

Day Camp Counselor Training Leads to Effective 4-H Day Camps

Issue:

Teenagers and young adults play a very important role in our society. As the upcoming adults that will be going out into the workforce and working with other adults and young children in our community. It is crucial that they know how to work as a team member, be able to implement problem solving skills and, most of all, be good communicators with the people around them.

What Has Been Done:

Day Camp Counselor Training program, which is for youth ages 13 to 19, involve teens in positive team-building and leadership activities and problem solving sessions. While preparing to work with children from 5 to 12 years, teen counselors plan eight week-long day camps at selected sites throughout the state at which they teach classes on a variety of subjects and expose campers to experiential learning on topics of foods and nutrition, animal science, health, aerospace, expressive arts, and theater. Additional subjects taught include environmental science, citizenship, plants, recreation, communications, woodworking and arts and crafts. Teen counselors also plan field trips and group activities. The 130 teenagers involved in the counselor training put in a lot of quality time to be trained and plan the 4-H Day Camps. Each counselor participates in approximately 12 to 15 hours of training sessions. Additional training is provided in CPR and first-aid. They volunteer a minimum of 40 hours for each week of camp and provide a fun and educational day camp experience to over 650 campers statewide.

Impact:

Teen counselors learn how to work with and communicate with other counselors, provide educational and fun experiences for the campers, and how to deal with situations that arise at camp. Teen counselors, who serve as role models for younger campers, report training beforehand has prepared them well, increasing their knowledge, and improving communication skills, leadership and decision-making skills, leading to a better camp experience for all ages.

Primary Impact Area:

Extension

Funding Source:

Fees

County 4-H Fund

Contact:

Doug Crouse, County Extension Agent, 4-H & Youth Development

Mary Ago, County Extension Educator, 4-H & Youth Development

Amy Estey, County Extension Educator, 4-H & Youth Development

Joy Sparks, State 4-H Program Coordinator