

2011 District 12 4-H Leadership Lab

Evaluation Report

District 12 4-H Leadership Lab is an overnight camping experience for youth ages 12-19. The focus of the event is to provide 4-H members the opportunity to learn valuable leadership and life skills by participating in a variety of educational activities, team-building exercises, and learning sessions. The event is rotated to a variety of locations around South Texas with most occurring on university campuses. The event is planned and coordinated cooperative between county Extension agents and the District 12 4-H Council Officers. Council officers take an active role in leading learning sessions, recreational activities, and teamwork exercises.

The 2011 District 12 4-H Leadership Lab was held on the campus of Texas A&M University Kingsville in June. Aside from the many leadership and teamwork activities, the learning sessions included: 1) Recreation Leadership; 2) Parliamentary Procedure; 3) Hick Hop; 4) Connor Museum & Hall of Horns; 5) Texting While Driving; and 6) Leading in 4-H.

An evaluation instrument was administered to participants on the final day of the event. The instrument used a variety of approaches to include retrospective post, post-only, and open-ended questions. There were 81 completed which excluded the district officers and a few youth that did not complete the evaluation. The results of that evaluation are provided below and reflect changes in knowledge and behavior as related to leadership.

CHANGES IN KNOWLEDGE

The evaluation asked a series questions in retrospective post format that asked participants to rate their level knowledge before the event, and then their current knowledge as a result of their participation. Participants rated their knowledge (before and after) on a 4-point scale (Poor, Average, Good, and Excellent). The responses (n=80) reflected below represent a positive change in knowledge as follows:

- **87.5%** (56 of 64) increased understanding of *parliamentary procedure and how to use it*
- **87.1%** (61 of 70) increased understanding of *my strengths and how to be a better leader*
- **76.0%** (57 of 75) increased knowledge of *teamwork*
- **71.6%** (48 of 67) increased understanding of *the dangers of texting and driving*
- **66.2%** (47 of 71) increased knowledge of *what makes a good public speaker*
- **54.5%** (36 of 66) increased understanding of *the responsibilities of being a leader*
- **51.6%** ((32 of 62) increased understanding of *the importance of cooperation with others when working on a team*

The information above reflects a positive change in knowledge. However, the data also reveals that some topics demonstrated a greater positive change (Before to After) in the level of knowledge than others. This is identified by increasing from two to three levels between the Before scale and the After scale. For example, a participant that responded "Poor" in the Before scale and responded "Good" in the



After scale would be considered a 2-point increase. The results reflect the greatest increases in knowledge among participants of at least a 2-point increase in knowledge:

- **34.3%** (23 of 67) increased knowledge of **the dangers of texting and driving**
- **29.7%** (19 of 64) increased knowledge of **parliamentary procedure and how to use it**
- **24.3%** (17 of 70) increased knowledge of **my strengths and how to be a better leader**

CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP

The evaluation assessed changes in behavior among participants as it related to leadership by measuring their level of confidence with six different leadership skills. Participants were asked to respond with “Yes, No, or *Unsure*” associated with increases in their confidence level.

- **93.3%** (70 of 75) increased ability ***to work in a team because of what I have learned***
- **86.7%** (65 of 75) increased ability ***as a leader because of what I have learned***
- **86.1%** (62 of 72) increased ability ***in making decisions because of what I have learned***
- **82.4%** (56 of 68) increased ability ***in serving in a leadership role in my county because of what I have learned***
- **81.9%** (59 of 72) increased ability ***speaking with others because of what I have learned***
- **74.3%** (52 of 70) increased ability ***with public speaking because of what I have learned***

In addition, participants were asked to respond to their intentions to apply some of the skills they learned at the event. Using the same scale for measuring confidence, responses (n=81) reflected the following:

- **91.2%** (62 of 68) plan to take ***a more proactive role in leading in 4-H***
- **87.3%** (62 of 71) plan to ***use recreation leadership in their club/county 4-H programs & meetings***

Similarly, participants were asked to respond to whether or not (Yes or No) their future involvement included any changes in their leadership activities. The questions also allowed for youth to explain their response in narrative form. The quantitative responses reflect the following:

- **100%** (73 of 73) plan to ***implement any of the activities or ideas they learned at Leadership Lab***
- **100%** (62 of 62) felt like ***what they learned provided them the ability to make better leadership decisions***

Responses to the open-ended question are as follows:,

- ***“Do you plan to implement any of the activities or ideas you learned at Leadership Lab in your county? Please explain your answer or provide an example:”***
 - ◇ *“by possibly getting our county council and a mini leadership lab”*
 - ◇ *“as president of my county council I plan to use some at our meetings”*
 - ◇ *“I plan to help people join 4-H by telling them it is easy and showing them what to do”*
 - ◇ *“to help my county work together”*
 - ◇ *“...before my club meetings were not run properly so now I will use the true parliamentary procedure”*
 - ◇ *“yes, because I want my club to be more involved”*

- ◇ *“stand up and do something good, be a leader”*
- ***“Do you feel like what you learned provides you the ability to make better leadership decisions? Please explain your answer or provide an example:”***
 - ◇ *“Be confident in myself”*
 - ◇ *“I really get the chance to get out of my shell and be a leader”*
 - ◇ *“Yes because I’m confident in myself and I know I can help others who aren’t”*
 - ◇ *“I will be able to take what I learned and use it to help my county”*
 - ◇ *“I understand the meaning of being a leader better and the responsibility that is necessary to make better decisions”*
 - ◇ *“Many of the fundamental aspects of being a leader, and having a good attitude are important in being a leader. Therefore, I will try and implement them.”*

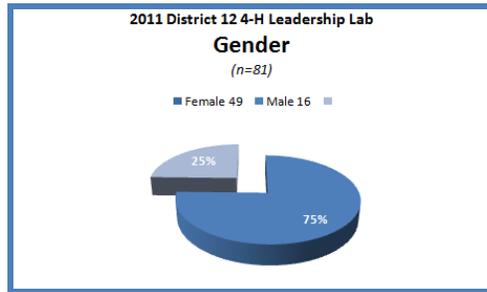
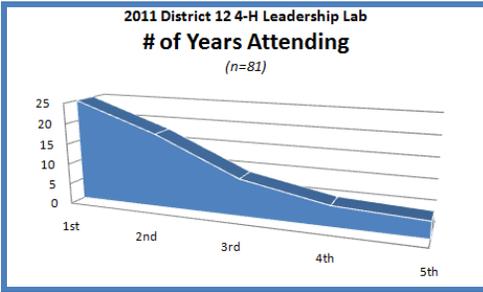
There were three other open-ended questions asked as part of the evaluation that were designed to measure other behavior changes, needs, and allow for any other comments participants were inspired to share. Responses varied significantly. However, a collection of responses are provided that highlight similar themes. The question is provided, followed by responses.

- ***“Can you list the areas you feel you need to work on to be a better leader?”***
 - ◇ *“being more helpful”*
 - ◇ *“confidence in public speaking”*
 - ◇ *“communicating more with my team”*
 - ◇ *“parliamentary procedure”*
 - ◇ *“listening to others”*
- ***“What will you do differently now based on what you have learned at District Leadership Lab?”***
 - ◇ *“be constructive and responsible”*
 - ◇ *“be more organized”*
 - ◇ *“take more responsibility and be more of a leader”*
 - ◇ *“I will listen to other people’s ideas better”*
 - ◇ *“teach others”*
- ***“Is there anything else you would like to say about Leadership Lab?”***
 - ◇ *“it was fun and I met a lot of people”*
 - ◇ *“my team leaders were amazing”*
 - ◇ *“this camp is awesome”*
 - ◇ *“it was like no other camp I have been to...it was fun”*
 - ◇ *“amazing experience”*

DEMOGRAPHICS

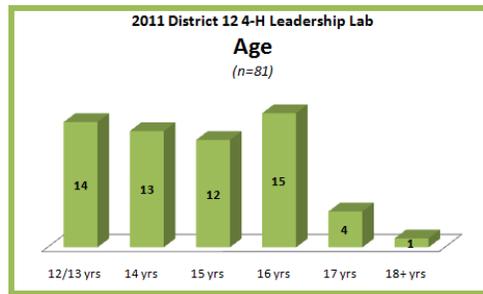
The assessment asked a few demographics questions to gather a little information about who attended the event. Participants were asked about the number of years they have attended leadership lab, gender, age, race & ethnicity, and residence.

Number of Years Attending & Gender

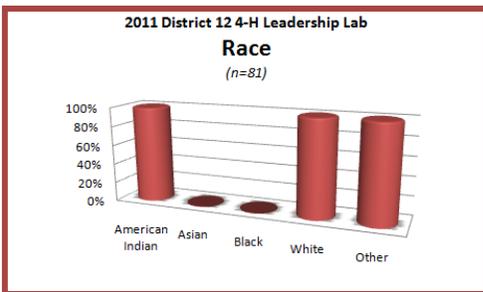


Age

- 23.7%** (14 of 59) are **12 or 13 years old**
- 22.0%** (13 of 59) are **14 years old**
- 20.3%** (12 of 59) are **15 years old**
- 25.4%** (15 of 59) are **16 years old**
- 6.8%** (4 of 59) are **17 years old**
- 1.7%** (1 of 59) are **18 or older**



Race and Ethnicity



Residence
 Respondents were asked to select a descriptive that best described their residence. Most participants indicated they lived on a Farm/Ranch with 47.5% (39 of 82). The next largest group represented 23.2% (19 of 82) living in a Town <10K residents. The balance of 29.3% (24 of 82) lived in communities of more than 10K residents.

SUMMARY

Leadership Lab continues to provide a valuable avenue for youth to learn leadership and life skills that are valuable to them and their local 4-H clubs. Youth meet new people, explore their own abilities, and evaluate how to use what they have learned to improve themselves and others in 4-H. The youth are primarily from small communities and ranches, are diverse in their race/ethnicity, and are almost evenly distributed in age among eligible age groups. Many youth are repeat participants, but there appears to be a disproportionate number of girls to boys. Nonetheless, youth value the experience and even suggest that the event should be longer.