



## Essential Elements of Positive Youth Development:

# Kentucky 4-H Club Checklist



Use this checklist to review your success in incorporating the 8 Essential Elements of Positive Youth Development into your club activities.

### How am I doing as the caring adult?

	Almost always	Sometimes	Hardly ever
<i>Do I encourage each member of our club?</i>			
<i>Do I treat each member as a valuable individual and member of our club?</i>			
<i>Do I expect members to treat each other with respect?</i>			
<i>Do I know the name of every member and address each by name?</i>			
<i>Do I strive to get to know each member's interests and some about their family?</i>			
<i>Do I give members my full attention when they talk to me?</i>			
<i>Do I encourage each member to achieve?</i>			
<i>Do members have a say in what we do in the club?</i>			
<i>Do I encourage members to help establish ground rules for the club?</i>			
<i>Do we set reasonable guidelines and insist that members follow them?</i>			
<i>Do I interact with members in such a way that the member knows I care?</i>			

### Does our club have an “inclusive” environment?

	Almost always	Sometimes	Hardly ever
<i>Do I introduce new members and their families to others to help them get to know each other?</i>			
<i>Do we have a plan to include new members right away so they feel involved?</i>			
<i>Is seating arranged at meetings to encourage positive group dynamics?</i>			
<i>Are fun, non-competitive, get-acquainted activities included in meetings?</i>			
<i>Do I encourage teamwork and recognize those who support it?</i>			
<i>Is diversity and uniqueness appreciated by all club members?</i>			
<i>Do members get positive feedback from leaders and members regularly?</i>			
<i>Do we recognize success in ways that are meaningful to the individuals?</i>			
<i>Do we recognize members for a variety of things or just for competitive events?</i>			
<i>Is time allotted for “hanging out”?</i>			
<i>Do we have and use 4-H Club identification items such as t-shirts, banners, or posters?</i>			
<i>Are responsibilities divided among all club members or only a few?</i>			
<i>Do we discourage new ideas with comments like, “That won't work” or “We tried that.”</i>			
<i>Do I share contests, camp, and award opportunities with every member?</i>			



## Is our club an emotionally and physically safe place for all of our members?

	Almost always	Sometimes	Hardly ever
<i>Are there enough adults for the youth involved to form a meaningful relationship with at least one adult?</i>			
<i>Are all adults working with our club familiar with the client protection policy?</i>			
<i>Do leaders and members watch for hazards and eliminate them as they surface?</i>			
<i>Do youth have opportunities to learn to trust each other in order to feel safe participating?</i>			
<i>Are accommodations made for those with special needs?</i>			
<i>Does the group have clear and consistent rules and expectations for positive behavior?</i>			
<i>Are there reasonable methods for dealing with misbehavior?</i>			
<i>Do we allow offensive language at meetings or functions?</i>			
<i>Are the activities we offer age appropriate?</i>			
<i>Do we strive for more than one youth and one adult in every setting?</i>			
<i>Are youth encouraged to support each other rather than compete against each other?</i>			

## Members in our club want to learn; therefore, we seek ways to do so.

	Almost always	Sometimes	Hardly ever
<i>Do all youth have opportunities to lead the club in some way?</i>			
<i>Is there a way for youth to increase their knowledge and skills in their project area?</i>			
<i>Is there a chance to reflect on what they have learned?</i>			
<i>Do I apply experiential learning methods to all educational opportunities?</i>			
<i>Do the youth have a chance to make mistakes and grow from them?</i>			
<i>Can youth participate in our club and pursue their own project interests as well?</i>			
<i>Are members given the opportunity to plan, conduct and evaluate their programs?</i>			
<i>Do we take the time to relate what is learned to real-life experiences wherever possible?</i>			
<i>Do the youth commit to making 4-H and their project a priority?</i>			

## How are we doing at providing opportunities for mastery of skills?

	Almost always	Sometimes	Hardly ever
<i>Do I enjoy working with the club members and helping them increase in knowledge and skills in their project?</i>			
<i>Do I have a desire to teach youth about their project?</i>			
<i>Do we have hands-on learning activities at club meetings?</i>			
<i>Do we encourage members to set realistic yet lofty goals?</i>			
<i>Do youth have opportunities to teach others and share what they've learned?</i>			
<i>Do we encourage members to help each other with project work, sharing their expertise?</i>			
<i>Are they encouraged to learn new skills and grow in their project as they mature?</i>			
<i>Do I offer activities to members to help build the skills needed?</i>			
<i>Are the members encouraged to work with younger members?</i>			
<i>Do I help them set personal goals and celebrate accomplishments?</i>			
<i>Are the youth given the information to gain experience on their own and then reflect on what they learned?</i>			
<i>Do we encourage everyone to speak in front of the club at some time?</i>			
<i>Do they participate in county and out-of-county competitions related to their project?</i>			

## Do our members feel they are active participants in the future?

	Almost always	Sometimes	Hardly ever
<i>Do members know how to set a goal and develop a plan to carry it out?</i>			
<i>Do adults give members the power to set goals for the club?</i>			
<i>Do they participate in annual club planning?</i>			
<i>Do we provide both inspiration and motivation for youth to strive toward their goals?</i>			
<i>Are members accepting responsibility for their own actions and achievement?</i>			
<i>Do members have opportunities to hear from former members about their success?</i>			
<i>Are youth taught to balance school-home-project work and to handle the responsibilities that come with each?</i>			
<i>Are they given the chance to reflect on how they can use their newly gained skills in the future?</i>			
<i>Are youth exposed to career options related to their projects?</i>			

## Does our club allow members the opportunity for self-determination?

	Almost always	Sometimes	Hardly ever
<i>Is each member encouraged to select his/her own projects and set his/her own goals for what they will learn?</i>			
<i>Are they given a chance to make their own decisions during business meetings?</i>			
<i>Do members set group goals and determine the club's direction?</i>			
<i>Do the youth choose the activities and the level of participation?</i>			
<i>Do youth and adults share in making club policies and planning the program and activities?</i>			
<i>Are youth given the opportunity to provide feedback and make changes to the club?</i>			
<i>Do one or two people control the direction of the group?</i>			
<i>Do youth believe that they have influence over the important decisions of the group?</i>			
<i>Am I serving as a group facilitator/mentor rather than as the leader?</i>			
<i>Are members allowed to solve problems for themselves and the group with minimal advice from adults?</i>			

## Do we value and practice service to others?

	Almost always	Sometimes	Hardly ever
<i>Have the youth planned and implemented a community service project?</i>			
<i>Are the service projects related to their 4-H project area?</i>			
<i>Do members help select the service project themselves?</i>			
<i>Do the members design and participate in real projects that make a difference in the lives of others?</i>			
<i>Do we discuss community needs and issues?</i>			
<i>Do members understand the relationship between community need and service?</i>			
<i>Are they encouraged to give back to their community?</i>			
<i>Do members demonstrate respect and concern for the needs of others?</i>			
<i>Do we process what the youth learn from their community involvement?</i>			
<i>Do the youth write "Thank You" notes to those involved in their efforts?</i>			
<i>Does the group look for ways to help the community?</i>			

Source: Essential Elements of 4-H Youth Development Programs: Key Ingredients for Program Success (2009), Retrieved on Oct. 10, 2012 from: <http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/professional-development-learning/4-h-youth-development/youth-development/essential-elements>. The original was written by Kirk Astroth and adapted by Brenda Young for use in Ohio. This checklist was adapted for use in Kentucky 4-H by Martha Welch.