

# MEETING 1: INTRODUCTIONS, DEFINING CIVILITY, COUNTY ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

## Objectives of Meeting 1

- ❖ Teambuilding
- ❖ Build group agreement
- ❖ Learn about the KYG conference
- ❖ Hand out registration materials
- ❖ Learn about civil discourse
- ❖ Identify local issues the delegation will consider addressing for its project

1. **The meeting essentials**
2. **Civil discourse**
3. **Using media to inform on a local topic**

## Activity 1: Introductions and Teambuilding

Use an icebreaker/teambuilding activity; either the one listed below or one of your own.

Have 4-H members pick partners, interview each other using the following questions, and then introduce your partner to the group.

- a) What is your name?
- b) Why are you interested in attending this conference?
- c) What do you want to learn?
- d) What can you contribute to this group?

## Activity 2: Overview of the KYG Program

Share about the 4-H Know Your Government Program from your experience or the information shared in this curriculum. Also, refer to the **Tentative Conference Agenda in the Handouts Section on page 5**.

Discuss the mission of KYG found on **page 4 of the Curriculum Introduction Section**.

*'KYG is designed to help 4-Hers learn more about our government process. The focus of this conference is the relationship between citizenship and media, researching issues and civil discourse.'*

Also, discuss the educational objectives for KYG and for this specific conference found also on **page 4 of the Curriculum Introduction Section**.

Ask students to consider these goals as they head into building a group agreement.

Refer to **page 12 of the Curriculum Introduction Section** to discuss the project you will be working on at the county level. Your delegation will be researching a local topic and creating posts on a blog, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter to educate the rest of the delegation on your topic. You will read about the local issues chosen by other counties and post questions or reactions on the various types of media.

During the sessions, delegates will be in groups with people from other counties researching and producing media posts about a topic assigned to them. In the various sessions, delegates will work

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together to research, write posts, create videos, take pictures, post these products using different types of media (blog, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and respond to other groups' posts.

The new delegates may want to hear from the experienced delegates about the agenda items that are not related to sessions. Have your delegates who have attended KYG before to talk about Challenge, County Night Out, County Meetings, Legislative Reception, Community Service, etc.

Discuss registration process and fundraising ideas. Tell them when the forms and money need to be returned by and remind them that you need them returned promptly because the County 4-H Office must sign them before they are sent to WSU.

## Activity 3: Building a Group Agreement

Distribute one note card per participant.

Tell them the following directions:

- Write these words on the note card:
  - “hopes” on one side
  - “fears” on the other side
  - Do not write names on the note cards
- On the side that has “hopes,” have participants write a response to this question:
  - *What are your hopes for what would have to happen to make the Know Your Government sessions a terrific experience?*
- On the side that has “fears,” have participants write a response to this question:
  - *What are your fears of what could happen that would make the Know Your Government sessions a terrible experience?*
- Collect and redistribute the cards. Do not worry if someone gets their own card. Have them go around in a circle and read the hopes listed on the card, writing them on flipchart paper. Then go around a second time and have them read the fears; again writing them on flipchart paper.
- Developing their group agreement
  - Building from the lists they have formed, have them come up with behaviors, attitudes, or actions that build on the “terrifics” and avoid the “terribles.”
  - Have suggestions to combining principles and narrowing the list down to five or less
  - Have a student re-write the group agreement and have everyone sign or stamp their finger print on the agreement- committing themselves to follow these guideline for the positive benefit of each member and for the whole group.
  - Bring to the KYG Conference for use during county meetings.
- As a reminder, here is the list of ground rules shared at the training at Leaders' Forum in October. Source: Glen Singleton's Courageous Conversations About Race
  - Speak your truth
  - Stay engaged
  - Expect to experience discomfort
  - Be aware of intent, own your impact
  - Accept and expect non-closure
  - Remain open to new thinking

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## Activity 4: Text, Talk, Revive Civility

Goal: To enhance civil discourse and listening skills in middle and high school students

### Objectives

After participating in this activity, young people will be able to:

- Define civility
- Discuss how to disagree respectfully
- Listen to another person's perspective on an issue and repeat it back
- Explain why being able to listen for understanding can help them better interact with other's who think differently than they do
- Engage in a respectful, productive exchange with people who think differently

Form small groups of 4-5 people with one cell phone. TEXT: CIVILITY to 89800

Have the groups follow the prompts. For your information, a script of the text conversation is included in the **Handouts Section on pages 7-9**.

## Activity 5: Brainstorming for Your County Issue

**Investigate:** Select an issue that is important to you and the members of your community.

- What conditions or problems have you seen, heard, read about, or experienced, that sparked your interest or curiosity, concerned you, or made you feel empathetic?
- Identify if the conditions or problems are connected to a bigger issue. **Example: community is debating building a swimming pool for their youth. Bigger issue – kids do not have anything constructive to do outside of school.**
- What is addressed in your local newspaper? On your local ballot? In the city council or school board meetings?

Write ideas on the board. If you have more than one idea, assign delegates to research the different topics and bring information to Meeting 2. As a group, determine how a topic will be chosen. What process will be used by the group? Majority vote, consensus, drawn from a hat, etc.

## Activity 6: Plan to be respectful

During the texting activity, one of the questions asked how you would respond when someone disagrees with you. Bullying, harassment, and name calling are frequent occurrences when discussing politics and controversial social issues.

It is essential that we learn and practice how to respect someone's humanity, even when we do not agree with their opinions and values. This means we do not:

1. Label or categorize people based on their beliefs;
2. Call people derogatory names or insult them as a person; or
3. Dismiss someone who has opposing opinions.

To better understand each other's opinions and experiences, we must learn to listen to one other. We can disagree with someone's ideas and not label them based on those ideas.

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Take two minutes to write out a plan for how you will respond the next time you hear or see someone making uncivil remarks. Pair up with someone and share your plan and provide feedback for five minutes. Get back into the group and share ideas for ten minutes.

You may say to them that you welcome diverse opinions, but you will not permit name calling or belittling. When you hear, or see people name calling, point out the behavior and ask them to stop. Hold yourself to the same standard. Review and share this infographic on Fostering Civility on Social Media.

**(Handouts Section on page 6)**

Here are suggestions from Dr Carolyn Lukensmeyer, Exec Director, National Institute for Civil Discourse

1. Practice staying calm (plan ahead, breathe and take breaks, remember intent vs impact, practice acceptance)
2. Approach with curiosity (Be curious, not judgemental. Walt Whitman)
3. Practice active listening (Pay attention, ask open ended questions, ask probing questions, request clarification, paraphrase, tune into the feelings, summarize)
4. Agree to disagree (When we agree to disagree, we honor the relationship above trying to change the person)
5. Find areas of agreement (Heal the division... Focus on that which unites us, rather than that which divides us. Sadiq Khan)

## Activity 7: Life Skill Selection and Commitment

Explain the importance of developing life skills through this civic experience. **This is what 4H is all about!** We are intentionally focusing this year on **Critical Thinking** and **Self Responsibility** and ultimately **Positive Citizenship**. The curriculum will provide numerous opportunities to discuss these skills, how to use and develop them, and when we see them being practiced.

### Discuss:

- Define critical thinking and self-responsibility. How do they look when they are practiced?
- Describe someone you have seen with these skills.
- When do you use these skills?

### Reflect:

1. What is one thing you learned through Meeting 1's activities that will strengthen your critical thinking skills? Your ability to be self-responsible?
2. How was that personally valuable? In what ways?
3. Now where can you practice getting better at either of these skills before our next meeting? Can you commit to it?
4. What have you learned about positive citizenship from through the material presented today?
5. Now where can you practice positive citizenship in school or your community to "Make the Best Better," till our next meeting?

## Activity 8: Compliments and Closing

### At the end of Meeting 1

**Compliments:** Spend a minute 'praising' your delegates as a group. You might recognize their

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attentiveness, creative ideas, willingness to share, diligent work or great attitudes.

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## *Tentative Conference Agenda*

### **Saturday**

3:00 – 5:00 Check in  
3:30 – 5:00 **Session A – Getting acquainted**  
5:00 – 5:30 Room Check in  
5:30 – 7:15 Dinner, Welcome, Speaker,  
7:15 – 7:30 Break  
7:30 – 8:30 **Chaperone meeting**  
7:30 – 8:30 **Challenge**  
8:45 – 9:30 County Meeting  
10:00 In your own room – quiet

### **Sunday**

Breakfast on your own  
8:00 – 9:30 **Session B**  
9:30 - 9:45 Break  
9:45-10:45 **Session C**  
11:00-12:00 **Session D**  
12:00-1:30 Lunch  
1:45 - 2:45 **Session E**  
2:45 – 3:00 Break  
3:00 – 4:30 **Session F**  
4:30 – 8:00 County Night Out  
8:00 – 9:00 **Session G**  
9:15 – 9:45 County Meeting  
10:00 In your own room – quiet

### **Monday**

Breakfast on your own  
8:15 – 10:15 **Session H**  
10:15 – 10:45 Break  
10:45 – 12:30 **Community Service**  
12:30 – 1:30 Lunch  
1:45 – 4:00 **Capitol Tours**  
4:00 -- 5:00 Dinner Prep  
5:30 – 7:30 **Legislative Reception**  
7:30 – 8:00 Break  
8:00 – 10:00 **Dance, Movie, Game Room**  
10:15–10:45 County Meeting  
11:00 In your own room – quiet

### **Tuesday**

8:30 – 10 **Session H – Wrap Up**

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## FOSTERING CIVILITY ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Here are some tips to stay respectful on social media.

### CHECK FOR ACCURACY

We are often in such a hurry that we share stories when we see them posted by a trusted source or based on their titles alone. In today's age of negative and false news, that is not enough. Before you share any information, make sure the story is true and accurate. Take a few moments to read the entire story and check included facts.



### AVOID INSULTS & NAME CALLING

Never say anything on social media that you would not feel comfortable saying to someone in person. Separate people's opinions from who they are as a person. Avoid name calling, insults, or labeling. Before posting, consider whether your story/comment contributes to civility or to incivility.

### SEEK INFORMATION FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Research reveals that our media feeds are filled with information based on sites we already prefer. This can lead to having a singular viewpoint about issues. It is important to read and to be open to news from various media sources and posts from people with differing opinions on social and political issues.



### WALK AWAY

When you see something on social media that upsets you - pause. Do not immediately respond. Instead, step away and take time to think if there is a response that would contribute to civil discourse. For example, is it true? Helpful? Necessary? Remember you do not always have to comment.

### SPREAD RESPECT

Share information about the role of civility and respect in promoting constructive conversations. Highlight instances of civility and respect. Sign the pledge to Revive Civility. Be an example for others by demonstrating respectful dialogue.



REVIVECIVILITY.ORG



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## Text, Talk, Revive Civility

### Text Messaging Script

Audience: Middle and High School Students

**Goal:** To enhance civil discourse and listening skills in middle and high school students

### Objectives

After participating in this activity, young people will be able to:

- Define civility
- Discuss how to disagree respectfully
- Listen to another person's perspective on an issue and repeat it back
- Explain why being able to listen for understanding can help them better interact with others who think differently than they do
- Engage in a respectful, productive exchange with people who think differently

### SCRIPT

Form small groups of 4-5 people with one cell phone. TEXT: CIVILITY to 89800

1. Welcome to Text Talk Revive Civility!

Are you in middle or high school? If so, reply by texting SCHOOL. We have a special conversation just for you! Otherwise, reply by texting ADULT.

2. Let's talk about civility and respect, and how we can use these values to hold civil conversations with people who think differently.

Text R1 to continue

3. This conversation will take about an hour. Your group will receive a series of text messages that will guide you through the conversation.

Text R2 to continue

4. If you're holding the phone, read each message to your group, give them time to discuss, and summarize your group's responses.

**Text R3**

5. Note: you may receive 2 texts at the same time. Be sure to read the first one (1/2) before the second (2/2). Sometimes they will arrive in the opposite order.

Text R4

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6. Before we talk about civility, let's define it!

Civility is the ability to disagree with others while respecting their sincerity and decency.  
Text R5

7. The opposite of civility is incivility. According to our research, most people agree incivility includes threatening physical harm and using racial, religious, ethnic or sexual slurs.  
Text R6

8. Discuss (5 min): In discussing something you care deeply about, why is it hard to talk to people with different points of view?  
Text R7

9. Discuss (5 min) Talk about a time when you disagreed with another person on an issue. How did it make you feel?  
Text R8

10. In a tense situation, have you noticed your heart beating faster, your breathing become irregular, or your face or body feel warmer?  
Text R9

11. These normal physical reactions can make it harder to remain civil and think clearly. Remember to pause, take deep breaths, and respond kindly.  
Text R10

12. When we are attached to our ideas, we can feel personally attacked when our ideas are in question. We can talk about ideas without making it personal.  
Text R11

13. Brainstorm (5 min): How can you respectfully disagree with someone and still share your perspective?  
Text R12

14. Sharing ideas is a two way street. Let's learn how to listen to others the way we want to be listened to. Watch this video: <http://bit.ly/ReallyListen>  
Text R13

15. 15 min: Now let's practice active listening. Divide into groups of two. Click this link for instructions on the activity: <http://bit.ly/TTRCActivity>  
Text R14

16. 5 min: Was it hard to actively listen and not respond with your own perspective? Did you learn something new about your partner's perspective?  
Text R15

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17. We don't have to change our values and beliefs to act civilly toward others. But by listening to others, we can enhance our understanding of that person's values, allowing us to feel more tolerance and empathy towards others.

Text R16

18. Watch this short video:

<http://bit.ly/HowtoDisagree>

Text R17

19. In the video, Kid President says that it is ok to disagree – but in doing so, we don't have to be mean and make everyone feel terrible.

Text R18

20. Go around your group: Next time someone disagrees with you, how will you respond?  
Text R19 plus your group's answers (e.g. R19 speak up, be kind, consider other's feelings)

21. What are ways to revive civility in our school and community? Share your ideas here <https://goo.gl/oOMoQ0> to help revive civility in your community.

Text R20

22. Civility challenge! In the next two weeks, listen to conversations around you and take note of the ways in which people are civil/uncivil.

Text R21

23. Are you each willing to commit to doing the civility challenge in the next two weeks?

Yes, most of us

Yes, half of us

No, none of us

Text R22 plus your group's answer (e.g. R22 Yes most of us)

24. Almost done! Have your group members write down this link of civility resources to check out later: <http://bit.ly/civilityresource>

Text R23

25. Thank you for participating in Text, Talk, Revive Civility!

Please help make this conversation even better by completing this short, 5 minute survey:

[https://dickinson.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_dprMgl0FFbdw0QZ](https://dickinson.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dprMgl0FFbdw0QZ)