

research in brief

4-H and Citizen Involvement

This descriptive research study was conducted to determine the role of the 4-H program in citizenship education. Selected county and area 4-H agents in Ohio responded to a questionnaire designed to solicit information about 4-H citizenship education programs conducted at county, area, and state levels. Ohio State University department chairpersons and assistant directors were interviewed.

Results

The following were among the major findings:

1. Faculty members generally perceived a democratic citizen to be a "participator"—one who participates in the decision-making processes of groups to which he/she belongs.
2. Skill and attitude domains were emphasized more than knowledge.
3. The content area that received the most emphasis was group dynamics/leadership.
4. The number of 4-H members and junior leaders involved in projects and activities was the predominant evidence used to evaluate the 4-H citizenship education program.
5. Publicity, awards, and verbal praise were the most frequently used forms of recognition to acknowledge the citizenship achievements of 4-Hers and 4-H Clubs.

Implications

Citizenship education is a complex area with which it's difficult to deal. However, it's a challenge that must be continually addressed if youth are to develop the abilities necessary to govern themselves. A goal or set of goals for 4-H citizenship education should be established in each state. Citizenship lesson plans would help local staff implement effective 4-H

citizenship programs. Awards for individual achievement should be fully used. Citizenship is certainly a core element of the entire 4-H program.

The Role of the 4-H Youth Program of the Ohio Cooperative Extension Service in Citizenship Education. C. Stephen Scheneman. Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, Columbus, 1979.

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