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# 12 Commendments by a 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinator

1. Say something, anything, positive to shooting sports athletes each meeting.
2. Try to see that shooting sports athletes achieve success in some way by offering a variety of activities.
3. Give shooting sports athletes recognition for the effort they make.
4. Make the shooting sports athletes feel they belong.
5. Listen to shooting sports athletes and look them in the eye while they talk.
6. Answer shooting sports athletes questions openly, honestly, and immediately, if possible.
7. Do not ever embarrass shooting sports athletes, do not allow them to question their worth – any criticism must be in private.
8. Compliment the athletes on creative ideas, improvement in performance, tasks, etc.
9. Encourage athletes to be proud of their name, ideals, and work.
10. Set reasonable goals with the athletes so that they have a reasonable chance of reaching the goals.
11. Emphasize what your athletes do right.
12. Treat your athletes as you would like to be treated....



**AGE GROUP: NINE TO TWELVE**  
**4-H AGE: 8-11**

<b>CHARACTERISTICS OF AGE GROUP</b>	<b>IMPLICATIONS FOR 4-H</b>	<b>LIFE SKILLS</b>
<p>Are quite active, with boundless energy.</p> <p>Like group activity.</p> <p>Like to be with members of own sex.</p> <p>Have interests which often change rapidly, jumping from one thing to another.</p> <p>Usually do best when work is laid out in small pieces</p> <p>Need guidance from adults to stay at a task to achieve their best performance.</p> <p>Admire and imitate older boys and girls.</p> <p>Are easily motivated, eager to try something new.</p> <p>Do not like to keep records and do not see the value of them; need assistance and close supervision.</p>	<p>Emphasize active learning experiences.</p> <p>Emphasize group learning experiences.</p> <p>Encourage learning experiences to be done with members of the same sex.</p> <p>Encourage many brief learning experiences.</p> <p>Use detailed outlines of the learning experiences; brief lessons.</p> <p>Work closely with 4-Her's in the age group throughout the life skills approach to leadership development.</p> <p>Encourage working with older 4-Her's.</p> <p>Provide a wide variety of learning experiences.</p> <p>Work closely with them in completing records. Identify other ways to keep records (journals, portfolios, etc.)</p>	<p><b>ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE:</b> Experiential learning is important. Provide concrete experiences through group activities. Combine seeing with doing. Provide opportunities to talk about the experience. Identify ways to use the skills learned in other ways in everyday life or in the future.</p> <p><b>DECISION MAKING:</b> Provide opportunities to identify problems and gather the needed information to solve the problems. Provide support for decisions made and opportunities to learn from the consequences of decisions.</p> <p><b>CREATIVE THINKING:</b> Select problem solving activities that are short, fun and challenge logical and symbolic thinking skills.</p> <p><b>COMMUNICATING:</b> Focus on learning and practicing demonstrating to a group, speaking before a group. Emphasis on concrete steps. Role-play refusal and disagreeing skills.</p> <p><b>GETTING ALONG WITH OTHERS:</b> Practice teamwork skills by planning together, and solving problems as a group. Provide opportunities for learning about personal strengths while understanding the unique differences and strengths of others in the group. Learn to work toward the achievement of group goals.</p> <p><b>OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limit competition for this age group and emphasize interview judging.</li> <li>▪ Individual evaluation by adults is preferable to group competition where only one can be best.</li> <li>▪ Danish system only at this age level.</li> <li>▪ Teen leaders may be especially effective with this age group and provide important role models.</li> </ul>

**AGE GROUP: THIRTEEN TO FIFTEEN**  
**4-H AGE: 12 - 14**

<b>CHARACTERISTICS OF AGE GROUP</b>	<b>IMPLICATIONS FOR 4-H</b>	<b>LIFE SKILLS</b>
<p>Are concerned about physical development, being liked by friends, social graces and good grooming (even though they don't like to admit it.)</p> <p>Desire a sense of independence, yet they want and need their parents' help.</p> <p>Are self-conscious, with many needing help to get over inferiority complexes.</p> <p>Like fan clubs; many youth have adult idols.</p> <p>Want to get outside of their own community to explore.</p> <p>Are getting over the age of fantasy and beginning to think what they will do when they grow up, however, are often unclear of needs and values.</p> <p>Are interested in activities involving boys and girls.</p> <p>Are interested in sports and active games.</p> <p>Are ready for in-depth, longer learning experiences.</p>	<p>Encourage learning experiences related to understanding yourself and getting along with others.</p> <p>Encourage working with adults and older teens to complete learning experiences.</p> <p>Concentrate on developing individual skills.</p> <p>Encourage working with or apprenticing to older teens and adults.</p> <p>Provide learning experiences outside of the community.</p> <p>Relate leadership life skills to career choices.</p> <p>Encourage learning experiences involving boys and girls.</p> <p>Encourage active, fun learning experiences.</p> <p>Encourage deeper exploration of leadership roles; encourage more detailed record-keeping of leadership experiences.</p>	<p><b>DECISION MAKING:</b> Help youth compare and analyze alternatives before making final decisions.</p> <p><b>ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE:</b> Provide for longer in-depth learning experiences especially in the areas of leadership and career exploration.</p> <p><b>CREATIVE THINKING:</b> Provide opportunities for individual problem solving experiences and opportunities to explore creative ways of doing things.</p> <p><b>COMMUNICATION:</b> Utilize interviewing techniques, communication technology, and dealing with social issues in a public forum to help them develop communication skills.</p> <p><b>RESPONSIBILITY:</b> Accepting responsibility for decisions and individual actions is vital as this age group prefers finding their own solutions. The youth have the capacity to plan and organize activities with limited support from adults.</p> <p><b>UNDERSTANDING SELF:</b> Constant positive reinforcement while participating in learning experiences is important as this period presents the biggest challenge to a young person's self concept.</p> <p><b>GETTING ALONG WITH OTHERS:</b> Practicing assertiveness while building rewarding relationships with older teens/adults is recommended. Acceptance of others and recognition of their strengths are important attitudes to teach at this level.</p> <p><b>OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase emphasis on leadership and citizenship opportunities.</li> <li>▪ Career exploration helps youth identify with potential mentors while helping to clarify their self-worth as young teens.</li> <li>▪ Great time for intra/interstate exchanges.</li> <li>▪ Recognize both individual achievement related to skill development and team efforts.</li> </ul>

**AGE GROUP: SIXTEEN TO NINETEEN**  
**4-H AGE: 15 - 18**

CHARACTERISTICS OF AGE GROUP	IMPLICATIONS FOR 4-H	LIFE SKILLS
<p>Have high social needs and desires.</p> <p>Want and need a strong voice in planning their own programs.</p> <p>Want adult leadership.</p> <p>Are interested in coeducational activities.</p> <p>Areas of interests are more restricted; patterns of interest becoming more definite.</p> <p>Need vocational guidance</p> <p>Are developing community consciousness.</p> <p>Beginning to think of leaving home for college, employment, marriage.</p> <p>Many will leave the community for employment and many who go to college will not return to their present community after graduation.</p> <p>Very interested in travel and adventure</p>	<p>Put more emphasis on personal development – mental and social.</p> <p>Provide suggestions and alternatives rather than detailed instructions.</p> <p>Emphasize guidance and counseling from adult leaders rather than direction.</p> <p>Recommend liberal use of discussion method.</p> <p>Provide many opportunities for boys and girls to work together.</p> <p>Project work can have considerably more depth. May need to suggest related areas to give members a broader outlook. Provide references.</p> <p>Include suggestions and information for career exploration.</p> <p>Recommend civic projects of a service nature.</p> <p>Put emphasis on economics (management, budgets, recordkeeping, credit, etc.) Emphasize need for a college / post-secondary education.</p> <p>Use tours, trips to state and interstate conferences and audiovisual materials to introduce members to the urban-industrial complex.</p> <p>Provide trips rather than medals and ribbons as incentives.</p>	<p><b>GETTING ALONG WITH OTHERS:</b> Provide constructive opportunities for older teens to develop and identify within a peer group and separate from the family.</p> <p><b>DECISION MAKING:</b> Help them look for and compare all possible solutions to a problem, keep track of various solutions, recognize that problems can have more than one solution. Provide experiences that are less formally structured so problem solving skills will improve.</p> <p><b>ACQUIRING KNOWLEDGE:</b> Provide more self-directed experiences where youth can systematically test their own hypotheses.</p> <p><b>RESPONSIBILITY:</b> Offer guidance so they gradually take on more responsibilities and face the consequences of their actions as they become adults.</p> <p><b>CREATIVE THINKING:</b> Encourage creative thinking by encouraging youth to think and act creatively.</p> <p><b>COMMUNICATING:</b> Provide opportunities for youth to express their own ideas and to understand others. Help older youth to put thoughts into words, sharpen expression and explore meaning and implications of language.</p> <p><b>UNDERSTANDING SELF:</b> Help adolescents examine their own feelings of identity and how others view them. Encourage them to test roles and experiment with new characteristics by discussion, community work and career exploration. Provide a set of standards and limits.</p>

# Ages and Stages

Some teaching and behavior considerations for youth shooting coaches.

## General

1. As a rule, children have a shorter attention span than adults do. Avoid long lectures. Keep your instruction short and to the point once you are on the shooting line.
2. Avoid being too critical. Something positive can always be found. Look for the positive and be sincere in your praise of the student's effort. Positive re-enforcement will build confidence and encourage the student to continue.
3. Keep it light and fun. The majority of kids come to 4-H for the FUN factor.
4. Above all be patient. Kids will pick up any negative attitude on your part and will get discouraged quickly.
5. Know your audience. Try to meet their expectation not yours.

## Age Considerations

1. 9-11 year olds. This group is typically high energy. They have short attention spans. Your instruction needs to be short simple and to the point. Avoid making too many corrections at one time. You will frustrate the student. Their coordination is still developing and they will have more success processing one change at a time. Fatigue will be a major factor with this group. Do what you can to minimize the time they have to hold the gun up in firing position. Continually reminding the student of the basics will be necessary. Don't expect them to remember everything after being told once or twice.
2. 12-14 year olds. This group is also high energy but generally stronger and more coordinated. They can absorb more complex information and will try hard to execute your instruction in most cases. However, they may also have some preconceived ideas about how they should shoot.
3. 15-18 year olds. This group will be much stronger and more coordinated. They can absorb much more complex information. The main thing to be cautious about with this group is their general self-consciousness. Both boys and girls at this age will be concerned with their appearance. Any situation that causes them embarrassment may result in them not returning. Even a comment you intend to be funny may be taken very seriously.

# APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR PUTTING THE CHILD FIRST

Touching is a very important part of healthy human relationships. From the first moment of life, babies thrive when they feel the warmth of being near their mother's bodies. Little children like to roll around on the ground in playful rough-housing. Lonely and hurting children need to be held with caring.

Some adults have become confused and worried about appropriate touching and related behaviors to use when they are with and around children. Caring adults are aware of the expanded needs for personal space of children who approach puberty and enter adolescence. Those who understand the special needs of abused children are especially sensitive about asking for permission to offer a hug. Adults who put the needs of the children first are alert to the appropriateness of their own behaviors.

It is important to show caring and to encourage children by being warm and affectionate, especially when many of the children who come to youth groups do so to get away from their own troubled homes. An extra effort by a child deserves a friendly "pat on the back" or a "tousling of the hair." Being touched in positive and appropriate ways means "I like you" and "You belong here."

There are sensible ways for volunteers to continue to show warmth to children while still protecting their own integrity.

1. Make a point of showing affection to all your children in open places where others can see and share in the warmth. If you are comfortable with others watching what you are doing with children, you are probably OK.
2. Touch children in safe places on their bodies, avoiding private places. The back, the head and the shoulders are acceptable; the buttocks, the breasts, the thighs and the groin are not acceptable. Consider cultural differences; here, for example, touching all people on their head would not be considered appropriate.
3. If a child is hurting or feeling ill and needs to be examined, ensure that another person of the same sex as the child is present in the room while you are carrying out the examination. If possible, leave an examination of private places to health professionals. Don't force the child to remove clothing for an examination.
4. If a child is sad and needs to be comforted, show affection by placing your arm around a shoulder and giving a gentle hug or a good squeeze from the side.

5. If the child needs to have a private conversation with you, remove yourselves the necessary distance from the others but stay in view of the group or leave a door slightly ajar.
6. It is impossible to avoid situations where you must be alone with the child. But if you are to be alone, be sure that you have considered some safeguards and that parents are aware of the nature of your activity with the child. For example, when doing bedchecks at camp, bring a second counselor if one is available. When traveling by car, try to take a number of children or bring along another volunteer.
7. Respect the policy of your organization concerning camping or traveling alone with a child.
8. Don't be alone and naked with the child, anywhere. If you must change at public swimming pools, use the usual kind of discretion that is appropriate for such places.
9. Be cautious about any conversations with children that involve sex. It is understood that children ask honest questions about sexuality and teenagers might seek advice. Listening with respect for the child is appropriate; it is also appropriate to distribute and discuss agency approved information which is part of a general educational program about sexuality. Joking around with kids in ways that encourage promiscuity or the acceptance of sexually explicit material is dangerous for you and the children.
10. In all things, respect the integrity of the child. Allow the child to back away from your well-intentioned affection if she/he wishes. Ask the child if they feel okay about being touched. Abused children are sometimes fearful or distrustful of any physical contact. Most of us sense the difference between positive and caring intentions and those which are meant to exploit us. Use your common sense and good judgment to guide you in protecting the personal space of the children in your care.

Source: Put the Child First, Canadian Council on Children and Youth, 1989

# Behavior and Guidance Techniques that Work

## **MISBEHAVIOR**

Four reasons for misbehavior just doesn't sound like many reasons, does it? As we talk, you will see there really are four basic reasons why kids misbehave and you will discover some ways to guide this misbehavior. These include:

1. Attention,
2. Power,
3. Revenge, and
4. Feelings of inadequacy.

Some kids believe they must misbehave to get your ATTENTION. They do not know how to ask for your attention. Those who get loud may be bored or frightened or unaware of how to tell you this. But they do know their loudness gets your attention. Others may have "bug bites" they must show you. They are seeking attention.

Kids may also misbehave for POWER. Have you ever had a kid tell you, "all these meetings are stupid"? Perhaps this statement is telling you that the kids feel they have no power in deciding on what takes place at the meetings. Give them some choices of meeting agendas and they will feel involved. Suppose the kids think the food at the last cook-out was terrible. Give them choices. Let them decide what they want to eat; better yet, get them involved in helping prepare the food.

Ever have a kid do something negative at every event? This can be rather nerve-racking. This may be an indicator that they are upset with you or something else and are unable to talk about it. They are exhibiting this behavior out of REVENGE. Look for possible reasons for this behavior and try to talk with the 4-H'er. Some kids may be "complainers"; this may be a result of coming to the meeting upset over a family situation. The kid feels if he/she is not happy then no else should be happy either,

When kids FEEL INADEQUATE or unable to perform a particular task they may misbehave. They may misbehave rather than admit to their fears. They are camouflaging their feelings of inadequacy.

## **GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES**

Guidance techniques are ways to guide behaviors. There are three types of techniques that have been found to be effective when working with kids;

1. Direct guidance,
2. Indirect guidance, and
3. Positive guidance.



**DIRECT GUIDANCE** means offering straightforward guidance. You deal specifically with the child and the behavior. Various types of direct guidance include:

1. **DEMONSTRATE EXPECTED BEHAVIORS.** Show the kids the behavior you expect from them. If you want them to walk on paths, you should walk on paths. If you want the kids to talk versus yell, be sure you talk with them rather than yell at them.
2. **PHYSICALLY RESTRAIN** (if necessary). Sometimes you may need to physically restrain a child from a behavior. For example, you may have to stop a fight. Perhaps a child may not come off the range when you ask. This is an extreme case. Just remember: to physically restrain a child is only used as a last resort. **NEVER ABUSE A CHILD.**
3. **SPEAK AT EYE LEVEL.** As you speak with the kids, place yourself at their eye level, squat down. When you speak at eye level, you are expressing concern and respect for the child. At times, it may be inconvenient to get at eye level. If so, look them in the eye as you speak with them. There is one word of caution as it relates to looking at others directly in the eyes when you speak. In some cultures, looking someone directly in the eye is disrespectful. Please be aware of this possible cultural norm and consider it in your situation.
4. **USE GESTURES.** Use gestures as you talk with the kids – in other words, use your hands as you speak.
5. **SMILE.** When you smile at the kids, generally they feel that you care about them and like them. Smile as you speak with them, the other adults, their parents. But, be sure your smile is sincere. A fake smile will not go far!
6. **COMMUNICATE IN WORDS.** Try to communicate your feelings in words. For example, if you aren't feeling well, tell the kids. Usually they will be more understanding and in fact even try harder to behave well.
7. **KEEP INSTRUCTIONS SHORT.** As you speak with kids, keep your instructions simple and short. If it is time to clean up, simply "clean-up time". Avoid lengthy lectures or justification of why. Instructions should be limited to three requests at a time.
8. **LIMIT DIRECTIONS.** Give directions only when necessary. Remember – coming to the shooting sports program should be fun. If an adult is constantly talking about "teaching", it can become boring. If a child is having difficulty with a certain task or project, silently observe and then offer to "help" the child.
9. **GIVE CHOICES.** Choices create situations in which kids are forced to think.

Choices provide opportunities for kids to make mistakes and learn from the consequences. Choices help us to avoid getting into control battles with youngsters. And choices provide opportunities for kids to hear that we trust their thinking abilities.

Rules for giving choices:

1. Always be sure to select choices that you like. Never provide one you don't like because the child will usually select the one you don't like.
2. Never give a choice unless you are willing to allow the child to experience the consequences of that choice.
3. Never give choices when the child is in danger.
4. Never give choices unless you are willing to make the choice for the child in the event he/she does not choose. "If you don't choose, I will." Give them 10 seconds to decide.

CAUTION!! It is very easy to turn your choices into threats: "You can either get to sleep immediately or lose your right to shoot tomorrow." This is just a little like your boss giving you the choice, "Would you rather do that report today or get fired?"

10. EXPLAIN. If the child has a question, be willing to explain the answer to the individual. If you don't know the answer, try and find it. Answer all the questions and never shame or belittle a child for asking questions.

INDIRECT GUIDANCE means roundabout ways to offer guidance. This may involve arranging factors in the environment or using your knowledge to work with other people. Techniques you can use include:

1. TIMING. Be sure to allow enough time for the kids to complete an activity without feeling rushed. In the same light, avoid times when the kids get bored because of too much time allowed for an activity. When possible, avoid having kids wait. Bored waiting brews misbehavior.
2. NUMBER. Be aware of the number of kids in your group activities. You may find it is better to split the group and have small groups. It may be helpful to split the group part of the time and at other times do activities as a whole unit. Too many or too few kids in a group can result in misbehavior.
3. AGE APPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES. Be sure the chosen activity is appropriate for the age of the child. Are they interested in it? Can the kids understand the activity? Is it too difficult? Too simple? These questions can prove to be quite beneficial when planning for groups of mixed ages.
4. SCHEDULES. In designing schedules (for meetings, day-long workshops, field trips, etc.) mix the type of activities you offer. Balance the active times with calm times.

Consider the time of day, the impact of various weather conditions, the site, the ages of kids, and what you want them to learn.

5. **BEHAVIOR CLUES.** There are clues you give without using words to tell the kids the behavior you expect. For example, tell the kids that at night when the radios and lights go out their talk is to end. The radio and lights become behavior clues to signal the time to stop talking and go to sleep.
6. **BE PREPARED.** Have the materials and supplies ready for activities. This is a behavior cue for “It is time to work.” If you have materials ready, then kids do not have to wait. Being prepared reduces boredom.
7. **OUT OF SIGHT.** “Out of sight – out of mind” goes the old, but true, phrase. Suppose the kids are not allowed to drink soda pop and the adult leaders are. Problems can be easily avoided by having the adults drink their pop out of the view of the campers.
8. **COOL, CALM AND COLLECTED.** If all else fails at least appear cool, calm, and collected with the kids. There may be times when you can’t believe what is happening to you. Believe it, deal with it, and somehow calmly guide yourself and the campers through the situation. Sigh, take a deep breath, and proceed to guide the campers in the best way you know how.

**POSITIVE GUIDANCE** means to offer the kids positiveness, to tell them what to do rather than what not to do. A few key points to keep in mind....

1. **STATE RULES IN POSITIVE FORM.** Rather than stating a rule with a “do not” state the rule with the “do”.
2. **KEEP SMILING.**
3. **SHOW GENUINE LOVE AND CONCERN FOR THE CHILD.**
4. **USE THINKING WORDS.** Thinking words tell the child what you will do or what they are free to do. Thinking words include: telling the child when he/she can do something or telling the child the conditions under which you will do something.
5. **CALL “TIME OUT” or “RENEWAL TIME”.** In a cool and calm manner, call for “time out” or “renewal time”. This gives a kid a chance to straighten out mixed-up feelings and get back a sense of personal control.
6. **CATCH THE CHILD BEING GOOD!!** Rearrange the attention which kids receive. Make it a habit to notice good behavior. Pay more attention to them when they are cooperating and sharing.

The following article appeared in the Community Risk Management and Insurance newsletter. It emphasizes the importance of carefully constructed policies. - Merl E. Miller

## Clear Rules to Prevent Abuse: Discipline and Touching \*

In a youth-serving program, touching is good; discipline is essential. Nonetheless, either can lead to abuse or allegations of abuse.

The most effective way to prevent excesses in either area is by adopting and enforcing clear policies regarding acceptable touching and appropriate discipline. Those policies can be part of a comprehensive strategy for protecting the children in your program.

The latest publication from the Non-Profit Risk Management Center, the *Child Abuse Prevention Primer for Your Organization*, provides guidance for developing those policies. The *Primer* organizes what it terms the “four P’s of abuse prevention” into personnel, program, premises and participants. A comprehensive approach to protecting children requires attention to all four areas.

The following excerpt is taken from the *Primer’s* discussion of an organization’s responsibility to create a personal shield of safety around each of the participants. In addition to the two sections excerpted, the “Participants” section of the *Primer* also covers out-of-program contacts between service recipients and staff, privacy, sign-in/sign-out procedures, and reporting procedures for suspected child abuse.

### DISCIPLINE

In most instances, the activities of youth programs are sufficiently rewarding that children want to behave. Sometimes, though, children misbehave and need to be disciplined. Appropriate discipline maintains order in a program and protects children from injuries from misbehavior. Therefore, every youth-serving program needs to exercise a reasonable degree of control over the participants.

Staff does not have the same options as parents,

however, when to discipline children. Staff members need to respect that difference in roles.

Parents, for example, may use physical punishment that does not physically injure their children. When administered by staff, corporal punishment such as hitting, slapping or spanking a child, may be considered abusive. It can also become excessive very quickly. Prohibiting physical punishment creates a buffer zone to protect children.

In addition, food and water should not be withheld as a disciplinary measure. For children in sports or other activities involving strenuous physical activity, water should be freely available - dehydration is a major risk for children.

Any disciplinary measure should be constructive. It should always be an answer to a need of the child rather than a response to a need of the staff. “Discipline” that results from staff anger or frustration may be abusive. Stressed-out staff may increase children’s stress level, which in turn increases stress for staff. Program staff should be role models for exercising self-control.

### TOUCHING

The topic of touching troubles most youth-serving organizations because it tears them between competing goals. On the one hand, they want to provide what children need – wholesome affections. On the other hand, touching can lead to lawsuits alleging that the touching was improper. Appropriate touching may lead to inappropriate touching as familiarity increases.

The following example illustrates how easily a touch can be misconstrued. As a group of children returning from a Salvation Army camp in California were getting off their bus, one of the staff members noticed that a girl had a bit of mud on her skirt.

Almost by reflex he reached up and brushed off the mud. When the girl arrived home, she told her mother that the man had touched her. Her mother reported the incident to the authorities. The man was arrested on suspicion of child sexual abuse and the camp director was arrested for failing to report abuse, since he had been a witness. Eventually all of the charges were dropped, but the memories of the bad experience live on.

Scared by such incidents and the prospect of lawsuits, some organizations have instituted a “no touch” policy. Less drastic approaches require clear limits for appropriate touching. Cordelia Anderson, a veteran child abuse prevention educator, developed the concept of the “touch continuum.” Anderson distinguishes between clearly good touches – those that are nurturing and proper and feel good; and clearly bad touches – those that feel “icky” and the child wants to have stopped. But there are also a large number of touches that are confusing – they many have felt good when they started, but at some point they began to make the child uncomfortable. Children need to have the right to say no to physical contact. A youth-serving organization can help the child understand and exercise that right.

Some children literally demand physical affection. They may cling to their adult supervisors or teachers. Adults can use these opportunities to teach children that there are social boundaries to the expressions of physical affection. Adults in these situations can be role models to help children learn how to set boundaries for themselves.

Many youth-serving organizations offer programs in which contact between adults and children is almost unavoidable. Teaching children to swim or to use a balance beam may require some touching. Even in these programs, the risk of abuse or a false allegation of abuse can be minimized by reinforcing the child’s right to set limits. If the activity is going to involve touching, the coach or helper should tell the child in advance what is going to happen and seek the child’s permission.

Some activities may be redesigned to eliminate an adult’s touching that can quickly become inappropriate. For example a state high school wrestling champion almost quit wrestling because the assistant wrestling coach insisted on being the youth’s practice partner and repeatedly groped the young man between his legs. When the wrestler complained, he was told that he must be misinterpreting the assistant coach’s

intentions. Eventually the assistant coach was fired, but the incidents need never have occurred. There was no legitimate reason for the assistant coach to be a practice partner with one of the team members. There were plenty of other youths available to practice with each other. Activities can usually be redesigned to reduce the opportunity for inappropriate touching.

The following considerations can help you develop or review your own policy on touching.

- Touching should be in response to the need of the child and not the need of the adult.
- Touching should be with the child’s permission – resistance from the child should be respected.
- Touching should avoid breasts, buttocks, and groin.
- Touching should be open and not secretive.
- Touching or other physical contact should be governed by the age and developmental stage of the child. For example, sitting in an adult’s lap may be appropriate for a three-year-old but less for an eight-year-old, unless the adult is the child’s parent.

## **ADDRESSING YOUR ORGANIZATION’S SPECIFIC NEEDS**

Every organization providing services to children and youth has the responsibility to be as safe as reasonably possible for its youthful participants. This includes protecting its service recipients from abuse. The *Child Abuse Prevention Primer for Your Organization* takes heed of the fact that every organization is different.

The *Primer*, therefore recognizes that no single set of policies or guidelines to protect children will be suitable for all organizations. The *Primer* examines the sensitive issues organizations need to address, offers suggestions based on the experiences of organizations that have implemented a wide array of child abuse prevention strategies, and provides suggestions for organizations to formulate their own set of abuse prevention guidelines.

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## Principles of Conflict Resolution and Positive Argument in Stressing Situations

Ronald A. Howard Jr.<sup>1</sup>

STRIVE for COMMON GROUND - Seek a fundamental level of agreement before attempting to pose arguments to address the issues at hand. Much conflict can be avoided if the principals involved can agree on some root concerns, needs or conditions. That permits the energy of the argument to be directed at improvement or enhancement rather than a contest of wills over agreed-upon issues.

Be CALM - Becoming angry damages your image, reduces your ability to think and argue effectively, reduces your impact on the situation and reinforces the behavior of those opposing you. Stay calm on the outside, even if your insides are in a massive turmoil; and make every effort to retain self-control.

Be PREPARED - Do your homework. Know the issues at hand, the arguments that may be posed and the types of argument that will be used. Prepare your responses prior to the encounter and be ready to respond effectively to the arguments and the forms of argument used. Be specifically prepared to complete or illuminate half-truths and to extract working definitions of terms that may be ambiguous. If possible use sources cited by the opposition to rectify inaccuracies.

Be FACTUAL - Make sure that your information is accurate and documented. Label all opinions expressed, giving your justifications or reasoning behind them. If you have personal data on the topic or issue, list it. If you need information, know where to get it. Defer to authorities with standing in a field (experts). Avoid mudslinging contests and similar forms of unacceptable argument.

Be HONEST - Do not worry about defending everything, righting every wrong or inflicting truth and justice on the situation. Let the audience come to its own conclusions. Most people are able to reach reasonable conclusions when given the opportunity and a clear set of choices. Any question of honesty results in confusion and reduced support. Use the root ethics and mores of the society in support of your argument, but do not try to pull the wool over anyone's eyes. It will destroy the honest, hard-working, straight-shooting image you want to project.

Be POSITIVE - Take the offensive with the positive aspects of your argument. State what the outcomes have been or may be if the course of action proposed is taken. List the positive points while acknowledging the negative or cost factors, allowing the group to reach logical conclusions. Worry more about positively communicating your arguments than tearing opposing arguments apart.

Show CONCERN for others - Nothing kills your image, credibility or impact faster than coming across as a callous, boorish or obnoxious person with no feeling for kids, other volunteers or extension staff members. On the other hand, nothing will kill the other side's image faster than having a calm, concerned and positive person representing a dissenting argument.

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<sup>1</sup> Professor and Extension 4-H and Youth Development Specialist. Texas Agricultural Extension Service, The Texas A&M University System, College Station, TX

## Fact Sheet- Conflict Resolution-

Watch your APPEARANCE - Be careful that your dress, personal mannerisms and speech characteristics do not make others ill at ease. Be particularly sensitive to avoiding the use of words and "colorful metaphors" that might ruin your image. Dressing on the level of your audience breaks down barriers and increases acceptance as a colleague rather than an outsider.

Use PROPER LANGUAGE and good GRAMMAR - "A tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury and signifying nothing," was the way Shakespeare put it. If the image projected is one of a poorly educated person, it will reflect on the truth value placed on your argument. Try to be as careful about the use of the language as possible. Practice good grammar to help you use it better in an argument context. It adds weight to your words, even if it does not make them easier to understand.

Be prepared to ACCEPT SUCCESS - When a conflict has been successfully resolved, be prepared to behave as an active participant in the solutions and their implementation. Accept victory holding an olive branch, accept the other outcome with magnanimity or politely decline to participate in the process. Avoid personal involvement in sniping or sabotage and discourage others from the processes.

## How Kids Learn

Ronald A. Howard Jr.<sup>1</sup>

### Lessons from Formal Education

Formal education has developed many learning models, often segregating elements for classification even though they are integrated in the individual. One such classification divides people into visual, auditory, tactile, spatial and kinesthetic learners, defining their primary sensory modality for learning. I might add conceptual learners – those who learn the concept first, then expand the concept or construct to the specific learning elements. For example, a youngster may learn mathematics principles then apply them to music theory with the notion that "music is nothing but math!" These big picture people are relatively rare and often discounted in synthetic conceptualizations of learning. In fact, most kids learn using a mixture of those artificially divided learning methods. 4-B prides itself on learning by doing - an adaptation of the kinesthetic approach reinforced by the others.

Retention rates for various learning modalities have been posted for many years, achieving the status of gospel without strong evidence for them across learning modalities. In general, hearing or reading alone is given extremely low marks for retention, while involvement in discussing, discovering, or integrating concepts hands-on is given the highest retention marks. I do not propose to reiterate those assumptions of reality here. Each learner is a specific and unique mix of modalities and generalities applied to individuals are often false. Many skilled readers, for example, retain in excess of 85 percent of what they read, while the average is less than 30 percent Here I propose a new set of generalities that assumes multiple learning modes and uniqueness of the individual with adaptation of the teaching process.

### Learning Must Challenge the Learner

"Boring" is the most deadly word in any teaching or learning situation. You will find two types. First, there is the failure to provide adequate challenge for someone who already has elements of a skill. We cannot continue teaching the first element in a skill when the learners have it ingrained. On the other hand, we cannot teach more advanced skills until the basic ones are learned. Each learner must be approached individually and all skills must be taught along the way in logical sequence, Advancement must be based upon achieving standards of excellence with those skills.

### Learning Requires a Positive Philosophy

Everyone can learn - including us. We must approach learning with a positive attitude, using positive reinforcement as a tool. Psychologically partial positive reinforcement *is* the most effective tool in training animals or teaching. One of the most challenging things for us as instructors *is* to focus on the positive actions without mentioning the negative ones. Teaching positively *is* much more effective, even with advanced shooters. We must resist the tendency to identify what was wrong in an action (archers may be the worst here) while sticking to the right things to do. Strive to ingrain the few positive things that must be done to achieve shooting success, and keep them to the minimum necessary at that stage of the shooter's development.

### Learning Requires a Foundational Context

Fundamentals are exactly what they say - the foundation for learning the shooting skills. Building a positive foundation often requires that we restructure our approach to a mechanical or mental error. We must correct ONE element at a time and select the most critical of the elements being corrected as the first priority. For example, if both sight alignment and sight picture are problems, we should address sight alignment first. It is the more fundamental element. We need to determine what is essential to know and provide that when it is needed. Overload, particularly with younger shooters, can be a devastating source of both confusion and potential safety errors. Lay the foundation as needed and build upon it to the level the shooter can achieve.

### Learning Requires Expanding One's Comfort Zone

All of us have a comfort zone where our skills and abilities are matched with the challenge. Learning requires stretching that comfort zone upward. Learning does not take place in the comfort zone, but on the extreme upward bound of that zone. Any learning sessions should start with a mental and physical warm-up in the comfort zone,

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<sup>1</sup> Professor and Extension Specialist, Texas Cooperative Extension



move into an area of discomfort and learning something new, then drop back into the comfort zone to end on a positive and non-stressful note. Repeating the previously learned materials reinforces them and fixes them mentally while it provides a lead-in for the new material to be learned.

### **Complex Learning Requires Basics First**

Learning complex skills or information requires that a sound foundation of fundamentals be laid down first. In this workshop, you will be led through a process that some of you will regard as pedantic or even unnecessary. Some of you are very advanced in your particular fields and have forgotten that the fundamental skills were required to get you where you are. Others will have the false notion that the kids they are leading are "natural shots" and require only refining those native abilities to reach their fullest development. Failure to address basics, e.g. SEEING the target in shotgunning, can result in arrested development of the shooter when they take on more complex skills, e.g. shooting skeet or sporting clays. Essentially, the shooter will "hit the wall" and find it very difficult to progress if their basics are unsound.

### **Learning Complicated Skills in Parts Aids Learning**

Complex skills generally must be assembled in parts before they are applied as a whole. We already have stressed the importance of learning the essentials first. Breaking down complex skills into a series of basic elements, then merging the elements promotes learning and enhances success. In the process, a shooter may suffer temporary reduction in outcomes; but if they are learning the skill, their progress toward mastery of that skill will be enhanced. Process is much more important here than is outcome. Outcomes will follow sound process.

### **Thinking Outside the Box**

The majority of you came here with a desire to become a national level instructor in a single discipline. Some of you want to do it all. Others are deeply invested in a single part of the program. That is fine as long as it does not develop into a desire to limit the program to your area of personal interest. My observations of programs indicate that single discipline programs are less successful in attracting and holding kids (and leaders). Retention of single leaders in a single discipline program runs 1-3 years as a rule. Those that last longer may encounter two problems. First, they may burn out even if they do not drop *out*, resulting in a program that bores both them and the kids. This generally results in loss of the program. Second, they may come to believe that the program is THEJRS. This results in resisting recruitment of others either passively (fine, you can come, but I will do everything that is important) or actively (I don't need any help with this program).

Having a broad and robust program where kids get to try all sorts of shooting sports then select those that they want to pursue at the level they want to achieve brings both endurance and success to programs. Many kids do not know what they want to do in shooting because they have not tried the various disciplines. My experience suggests that active, instant feed-back games attract kids more readily. Shotgun games, silhouette games, and archery all fall within that arena. If a mentor and access are available, hunting can fall in the same category. Black powder can approach the same level because of the processes, smoke and fire. Bullseye shooting, particularly with precision rifles, is extremely demanding of young people. One club recently reported that they start every year with about 35 new kids and end up with fewer than ten. Those other 25 kids needed something different. All shooting supports other kinds. Spend some time exploring other areas and have a program where kids are clamoring to get involved.

### **How Do Kids Learn?**

Kids learn using all of their senses. Kids learn primarily in stepwise fashion from basic skills to application of those skills. Kids learn at unique rates. Kids learn best when positively approached and reinforced. Kids learn best when their leaders support them, encourage them, and provide coaching principles as needed.

### **Sneaky Prophylactic Education**

The 4-H Program is predicated on the notion that we can teach kids life skills while providing subject matter training in areas that are of interest to young people, parents and leaders. We combine life skills, subject matter content, and audience interest in an effort to prepare young people for their roles as adults. In reality, this is prevention education - the true meaning of prophylaxis. We are equipping them with life skills built into subject matter that is attractive to them and complex enough to enhance their learning skills so they will be able to cope with the multiple challenges that will be thrown at them in the course of life. If we approach them saying "hey, kids, want to learn some life skills?"

they tend to retreat with all due haste. If we approach them saying, "would you like to learn how to shoot?" they flock to us. Our responsibility is at least three-fold. *First*, we must teach the shooting safely and positively. Second, we must embed *life* skills into the process. Third, we must act as positive adult role models who are available, interested, and willing to spend some time with a kid. Given those three factors, even a poor teacher can be an outstanding leader. Adding teaching skills to that set provides assets to the kids we touch that will sustain them throughout their lives.

### **Teaching, Coaching, Rearing Kids and Training Dogs**

The best book I have ever found in teaching, coaching, rearing kids and training dogs is Rainer Martens' *Successful Coaching*. I have used it and its predecessor, *Coaching Young Athletes*, ever since the very first national workshop in Georgia many years ago. Get yourself a copy and become a student of the coaching game. Since that time I have left copies with many *folks* who appreciated it. You will find it useful to you as a teacher, as a leader, and as a parent or dog trainer. I would encourage you to get a copy, read it carefully, and apply the skills to your teaching.

# Kids 'n' Guns

## National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee

### Position Statements

#### Why does 4-H have a shooting sports program?

- 4-H uses shooting sports to teach youth development. Our programs are valuable for helping young people develop self-confidence, personal discipline, responsibility, teamwork, self esteem and sportsmanship. The discipline and self-control required for responsible firearms use carries over into many other aspects of life.
- 4-H programs provide a positive experience for youth and promote the safe and ethical use of firearms.
- It is our belief that firearms education reduces gun accidents.
- Hunting and Shooting are rich American traditions. 4-H shooting sports programs help continue this tradition through involvement of the total family: youth, teens, parents, grandparents, etc.

#### Don't shooting programs like those run by 4-H spread American's violent gun culture?

- No! In fact, there is ample evidence that the opposite is true. The 4-H shooting sports program is designed to teach good self-concept and character, and to promote the highest standards of safety and ethical behavior. In addition, with 60-80 million gun owners in America, and the vast majority of them using guns safely and responsibly, America has a peaceful gun culture.
- In a society that has chosen to possess firearms, all members, regardless of age, should be provided adequate training to ensure safe, ethical and responsible interaction with firearms.

#### Isn't easy access to firearms one reason for the violent behavior we've seen in Columbine and other school shootings?

- No, access is not the issue. The safest location for a responsible gun owner to store a firearm is the secure environment of his or her home.
- Firearms should however, be stored so that they are inaccessible to unauthorized users.

#### Isn't hunting inhumane and unnecessary in modern life?

There are four primary values that arise from hunting: social, economic, ecological and historical.

1. **Social.** Hunting is a viable and healthy food source, promoting good sportsmanship and ethics. It is a valued part of our American heritage and is exceptionally good mental/physical exercise. Hunting is an ideal and common family activity.
2. **Economic.** Hunting minimizes the economic loss of human life and property damage that may result from road kills and crop depredation. Hunters spend millions of dollars each year to pursue the sport, and much of that money goes directly into wildlife management.
3. **Ecological.** Hunting is a vital wildlife management tool. Hunters' dollars support wildlife habitat projects in every state in the USA. Hunting improves the health of natural wildlife populations and contributes to the conservation of our natural resources. A well-placed shot by a skilled marksman is a more humane cause of death than natural causes experienced by wildlife.
4. **Historical.** Hunting was a necessary method of obtaining food and clothing by our forefathers. The act of hunting and utilizing game animals, in similar ways, helps us to appreciate the demands and sacrifices that our ancestors faced in the historical development of modern civilization.

# LEARNING STYLES



## EYE ASSESSING CUES Visual



EYES  
UP  
RIGHT



EYES  
UP  
LEFT



EYES  
STRAIGHT AHEAD  
DEFOCUSED

## PREDICATES OR PROCESS WORDS Visual



- Analyze
- Demonstrate
- Inspect
- Observe
- Picture



- See
- View
- Witness
- Focus
- Show



- Appear
- Dream
- Outlook
- Sketchy
- Witness

## EYE ASSESSING CUES Auditory



EYES  
LEVEL  
RIGHT



EYES  
LEVEL  
LEFT



EYES  
DOWN  
LEFT

## PREDICATES OR PROCESS WORDS Auditory



- Hush
- Discuss
- Noise
- Oral
- Gossip



- Listen
- Tell
- Talk
- Report
- Rumor



- Tone
- Vocal
- Say
- Converse
- Shrill

## EYE ASSESSING CUES Kinesthetic



EYES  
DOWN  
RIGHT

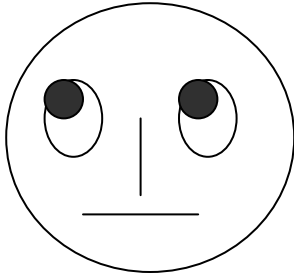
## PREDICATES OR PROCESS WORDS Kinesthetic



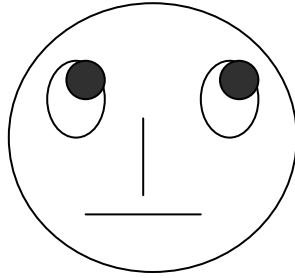
- |          |           |           |
|----------|-----------|-----------|
| •Active  | •Tension  | •Whipped  |
| •Charge  | •Affected | •Grasp    |
| •Hold    | •Feel     | •Pressure |
| •Shallow | •Hold     | •Rush     |
| •Sore    | •Touch    | •Stress   |

**EYE ACCESSING CUES**

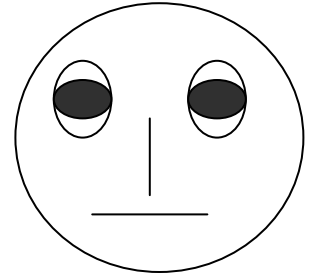
**VISUAL**



**EYES  
UP  
RIGHT**

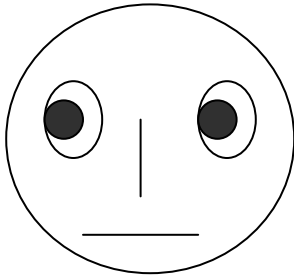


**EYES  
UP  
LEFT**

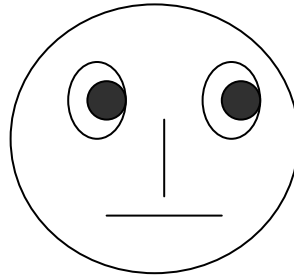


**EYES  
STRAIGHT AHEAD  
DEFOCUSED**

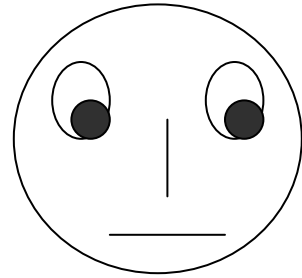
**AUDITORY**



**EYES  
LEVEL  
RIGHT**

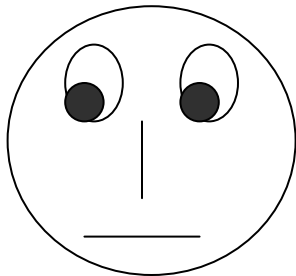


**EYES  
LEVEL  
LEFT**



**EYES  
DOWN  
LEFT**

**KINESTHETIC**



**EYES  
DOWN  
RIGHT**

## PREDICATE WORDS

PREDICATES are the process words (verbs, adverbs, and adjectives) which people use in their communication to represent their experience internally, either visually, auditorially or kinesthetically. Below are listed some of the more commonly used predicate (words) in the business environment.

### VISUAL (see)

Analyze  
Angle  
Appear  
Aspect  
Clarity  
Cognizant  
Conspicuous  
Demonstrate  
Dream  
Examine  
Focus  
Foresee  
Glance  
Hindsight  
Horizon  
Idea  
Illusion  
Illustrate  
Image  
Inspect  
Look  
Notice  
Obscure  
Observe  
Obvious  
Outlook  
Perception  
Perspective  
Picture  
Pinpoint  
See  
Scene  
Scope  
Scrutinize  
Show  
Sight  
Sketchy  
Survey  
Vague  
View  
Vision  
Watch  
Witness

### AUDITORY (hear)

Announce  
Articulate  
Audible  
Boisterous]  
Communicate  
Converse  
Discuss  
Dissonant  
Divulge  
Earshot  
Enunciate  
Gossip  
Hear  
Hush  
Inquire  
Interview  
Listen  
Loud  
Mention  
Noise  
Oral  
Proclaim  
Pronounce  
Remark  
Report  
Ring  
Roar  
Rumor  
Say  
Screech  
Shrill  
Silence  
Sound  
Speak  
Speechless  
Squeal  
State  
Talk  
Tell  
Tone  
Utter  
Vocal  
Voice

### KINETHETIC (feel)

Active  
Affected  
Bearable  
Callous  
Charge  
Concrete  
Emotional  
Feel  
Firm  
Flow  
Foundation  
Grasp  
Grip  
Hanging  
Hassle  
Heated  
Hold  
Hunch  
Hustle  
Intuition  
Lukewarm  
Motion  
Muddled  
Panicky  
Pressure  
Rush  
Sensitive  
Set  
Shallow  
Shift  
Softy  
Solid  
Sore  
Stir  
Stress  
Structured  
Support  
Tension  
Tied]  
Touch  
Unbearable  
Unsettled  
Whipped

The objective in “matching” predicates is to “match” the language in which your listener speaks, thus creating an atmosphere of rapport and understanding.

By: Robbins Research Institute



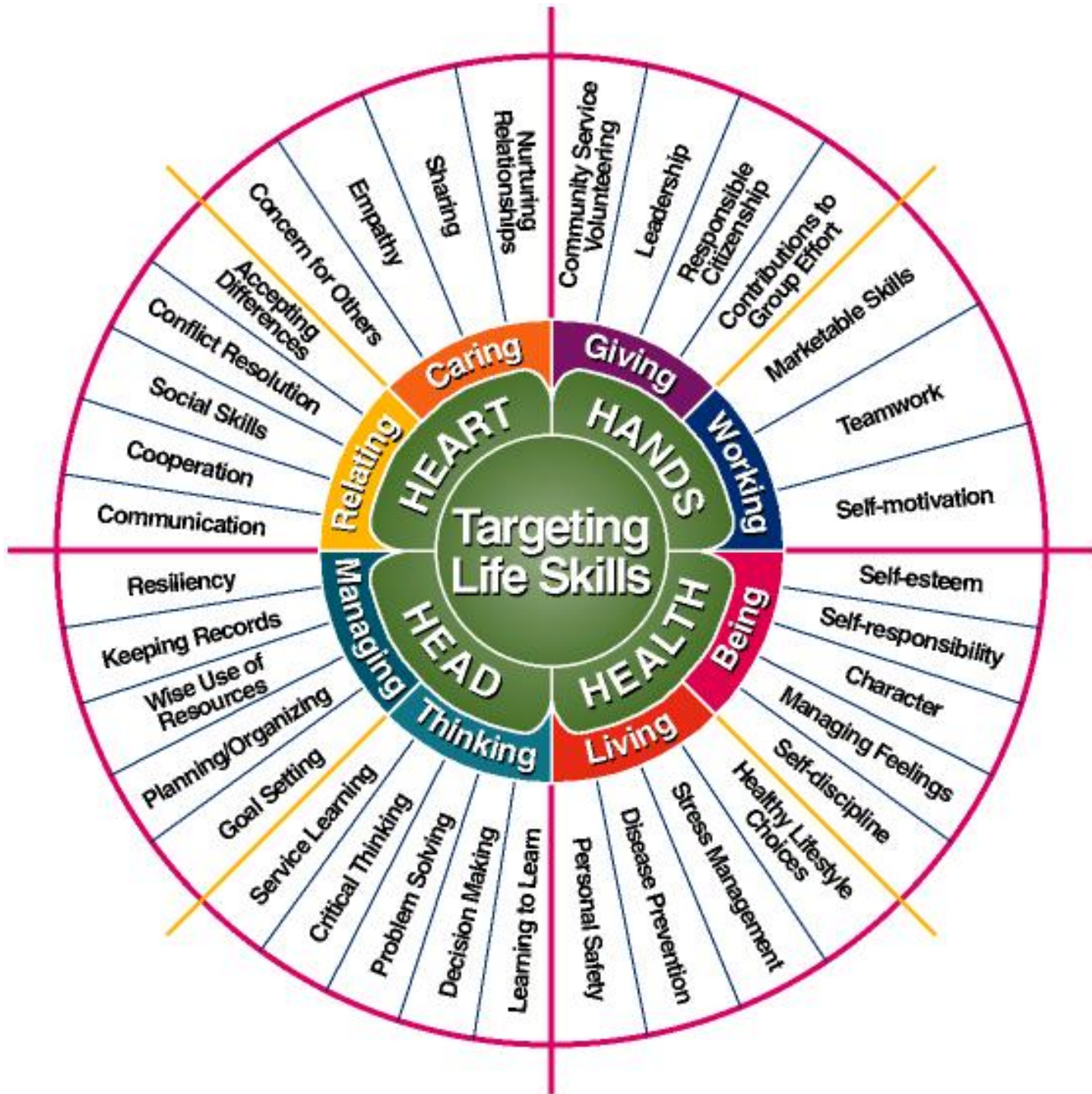


# TALKING WITH CHILDREN

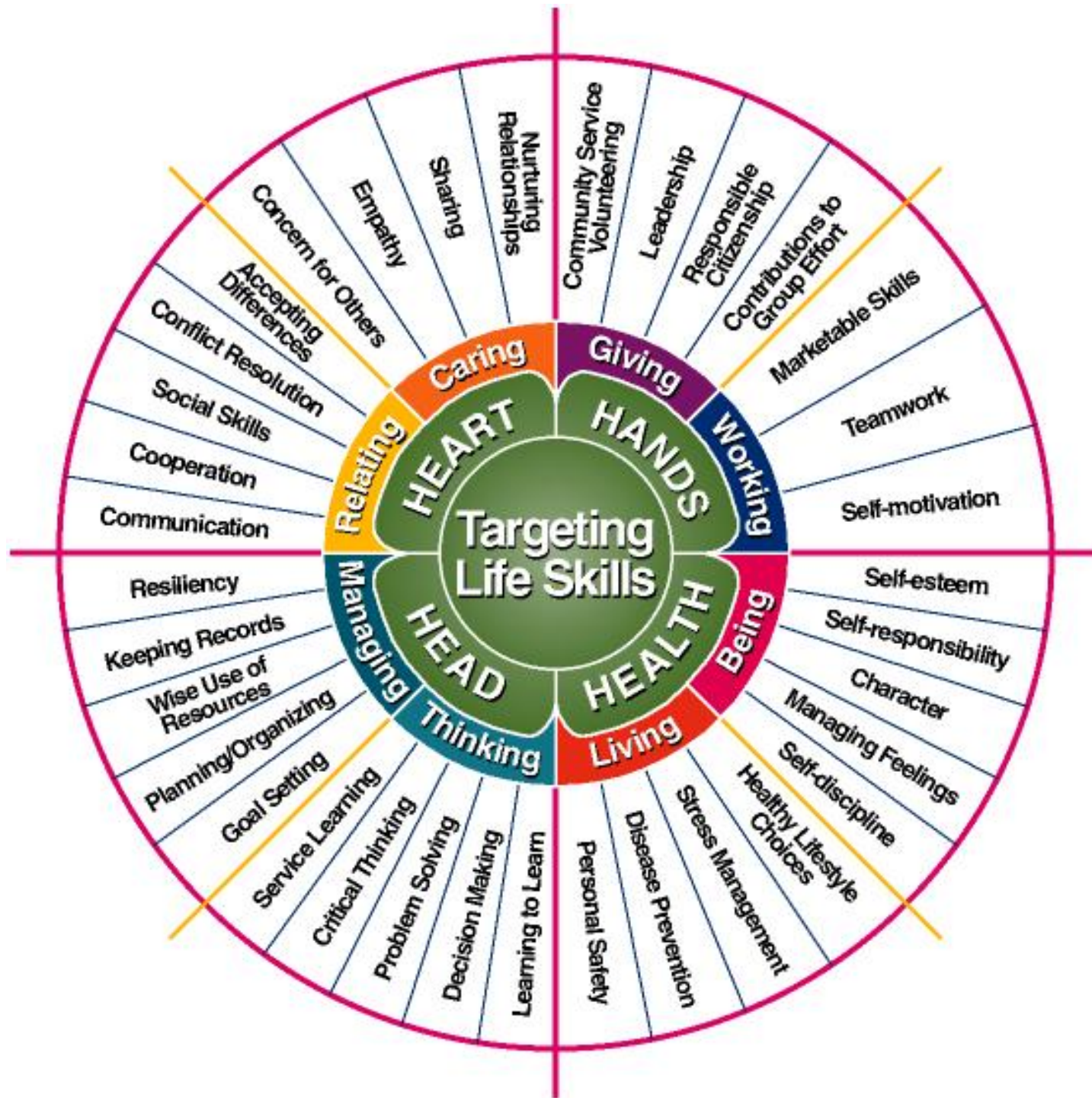
Talking with children when the talking gets tough

- **Don't assume that the kids don't know about it.**  
They probably know more than you think. Not talking about (disasters and tragedies) does not protect children. In fact, you may communicate that the subject is taboo and that you are unavailable if you remain silent.
- **Be available and "askable."**  
Let kids know that it is OK to talk about the unpleasant events. Listen to what they think and feel. You do not need to explain more than they are ready to hear, but be willing to answer their questions.
- **Share your feelings.**  
Tell young people if you feel afraid, angry or frustrated. It can help them to know that others also are upset by the events. You also can tell them about how you deal with the feelings. Be careful not to overwhelm them or expect them to find answers for you.
- **Help children use creative outlets like art and music to express their feelings.**  
Children may not be comfortable or skilled with words, especially in relation to difficult situations. Using art, puppets, music or books might help children open up about their reactions. They may want to draw pictures and then destroy them, or they could want to display them or end them to someone else. Be flexible and listen.
- **Reassure young people and help them feel safe.**  
When tragic events occur, children may be afraid that the same will happen to them. Some young children may even think that it already did happen to them. It is important to let them know that they are not at risk - if they are not. Try to be realistic as you reassure them, however. You can try to support them and protect them, but you cannot keep all bad things from happening to children. You can always tell them that you love them, though. You can say that, no matter what happens, your love will be with them. That is realistic, and often that is all the children need to feel better.
- **Support children's concern for people they do not know.**  
Children often are afraid not only for themselves, but also for people they do not even know. Explore ways to help others and ease the pain.
- **Look for feelings beyond fear.**  
After reassuring kids, don't stop there. Studies have shown that children also may feel sad or angry. Let them express that full range of emotions. Support the development of caring and empathy.
- **Help children and youth find a course of action.**  
One important way to reduce stress is to take action. This is true for both adults and children. The action may be very simple or more complex. Children may not want to write a letter to someone about their feelings, get involved in an organization committed to preventing events like the one they are dealing with, or send money to help victims or interventionists. Let the young people help to identify the action choices. They may have wonderful ideas.
- **Take action and get involved in something.**  
It is not enough to let children take action by themselves. Children who know that their parents, teachers or significant caregivers are working to make a difference feel hope. They feel safer and more positive about the future. So do something. It will make you feel more hopeful, too. And hope is one of the most valuable gifts we can give children and ourselves.

Source: University of Maryland Extension



Iowa State 4-H Youth Development – Targeting Life Skills Model  
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Iowa State 4-H Youth Development – Targeting Life Skills Model  
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# The Seven Development Needs of Young Adolescents

## A Checklist for Youth Programs

The Center for Early Adolescence in North Carolina has identified seven developmental needs which appear to be central in the growth of 10-15 year olds. Although they are not absolute or necessarily exhaustive in their description of young adolescents, the seven needs provide a very useful checklist framework for the analysis of youth program.

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY.** Because they are growing faster than any other time in their lives except infancy, young adolescents need to move. They will squirm and fidget when they do try to sit still. Not being active is often interpreted as boredom. Giving them active things to do and excusing their inability to sit still are ways of recognizing the need for physical activity.

**COMPETENCE and ACHIEVEMENT.** Young adolescents have a strong desire to do things well and to be recognized for their accomplishments. They are very self-conscious, so rewards mean everything, and embarrassment and failure are devastating. Making success too difficult is a problem. Providing opportunities for achievable success, especially situations in which everyone can succeed in his or her own unique way, can help to meet this need.

**SELF-DEFINITION.** Because of the rapid changes that characterize the teen years, young adolescents spend a good deal of time trying to figure out who they are. They need opportunities to explore being an adolescent instead of a child, belonging to the gender, race, ethnic group, or other social category in which they fit, and what their new physical and mental abilities will allow them to do. Providing for the exploration of a variety of ideas, skills, crafts, volunteer activities, careers, and games will facilitate growth in this area and help young people avoid dangerous risk-taking as a means of self-definition.

**CREATIVE EXPRESSION.** During adolescence, young people begin to identify what makes them unique or individually creative, whether it is written, played, grown, painted or performed. Although not all young people are artistic or musical, all young people can create something unique and special. Excellent youth programs help young people find that creative outlet in which each can shine.

**POSITIVE SOCIAL INTERACTIONS WITH PEERS and ADULTS.** Most adults recognize and accept the fact that young people need to have positive interaction and friendships with other young people, but they are skeptical about young people's desire to be with adults. But young people themselves admit their parents, families, and other adults remain of primary importance in setting values and giving affection. The best programs offer accessible and responsible adults with whom the young people can interact, and they provide interaction with peers that is support and builds social skills.

**STRUCTURE and CLEAR LIMITS.** Young people want to know what the expectations are for their behavior and what they may and may not do. If the structure is too loose, they will not know what to expect and will react out of sense of insecurity. If the rules are clear, they may, and probably will, test them, but they want and expect consistent reinforcement of those rules. They are also under the influence of the “personal fable” that “it can’t happen to me.” At this age, however, they want and can handle participation in defining those limits and setting the structure.

**MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION.** Good youth programs are designed WITH young people, not for them. As they near adulthood, the experience of taking responsibility for programs in which they participate helps to develop adult skills and increases commitment to the programs. In addition, young people at this age begin to develop heartfelt commitments to causes and to social service. Although their commitments are likely to be short-term, allowing them a chance to participate meaningfully in their communities by doing social service projects, volunteering, or serving on advisory boards will help both the adolescents and their communities.

Programs for young people that have achieved national recognition have been shown to use these guidelines, either consciously or unconsciously. The best programs address a large number of the needs. The Center for Early Adolescence will define a program as “good” as long as it meets the needs of young people in at least four areas, with two of those areas, Positive Social Interaction with Peers and Adults and Structure and Clear Limits, be nonnegotiable. “Excellent” programs take into account the other needs, although they may not meet them directly.

Adapted from an article for News and Views, the official publication of the National Association of Extension 4-H Agents, by Judith Myers-Walls, Extension Specialist, Human Development, Purdue University, 1988.

# Youth's Bill of Rights

1. Stand by us, not over us. Give us the feeling that we are not alone in the world, that we can always count on your when we are in trouble.
2. Make us feel that we are loved and wanted. We want to love you, not as a duty but because you love us.
3. Train us by being affectionately firm. You really will achieve more with us through patient teaching than by punishment or preaching. Say "NO" when you feel you have to explain your rules; don't merely impose them.
4. Bring us up so that we will not always need you. Teach us to take on responsibility and become independent of you. We will learn this faster and better if you will let us question you, your ideas, and standards.
5. Don't act shocked when we do things we shouldn't. It is going to take us time to learn how to grow into life properly.
6. Try to be as consistent as possible. If you are mixed up about what you want from us, why shouldn't we be mixed up, too, in what we give you.
7. Don't try to make us feel inferior. We doubt ourselves enough without your confirming it. Predicting failure to us won't help us succeed.
8. Say "nice work" when we do something really well. Don't hold back the praise when we deserve it. That's the way to spur us on.
9. Show respect for our wishes even if you disagree with them. Respect for you will flow naturally from your respect for us.
10. Give us direct answers to direct questions. But don't give us more than we ask or can understand. When you don't know, say so, but find someone for us who does know.
11. Show an interest in what we're doing. Even though by your standards our activities may not be important or interesting, don't reduce them in our eyes by your indifference.
12. Treat us if we are normal, even when our conduct seems peculiar to you. All God's children have problems. That doesn't mean we're all problem children.
13. Sometimes all of us run into serious emotional difficulties. Should this happen, obtain for us professional counseling. It isn't always for boys and girls to understand themselves or know just what they want. That's why there are specialists in personal adjustments and vocational selection.

14. Teach us by example. “What you are speaks louder than your words.”
15. Treat each one of us as a person in his own right. Children are people – not carbon copies of grownups. Treat all children in your care fairly; that is, as of equal value to you. That is how we will learn to respect the rights of other people and to treat them fairly.
16. Don’t keep us young too long. We want a chance to prove what we can do as soon as we are ready to give proof. Don’t hold us back by love which overprotects and paralyzes.
17. We need fun and companionship. Help us share our interests and happy feelings with groups of friends. Give us time to be with them and make them welcome when they come to visit.
18. Make us feel that our homes belong to us. We are at least as important as the furniture. Don’t protect “things” at our expense by making us feel like intruding bulls in a china shop.
19. Permit us the failings of average children, just as we permit you the failings of average parents. Let us both break the rules sometimes.
20. Prepare us to lead our lives, not yours. Find out what we can do or we want to be before you force us beyond our capacity or make us become what you want us to become.
21. Give us the right to a major voice in our own lives. Decisions that will affect our whole future should be made with us, not for us. We have a right to our kind of future.