve the growth and impact to which our system is committed, Extension must build and sustain community partnerships to offer 4-H in response to community needs, and re-examine how we hire and support staff, recruit and support volunteers, and fund and sustain programs. Uniting toward an inclusive, diverse and equitable 4-H is the fuel we need to increase access for all youth, families and communities—in every town, every city and every corner of America.
AEBC Purpose

1. Provide professional development and resources to 4-H professionals (and indirectly to 4-H volunteers) to strengthen their capacity to engage and sustain the participation of diverse youth in 4-H.

2. Serve as the coordinating body among national efforts in support of our national goals that include equity, access and belonging.

https://access-equity-belonging.extension.org/
AEBC Champion Groups

- Immigrant and Refugee Youth
- Incarcerated Youth
- LGBTQ+ Youth/Community
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Youth Experiencing Homelessness
- Youth in Foster Care
- Youth Living in Poverty
- Youth with Disabilities

- Racial and Ethnic Youth Groups:
  - African American Youth
  - Asian American Youth
  - Native American/Pacific Islander Youth
  - Latino Youth (Latino Advisory Committee)
Common Understanding of Terms
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diversity</th>
<th>Inclusion</th>
<th>Culture</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our different identities such as age, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, physical and mental ability, gender, sexual orientation, spiritual practices, employment status, geographic location and other characteristics.</td>
<td>Moves beyond simply having diversity within a space and toward creating an equitable environment where the richness of ideas, backgrounds, and perspectives are harnessed. Inclusion is the act of creating a space where each person is authentically valued, respected and supported.</td>
<td>The shared experiences of people, including their languages, values, customs and worldviews.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Equity</th>
<th>Culturally Relevant Teaching</th>
<th>Stereotype</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When a person or group receives the unique resources and opportunities needed to reduce or eliminate the barriers.</td>
<td>Teaching practices that use the cultural knowledge, viewpoints, and social conditions of our participants to make our programs more relevant.</td>
<td>Generalized beliefs and expectations about members of certain groups that often lead to judgement without cause.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implicit Bias</th>
<th>Oppression</th>
<th>Social Justice</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.</td>
<td>The discrimination of one social group for the benefit of another.</td>
<td>The act of distributing power, resources, opportunity, societal benefits and protection in a way that is equitable for all members of society.</td>
</tr>
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https://campus.extension.org Course Title: Increasing Cultural Awareness & Equity in Extension Programs
Equality
When each member of a society or group receives the same resource or treatment regardless of what may be needed to achieve a desired outcome.

Equity
When a person or group receives the unique resources and opportunities needed to reduce or eliminate the barriers.
4-H is the youth development program of our nation’s Cooperative Extension System and USDA. The PLWG encourages all Cooperative Extension programs to adhere to their Land-grant University nondiscrimination policy in the development and delivery of Extension efforts designed to engage all people.

What’s the difference?
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4-H Thriving Model

DEVELOPMENTAL CONTEXT

Developmental Relationships
Youth Sparks

THRXIVING TRAJECTORY

Growth Mindset
Transcendent Awareness
Positive Emotionality

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

DRIVING THE THRIVING

Academic Motivation and Success
Social Competence
Personal Standards
Contribution to Others
Goal Management
Connection with Others
Personal Responsibility

DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

Academic or Vocational Success
Civic Engagement
Employability and Economic Stability
Happiness and Wellbeing
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4-H Thriving through an Equity Lens
## Thriving: Program Quality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8 Critical Aspects of Quality</th>
<th>Equitable Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical and psychological safety</td>
<td>…consider the socioecological factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriate structure</td>
<td>…that is culturally relevant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supportive relationships</td>
<td>…with diverse groups of youth &amp; adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to belong</td>
<td>…genuine and intentional belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive social norms</td>
<td>…should not reinforce a hegemonic understanding of norms or behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support for efficacy and mattering</td>
<td>…opportunities for critical thinking &amp; action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for skill building</td>
<td>…through culturally relevant learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration of family, school and community</td>
<td>…bonding, bridging &amp; linking networks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A positive, supportive relationship between youth & 4-H staff and volunteers is critical to youth development. These relationships are called “developmental” because they grow and change as the young person does.
Thriving Model: Youth Program Engagement

1. **Duration**, length of time a youth participates in a program;
2. **Intensity**, frequency or involvement of a youth with a program;
3. **Breadth**, number and scope of opportunities youth participate in as a part of a program.
## 4-H Thriving Indicators

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Thriving Indicator</th>
<th>Equity Considerations</th>
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<tr>
<td>Openness to Challenge &amp; Discovery</td>
<td>Exposure to new opportunity and connections can serve as a link to critical perspectives, resources, and connections to institutions that can bring about change.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growth Mindset</td>
<td>This directly connects to the concept of high expectations—a key ingredient within culturally relevant teaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopeful Purpose</td>
<td>This concept directly connects to self-efficacy—an integral component of youth’s success and confidence to address issues related to injustice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transcendent Awareness</td>
<td>It is critical that the idea of transcendent awareness not imply a religious affiliation as this can be exclusive. A sense of empathy grows when one acknowledges that the world is bigger than just themselves. Social justice requires one to feel a sense of responsibility beyond self.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro-Social Orientation</td>
<td>This must include diverse cultural values and norms related to respect, responsibility, honesty, caring, and helping others so as to not reinforce hegemonic understandings and expectations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive Emotionality</td>
<td>It is critical to acknowledge the trauma and societal factors that exist within marginalized communities as this can be a determining factor of optimism and emotional responses. PYD professionals must examine the complex social, economic, and political forces that influence youth experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Management</td>
<td>Youth’s cultural values must be at the center of establishing desired goals. Strategies to achieve goals should be informed by the youth’s socioecological factors. Increasing access to social capital can influence self-efficacy—a critical ingredient in setting and achieving personal and community goals.</td>
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### Developmental Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Outcome</th>
<th>Considerations with Equity in Mind</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Motivation</td>
<td>How do we consider inequitable access to quality education in academic motivating factors?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Success</td>
<td>How do we consider inequitable access to quality education in academic success factors? How do we define success?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in Risk Behaviors</td>
<td>How do we consider societal/oppressive factors that increase risk factors for marginalized audiences?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthful Choices</td>
<td>How does 4-H consider factors of limited access to healthy food choices, higher levels of stress factors, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Competence</td>
<td>How do we intentionally acknowledge diversity, privilege, systems of oppression?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Standards</td>
<td>How do we place equal value on various cultural norms and values?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection to Others</td>
<td>How do we ensure this is with diverse groups of people?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contribution to Others</td>
<td>How do we encourage engagement in service and collective action to address social injustice?</td>
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What’s Coming? Thriving through an Equity Lens

Fact Sheets

- Belonging
- Social Conditions of Youth
- Access, Equity and Opportunities Competencies
- Community Relationship and Partners
- Resources
- Program Evaluation
Social Justice Self-Reflection Questions for the Youth Development Professional

Below are some self-reflection questions that facilitators and youth development professionals can ask themselves both during and at the conclusion of a youth program.

- How aligned or misaligned are your program participant demographics with your community/county/city/state demographics? How are you sharing your promising practices or seeking to create better alignment?
- How aligned or misaligned are your faculty, staff, and volunteers with community/county/city/state demographics? How are you sharing your promising practices or seeking to create better alignment?
- How are you identifying and including diverse voices of history, theories, and experiences in your curriculum and teaching materials?
- Through what process(es) are you recognizing, identifying, and reacting to learning environments that are predominately and historically filled with a dominant culture?
- How do you invite, welcome, engage, and recognize of achievements of diverse youth? Are there barriers to engagement and recognition?
- Who defines success and achievement in your program? Is there an agreed upon understanding your youth and adults? Is it equitable?
- In what ways does your program make the youth and community’s identity central to the program’s goals and activities?
- Have you created opportunities where youth and the community are intentionally involved in program planning and evaluation?
- What youth-centered learning methods do you use to develop the critical awareness of youth?
- In what ways does your program and organization foster a climate of empathy?
- How do you frame your programs and practices around social justice principles [i.e. equity, challenging oppression, fostering efficacy/agency]?
- Building on the Critical Experiential Learning Model (pg. 17), how are you empowering youth to engage in collective action (praxis)?
Let’s focus on 3 questions…

1. Through what processes are you recognizing, identifying, and reacting to learning environments that are predominately and historically filled with dominant cultures?

2. How do you invite, welcome, engage, and recognize the achievements of diverse youth? Are there barriers to engagement and recognition?

3. Have you created opportunities where youth and the community are intentionally involved in program planning and evaluation?
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