2013 District 8 4-H Leadership Lab

RELEVANCE
It is important for young people to develop and gain leadership life skills as youth to grow into successful, contributing members of society in adulthood. The 4-H & Youth Development program prides itself on teaching these leadership skills to its youth members involved in the program. Youth are able to develop these skills at numerous activities and events conducted at the county, district, and state levels. This program was targeted towards 4-H members ages 13-18 years old in the District 8 4-H program including the following 21 counties: Bell, Bosque, Comanche, Coryell, Eastland, Ellis, Erath, Falls, Freestone, Hamilton, Hill, Hood, Johnson, Leon, Limestone, McLennan, Milam, Navarro, Robertson, Somervell, and Williamson.

RESPONSE
Each June, the District 8 4-H & Youth Development program offers a three-day, two night event called Leadership Lab as a tool to further teach and develop the life skills of our teenage 4-H members. The workshops this year were focused primarily on learning about safety while driving through a program offered by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service’s Passenger Safety Program, as well as additional educational programs related to team building, decision making, leadership, and dressing for success. The passenger safety workshop was led by the Passenger Safety Program Coordinators. The other three workshops were primarily conducted by the District 8 4-H Council Officer Team under the direction of the agent advisors.

RESULTS
A retrospective post survey was administered to gather information from the youth participants. 154 of 166 (92.77%) participants responded to the survey.

Behavior Changes
Participants indicated the following results because of what they experienced and learned while at District 8 4-H Leadership Lab:

- 147 of 153 (96.1%) respondents indicated they will practice safe driving while being a driver and/or passenger.
- 138 of 154 (89.6%) respondents indicated they feel more comfortable working in a team.
- 135 of 154 (87.7%) respondents indicated they feel more confident in their abilities as a leader.
- 135 of 154 (87.7%) respondents indicated they feel more confident in making decisions.
- 133 of 154 (86.4%) respondents indicated they feel more confident in serving in a leadership role.
- 128 of 154 (83.1%) respondents indicated they feel more comfortable speaking with others.
- 108 of 154 (70.1%) respondents indicated they feel more confident with public speaking.

Youth were asked to identify what they will do differently now based on what they learned at Leadership Lab.

- Strive to be a better leader (28 youth)
- Be more confident of one’s self (17 youth)
- Be a more social, friendly, and accepting person (17 youth)
- Working with others and teamwork skills (9 youth)
- Be a better driving and not to text and drive (6 youth)

141 of 151 (93.4%) participants indicated that they now have the ability to make better leadership decisions as result of attending District Leadership Lab.

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The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

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Knowledge Gained

Participants were asked to rank their knowledge before and after Leadership Lab in eight areas based on a four-point scale of 1=Poor, 2=Average, 3=Good, and 4=Excellent. The table below shows the mean scores before and after, as well as the percent change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge Area</th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>% Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My understanding of my strengths and things I need to work on to be a better leader.</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>36.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My understanding of the responsibilities of being a leader.</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>27.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My knowledge of what makes a good public speaker.</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>26.84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My knowledge of teamwork.</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>25.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My understanding of the importance of dressing for success.</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>19.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My understanding of the importance of cooperation with others when working on a team</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>18.69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹Percent Change is calculated by (mean after – mean before) / mean before *100.
²Blue indicates percent change of 36.90% and higher, Yellow indicates percent change of 25.50% to 27.70%, Green indicates percent change of 19.03% and lower.

Open Ended Responses.

143 of 153 (93.5%) youth responded yes, they would implement activities or ideas they learned at Leadership Lab.

Common responses included:
- 67 youth indicated they would implement the activities, games, and mixers learned in their 4-H Club and County.
- 17 youth indicated they would use the teamwork and leadership skills they learned at home and want to share them with others in their club and county.
- 14 youth indicated they would use what they learned to teach leadership skills to others.
- 6 youth indicated they would use their new knowledge and skills to strengthen their clubs.
- 6 youth indicated they would not text and drive.
- 3 youth indicated they have developed confidence.
- 3 youth indicated they want to take more of a leadership role in their county.
- Other responses included they learned about public speaking (2), flexibility as a leader (4), being a better listener (3), focusing on needs versus wants (2).

Demographics. The following section focuses on the makeup of the participants that attended District Leadership Lab. The results are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th># of 151</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># Years Attending</th>
<th># of 143</th>
<th>%</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Time Attendee</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Time Attendee</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Time Attendee</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Time Attendee</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th Time Attendee</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other comments about Leadership Lab included:
- “LOVED IT!”
- “It’s AWESOME!”
- “I wish it would last longer.”
- “Super fun. Definitely coming again!”
- “I love the people more than anything.”
- “It was fun – I can’t wait for next year!”
- “It was great. I had fun and learned a lot.”
- “It inspired me to pursue better leadership.”
- “I thoroughly enjoyed every minute at this camp.”
- “It was the best and most impactful camp I have been to.”
- “Really organized and great leaders showing what to do and how to have fun.”
- “It was a blast! I love it!! I can’t wait to come back next year and run for office.”
- “Leadership Lab was super-duper awesome this year! Loved the theme and activities!!”

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

The Texas 4-H & Youth Development Program in District 8 will continue to provide the 4-H members in the district an opportunity to learn and practice their leadership life skills at District Leadership Lab. Based on responses, youth feel that they are learning a tremendous amount about teamwork and leadership skills. Responses also indicate that public speaking, listening skills, communication, and confidence building should be an area to focus on for the future.