

Handout 1

Developing Group Guidelines Together: The Four H's Plus One

Young people want to cooperate and be part of a group. 4-H volunteers can help youth identify and develop their own group guidelines that support a successful and cooperative learning environment. Young people are more likely to accept guidelines if they have been included in the development of those guidelines. Giving them ownership of their behavior and helping them set their own guidelines encourages the group to monitor their actions and utilize peer pressure in a positive manner to model appropriate behavior.

Developing group guidelines can be tied to the 4 "H's" we know so well: Head, Heart, Hands, and Health. When developing group guidelines, we need to keep the 4 "H's" in mind, plus add one more. The fifth "H" is for "hush," or a quiet signal.

Head: The group should think about how they should act and what to expect from each member. The group's guidelines should be logical, reasonable, possible, and apply to everyone. They also need to be easy to understand, written in simple language, and non-debatable. Fewer, easy-to-understand guidelines are better and easier to enforce. Avoid using the words "never" and "always."

Heart: Caring, sharing, cooperation, and conflict resolution are the heart of planning group guidelines. Good guidelines help members develop these social skills. The guidelines also need to be a shared responsibility between the group's members and the adults. Both parties should suggest guidelines and consequences, as they each have a stake in the outcome.

Hands: Just as your hands do the work on a project, the group guidelines should do the work for the group. Only develop guidelines that are needed and necessary. They should assist members to be responsible and promote team work within the group. Consequences should also be developed when the guidelines are proposed and designed, and the consequences should be appropriate for the rule. Working together for the group's goals should be the end result.

Health: Respect and self-worth of each member should be considered when developing guidelines. They need to be stated in a positive manner to promote good behavior, rather than punish for misbehavior. If consequences need to be enforced, the offender should not be humiliated or embarrassed. Guidelines and rules should also keep members physically safe.

Hush: As a group, agree upon a quiet signal. Rather than the volunteer raising his/her voice to get the group's attention, the quiet signal should be used and participants encouraged to abide by the signal. To enforce the quiet signal, the leader must *wait* until the group is quiet before activities can resume. Screaming, red-faced adults are more fun to ignore than a calm, collected leader who uses a quiet signal. This type of volunteer is more likely to end up with a productive group of youth.

Each 4-H club/group should create their own set of guidelines with guidance from volunteers and parents. These should be voted upon by the group and a copy distributed to each family. A set of the guidelines may also be listed on a poster that hangs in the club/group meeting space so that 4-H members can help monitor the actions of others and refer back to the agreed upon guidelines.

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Volunteerism for the Next Generation



Handout 2

Techniques for Managing Children's Behavior

- Give choices
- Use a variety activities—teach to all learning styles
- Use humor
- Set clear expectations (rules, schedule, actions, etc.)
- Carefully plan and prepare for activities
- Choose age appropriate activities
- Plan for transitions (before, in-between and after)
- Show interest in and get to know each child
- Emphasize cooperation over competition
- Show concern
- Separate the child(ren)
- Use natural consequences
- Ignore the behavior
- Involve youth in planning
- Tell what “to do” rather than “what not to do”
- Allow time to practice
- Demonstrate the task or skill
- Redirect or distract
- Surprise them with an unexpected response or action
- Provide rewards
- Seek help/call 911
- Other

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