

4-H Advisory Council Meeting

Monday, April 24, 2006

Members Present: Ruth Ann Duncan, Rachel Jolly, Anna Matthews, Margaret Hinton (proxy for Marcie Nelson), Suzanne Rogers, and Bethany Skinner.

The meeting was opened with a brief explanation of the role of the 4-H Advisory Council. Discussion was held concerning the needs of youth in the parish. Issues identified included a lack of youth motivation to be involved, problems with transportation, and a critical need for improved methods of communicating with parents.

Ideas for addressing needs included incorporating hands-on activities of interest to youth in the club meetings and providing more low-cost activities at the school and parish levels for youth to be involved in (like a pet show or parish livestock show). An additional suggestion included providing more opportunities for youth to make presentations.

Parental communication was mentioned as a key to successfully involving youth. It was recognized that getting information to parents can be difficult. Ideas recommended for reaching parents included holding school parent meetings or having a 4-H booth at another planned school function that attracts parents, placing articles in the newspaper, placing notices on community bulletin boards at local grocery stores, running announcements on bank sign, having junior leaders place direct calls to targeted parent groups, placing 4-H information in school newsletters and on parish school website, and mailing postcards to parents. Additionally, the idea of conducting volunteer training for parents or community members was recommended as well as considering the idea of recruiting parents to lead 4-H clubs.

Programming that was identified that was working well and was addressing older youths' needs to develop leadership and workforce skills included opportunities like Wildlife Day which allow older youth to plan programs and to teach younger youth. It was noted that 4-H provides a valuable opportunity for youth to gain socialization skills.