



# 4-H VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SERIES

Nebraska 4-H Youth Development

## Benefits of Youth-Adult Partnerships

Youth ages 5-19 are about 25 percent of the U.S. population. They can be active participants in school and community activities, especially if they receive mentoring and encouragement from adults. Youths are a resource that often times go untapped in a community. Youth who become engaged in their communities now will benefit the future of our communities.

### ■ What is a youth-adult partnership?

A youth-adult partnership is a joint effort----youth and adult working together to achieve common goals. Adults offer the knowledge they have on a topic and the youth are able to give fresh ideas, energy and enthusiasm to carry out the goal.

### ■ Youths gain....

- \* life skills such as leadership, planning, and teamwork.
- \* a sense of belonging and being accountable and committed to their community.
- \* civic awareness, the capacity to care for others, and a desire to change and improve the lives of others.
- \* a sense of pride and the feeling of being needed and valued.
- \* a new respect and acceptance from adults.

### ■ Adults gain....

- \* first hand information about the needs, concerns, and issues that pertain to youth.
- \* the satisfaction of seeing youths willingly accept the services and messages of the relationship.
- \* open and honest interactions and feedback about existing programs or services relating to youth.
- \* access to new collaborators with fresh and innovative ideas, creativity, energy, and enthusiasm.
- \* new perspectives on decision-making and community problem-solving, as responsibilities are shared with the partnering young person.
- \* opportunities to foster active community members for the future.

### ■ Communities gain....

- \* resources and creativity to solve critical problems and provide needed community services.
- \* mutual understanding and increased trust between youths and adults, leading to strong youth-adult partnerships.
- \* new alliances among organizations as they work together to support youths.
- \* fresh perspectives on policy making, as youths gain a voice in governance and philanthropy.
- \* citizens who are more knowledgeable and invested in youths and community.

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Innovation Center of Community and Youth Development, et al. 2003. Youth-Adult Partnerships: A Training Manual. Tokoma Park, MD. Topp, A. University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension 4-H Youth Development.



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

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