

Camp Counselor Training Makes for Better 4-H Experience

Issue:

At 4-H day camps held annually in every county in Delaware, teenaged camp counselors serve as role models to young campers. It is crucial that these volunteer camp counselors know how to work as team members, 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, designed for young people ages 13 to 19, consists of a variety of team-building and leadership activities and problem-solving sessions. This intensive training program prepares teens for the eight week-long day camps at which they are called upon to teach campers about such topics as 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. In 2002, 130 teenagers participated in counselor training. Each counselor participated in 12 to 15 hours of training sessions. Additional training was provided in CPR and first-aid.

Impact:

Teen counselors learned how to work with and communicate with other counselors, provide educational and fun experiences for campers, and learned how to deal with the myriad issues that arise during a week at camp. The Day Camp Counselor Training Program participants report that the program increased their knowledge, as well as improving their communication, leadership and decision-making skills. In 2002, the 130 camp counselors volunteered a minimum of 40 hours for each week of camp, providing a fun and educational day camp experience to more than 650 campers statewide.

Primary Impact Area:

Extension

Funding Source:

Fees

County 4-H Fund

Contact:

Mary Argo,

Sussex County Extension Educator, 4-H & Youth Development

University of Delaware

Research and Education Center

16684 County Seat Hwy. Georgetown, DE 19947

Phone: 302-856-7303

Fax: 302-856-1845

maryargo@udel.edu

Doug Crouse
Kent County Extension Educator, 4-H & Youth Development
69 Transportation Circle
Dover, DE 19904
Ph: (302) 730-4000
Fax: (302) 735-8130

dcrouse@udel.edu

Amy Estey
New Castle County Extension Educator, 4-H & Youth Development
910 South Chapel Street
Newark, DE 19716-1303
Phone: 302-831-8965
Fax 302-831-8934

aestey@udel.edu

Joy Sparks
State Program Coordinator, 4-H Youth Development
120 Townsend Hall
University of Delaware
Newark, DE 19716
Ph: (302) 831-2501
Fax: (302) 831-6758

jsparks@udel.edu