

National 4-H Curriculum Survey And National 4-H Council Interview Results

What we learned from those who use our curriculum:

Almost all surveyed said that

- The most important elements to consider when setting priorities for which curriculum to develop are “cool” topics that will interest kids, usefulness, and employment of several delivery methods
- Curriculum content should be up-to-date and relevant
 - Guides should look less like a textbook; ie. more exciting and colorful with lots of activities
- When ordering curriculum, it is somewhat to very important to those selecting curriculum that it is peer-reviewed and carries the “reviewed and recommended” seal of approval
- Life skills, lists of additional resources, experiential learning models, process questions, structured goals, and achievement levels are some of the “givens” that should be included in the 4-H curriculum
- It is somewhat to very important that we have some national curriculum products for use in all states
 - National curriculum focuses on projects that nearly all states can use
 - Eliminates duplication efforts in states; offers a high quality, consistent, and uniform product; and it meets a need the states cannot fill
- Strong subject matter content, ease of adaptability to many delivery modes, low cost, and youth-focused manuals must be hallmarks of the curriculum

Most surveyed said that

- Curriculum should be distributed through a variety of media, including hard copy, web, CD or DVD, audio or video downloads, podcasts, online training, blogs, a national directory, and online communities
- A minimum of one year (or a full 4-H program year cycle) is a realistic length of time for pilot-testing new curriculum products
 - This testing should take place in at least five states
- The greatest strengths of the current 4-H curriculum are their life skills emphasis, attractiveness, and leader activity guides

Some surveyed said that

- The greatest limitation identified with the current 4-H curriculum is the subject matter content
- 3 to 5 new and revised curriculum products should be produced each year
- The biggest drawback to having a standardized national 4-H curriculum is that it provides only a generic curriculum that is not specific to a region or state
- During service delivery, a modification of the multiple levels was used, based on the “scope and sequence” of planned learning and advancement
 - By doing so, some of the members progressed quickly at their own pace while others stayed with one book their entire time in 4-H
- Criteria or standards should be different for different types of products
- The peer or jury-review process is very important in most cases
- Curriculum should offer more in-depth content for older youth
- In practice, they supplement the curriculum guides with other matter-specific information