

Partnering with Summer Program Providers

Introduction

4-H offers traditional audiences many summer camp opportunities at state camp facilities (often far from urban areas) and some full-week 4-H exploratory day camps (often not in the urban center of a county or targeting urban youth). In urban communities, however there are myriad opportunities to partner with existing summer day camp providers to offer 4-H Science programming to youth. Potential partners include: other youth organizations such as Boys & Girls Clubs, and Ys; libraries; parks and recreation departments; community/neighborhood centers (often city-funded); faith-based organizations; and so forth.

Another excellent opportunity is to work with existing afterschool partners who also host summer day camps. This allows for continued work with existing partners, and provides continuity for youth who participated in the afterschool program.

4-H can provide entire theme-based weeks of science programming at partner sites (e.g., robotics camp, nature camp, etc.) or provide an enrichment component (science programming as part of the camp during a designated time throughout the week and/or summer). The delivery modes may be direct delivery or through training collaborating staff. Trainings are generally held over a one-week period the week before camp (as opposed to continuous, ongoing trainings). These trainings should include the science curriculum, inquiry-based and experiential learning, positive youth development, developmentally appropriate practices, group management, and so forth (see *Training Others to Deliver High Quality Science Programming*).

4-H and the university system have a lot to offer, in partnership with providers, to take the youth summer experience beyond recreation with hands-on, minds-on, fun, and engaging 4-H Science programming that helps develop foundational skills and interests in science. Thus, summer camps offer another opportunity to positively effect school-year science learning, interest, and engagement. The purpose of this chapter is to provide promising practices that will help develop and sustain successful 4-H Science summer programs in partnership with provider organizations.

Promising Practices

The promising practices for *Partnering with Summer Program Providers* are subdivided into three categories: (a) Program Planning and Evaluation, (b) Developing and Sustaining Partnerships, and (c) Staffing.

Program Planning and Evaluation

1. *Read the chapter 4-H Science Program Design – 4-H Science Checklist.* This chapter provides fundamental program planning and evaluation information required for successful 4-H Science programs. The information contained here is specific to planning summer programs.
2. *Develop and implement 4-H Science “programs.”* See *4-H Science Program Design*.
3. *Develop measurable process and outcome objectives.* See *4-H Science Program Design*.





4. *Identify evaluation (success) criteria for all objectives. See 4-H Science Program Design.*
5. *Use creativity in designing summer programs.* Summer camps offer possibilities to engage in activities that may not be possible in afterschool or traditional program settings. Look for opportunities to provide programming that supports application (a critical component of experiential learning) and/or service (essential element – generosity).
6. *Utilize existing inquiry- and research-based science curricula.* Adding an education component to a recreation program is always a plus, but youth also want fun and excitement! Look for curriculum that can be implemented outdoors, or that provides opportunities to increase physical activity (e.g., hikes, scavenger hunts, geocache courses, etc.). For more information regarding curricula see [*Inquiry Based Learning Approaches*](#).
7. *Plan in advance of program implementation.* The closer to the program’s beginning date the more hectic planning becomes. Allow several months to organize the details of the program and promote it.
 - Summer camps begin to advertise in February, so they need everything related to promotion before then.
 - Create a timeline that includes distribution of mandatory enrollment and consent forms. Set enrollment deadlines no later than three weeks before camp start date.
8. *Know where the program or activities are going to take place.* Clearly communicate the type of setting and resources that will be needed during the sessions. For example: Is water needed (buckets of water vs. access to running water)? Is electricity needed? Are there any restrictions to using outdoor spaces?
9. *Evaluate the program against program objectives. See 4-H Science Program Design.*
10. *Share evaluation results. See 4-H Science Program Design.*

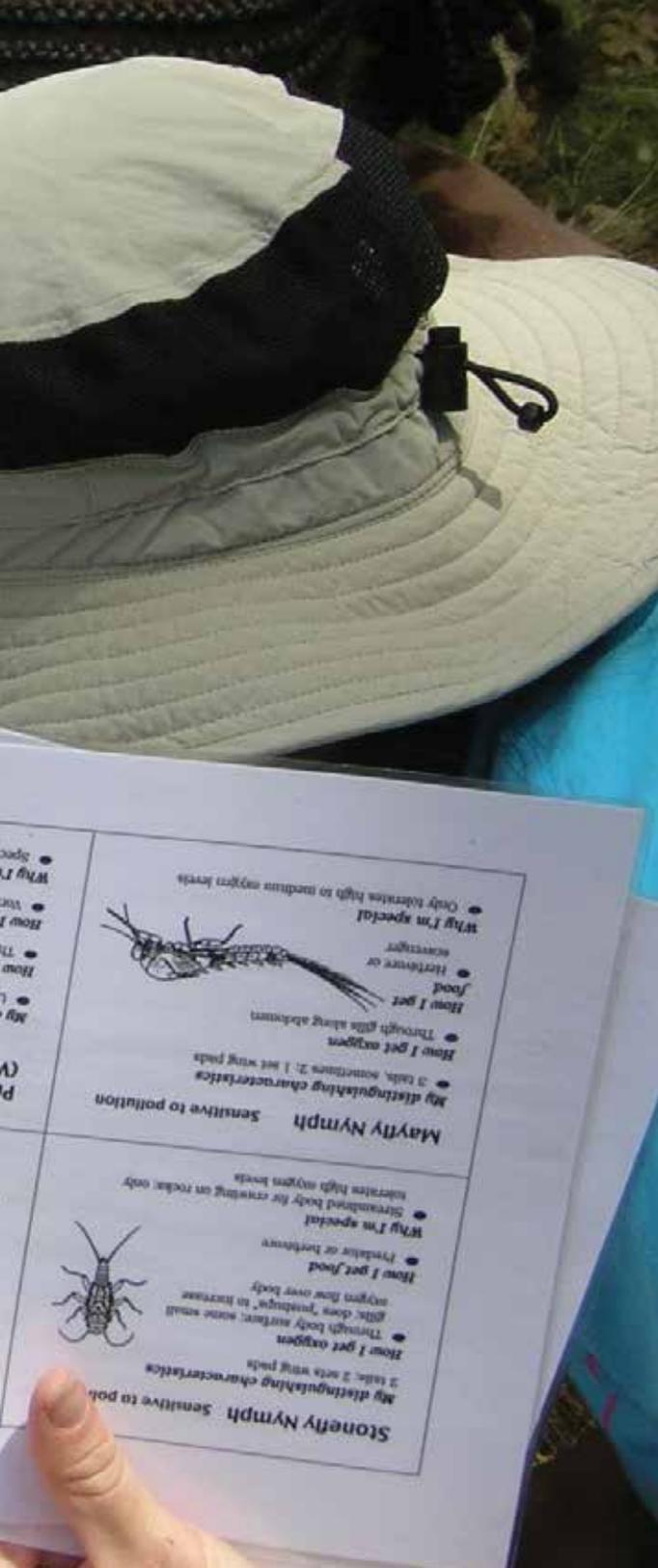
Developing and Sustaining Partnerships

1. *Read the [Section Introduction](#) to Partnerships, Resource Development, Program Growth and Sustainability.* This introduction contains critical “overarching principles” that are vital to developing and sustaining program partners. The information included here is specific to partnering with summer program providers.
2. *Provide information on contacts and associations with people and agencies that will offer support and cooperation to camps and camp directors.* It is important to work together to pool resources and determine which organizations are willing and interested in assisting with camps (e.g., busing, camperships, guest facilitators, etc.).
3. *Create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).* See the [Section Introduction](#) to Partnerships, Resource Development, Program Growth and Sustainability.
4. *Keep in constant communication with implementation sites.* All required documentation must be precisely communicated to staff and volunteers. Follow through on stated deadlines by sending frequent reminders of needed information. Visit sites and reassure staff and volunteers of continuous support and availability.
5. *Coordinate efforts to publicize programs.* See the [Section Introduction](#) to Partnerships, Resource Development, Program Growth and Sustainability.



Quick Reference Guide to Aquatic Invertebrates

- My distinguishing characteristics
● Most species build cases or tubes with body
- How I get oxygen
● Through body surface
- How I get food
● Filter feeder, herbivore, or predator
- Why I'm special
● Tube cases of heavy materials locked in
● avoid being swept away by fast-flowing
● streams; in ponds, uses grass and plants
● to make caves
- Redaceous Diving Beetle Larva (Water Tiger)
● Somewhat tolerant of pollution
● Distinguishing characteristics
● up to 6 cm long; robust form
- I get oxygen
● through body surface
- I get food
● various predators
- I'm special
● I can jump; robust form
- I get oxygen
● through body surface
- I get food
● various predators
- I'm special
● I can jump; robust form



Staffing

1. *Utilize temporary, part-time 4-H program assistants (direct delivery).* Summer is an excellent time to find qualified, experienced part-time staff. Look for science teachers and other educators who are off for the summer. Pay them as close to scale as possible. Tap into college students looking for part-time summer jobs, particularly those with education and science-related majors. Position(s) can be funded by a joint grant or subcontract.
2. *Recruit teens as program facilitators.* Teens, under the leadership of 4-H staff doing direct delivery, are a great way to improve the facilitator/youth ratio. Place summer camp youth in teams, and assign a teen to each team or pair of teams (for more information see [Staffing with Teenagers and Teens as Cross-Age Teachers](#)).

Case Studies

Enfield – Extending the Reach of 4-H Science through a Variety of Community Partners. Over the 15 year history of 4-H SLO (San Luis Obispo) SCIENTISTS, the program has actively sought summer partners in order to reach more youth with inquiry based STEM activities. When needed, the 4-H SLO SCIENTISTS program has been modified to meet the needs of the summer program, time constraints, overall length of the program, and other particulars specific to the provider. Some of the summer program providers over the years have been:

- Salvation Army Youth Programs
- Exploratorium/Discovery Center
- Housing Authority sites
- Summer Recreation Programs
- County Library System

The latest and current summer program partnership is with the SLO County Library System, which has 14 library branches throughout the county. After a couple of discussions, a new partnership was formed and SLO SCIENTISTS activities were conducted to a delighted audience of youth (and sometimes attending adults) at seven library sites throughout the county. SLO SCIENTISTS facilitators were recruited by the SLO SCIENTISTS Coordinator to facilitate activities with young people on specific days provided by the local library staff. Some of the facilitators recruited teens or older SLO SCIENTISTS alumni to help facilitate. All costs of the program were paid for by a grant written by library management for the program. -**Richard Enfield, University of California**

Martin – Taking 4-H Science on the Road to Enrich Summer Learning. For more than 20 years, Summer 4-H on Wheels has travelled to parks, apartment complexes, and schools in Iowa City and Johnson County. Science is the core of the hands-on learning at the two-hour weekly sessions for seven weeks during the summer. Partners have included Iowa City Community Schools (Yet Another Learning Experience-YALE), Johnson County Social Services, Iowa City Parks and Recreation, and numerous summer program sites. During summer 2010, 500 youth participated in the program at 19 locations. The science emphasis rotates annually through life science, physical science, and earth/space science based on the K-8 Curriculum Regional Framework for schools in the Grant Wood Area Education Agency (AEA). The science consultant from the Grant Wood AEA met with the 4-H staff to review the Iowa science core curriculum and suggest ways to help the summer curriculum support the school year curriculum.

Another summer program, GEAR-TECH-21, combines robotics, GPS (global position systems), and GIS (geograph-

ic information systems). The 4-H program in Nebraska received a National Science Foundation grant to develop and lead the program to inspire youth to enter STEM careers. To expand the program, Johnson and Linn County 4-H received grants for the 2010 summer program. Youth were recruited through the schools and through 4-H.

–**Janet Martin, Iowa State University**

Mullens – Partnering with Camps to Promote Environmental Stewardship. The Youth Wetlands Education and Outreach Program (YWP) provides the primary funding for two environmentally-based summer camps that focus specifically on wetlands. Both camps have directors that organize and implement the camps, while the YWP offers logistical support and in-kind contributions. At the beginning of each calendar year, program staff meet with the camp directors to determine financial needs, staffing needs, reporting guidelines, and improvements to the curriculum. Details on each camp:

- Marsh Maneuvers is a five-day camp held on a state wildlife refuge in coastal Louisiana. High school youth are immersed in wetland ecology lessons, including fishing, crabbing, cast netting, water chemistry testing, wildlife observation, seafood processing, boating, policy debates, and more. The camp is a collaboration between the YWP (LSU AgCenter 4-H), Louisiana SeaGrant, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and a family-owned corporation, the McIlhenny Company.
- Wild Woods Wanderings is a five-day camp providing high school participants with first-hand experiences in a forested wetland ecosystem on a national wildlife refuge in North Louisiana. Camp activities consist of outdoor survival skill training and classes on map and compass skills, water quality, public policy, pollution, and aquatic education. This camp is a collaboration between the YWP (LSU AgCenter 4-H), Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (La DNR), Northeast Delta RC&D, Poverty Point State Park and Historic Site, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, and the Murphy Family Foundation.

In addition, the YWP provides the curriculum, staff, and funding for the “Wetlands Track” held at 4-H Camp Grant Walker and Louisiana Outdoor Science and Technology (LOST) Camp that is based on the 4-H Science Mandate. Over 4,000 youth in 4th-8th grade participate in these camps that are offered for 10 weeks over the summer. Through this “Wetlands Track,” youth receive hands-on experience in wetland environments, and are motivated to become ambassadors for wetland preservation, conservation and restoration, and to become responsible environmental stewards. –**Ashley Mullens, Louisiana State University**

Nichnadowicz – Corporate Sponsor Provides Funding and Scientists for 4-H Summer Program. The Union County, New Jersey 4-H Summer Science Program develops interest in science and science careers in low-income youth. The program targets youth in 1st-6th grades residing in Elizabeth, Plainfield, and Rahway. Since 1992, for seven weeks each summer, 4-H science facilitators travel from the Union County 4-H Center to 19 partnering day camps to provide informal science programming. The number of youth served has doubled since its inception, and in recent years the program has served over 600 youth each summer. The program’s longevity and growth is at least in part due to the fact that it fulfills a legitimate need for informal science education. The program has been funded since 1993 by a pharmaceutical corporation located in Union County.

4-H Summer Science emphasizes science processes using the experiential learning model. A different science theme is presented each year. Some past themes have been the human body, aeronautics, robotics, kitchen chemistry, and physics with toys. Youth also learn about science careers through visits from science professionals such as lab technicians, researchers, chemists, and so forth. Many of these scientists are from the same phar-





maceutical corporation that funds the program. The majority of youth have never met a science professional in person. Program evaluations have demonstrated an increase in youth interest in science as a field of study and as a career.

The 4-H Summer Science Program is unique in Union County in several ways. First, it is a 4-H program that is not volunteer or club-based. Due to the intensive nature of the program, it was decided that using paid employees would work best – to maintain quality programming, 4-H hires certified teachers to facilitate the lessons. Secondly, this program was the first of its kind in the county to bring informal science education to day camps located in low-income areas. Although science is studied in the county's elementary schools, it had rarely been offered at a professional level through the summer day camps. Lastly, this program was implemented with several groups in the county who had not previously collaborated with 4-H. –**Jim Nichnadowicz, Rutgers University**

Resources

Building Quality in Summer Learning Programs: Approaches and Recommendations – identifies the different settings in which summer programs for disadvantaged youth most commonly take place – schools, parks and recreation departments, community- and faith-based organizations, and child-care programs – and examines the limitations and opportunities presented by each in building better programming. Available at <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/KnowledgeCenter/KnowledgeTopics/CurrentAreasofFocus/Out-Of-SchoolLearning/Documents/Building-Quality-in-Summer-Learning-Programs.pdf>.

Effective and Promising Summer Learning Programs and Approaches for Economically-Disadvantaged Children and Youth – summarizes findings from an extensive literature review that was conducted to identify the most promising models and approaches for meeting the needs of low-income children, youth, and families during the summer months. Available at http://www.childtrends.org/Files/Child_Trends-2009_06_17_FR_SummerLearning.pdf.

National Summer Learning Association – the National Summer Learning Association serves as a network hub for thousands of summer learning program providers and stakeholders across the country, providing tools, resources, and expertise to improve program quality, generate support, and increase youth access and participation. The association offers professional development, quality assessment and evaluation, and best practices dissemination. Available at <http://www.summerlearning.org/>.