

EFNEP and 4-H: Success and Challenges – A Brainstorming Session (March 16, 2016)

On March 16, 2016, Tekila Gray (Program Analyst, Planning, Accountability and Reporting Staff, National Institute of Food and Agriculture) and Toija Riggins (National Program Leader, Division of Youth and 4-H, National Institute of Food and Agriculture) conducted an EFNEP/4-H Partnership think tank with eight state Extension professionals. These professionals were asked to share their opinions of EFNEP/4-H partnerships during the discussion and on a response sheet. Their responses, shared both during the discussion and on the response sheet, are below.

What are your successes in collaborations among EFNEP and 4-H staff?

- We have partnered with 4-H for the last three summers to conduct EFNEP youth programs. With funding from National 4-H Council – Walmart grant, we had youth health ambassadors. ^a
- Working together, not in silos, everyone in the community works together on how best to meet the needs of the youth and families. Only working in a couple of communities at this time. ^a
- Collaborating for short-term programs held on common grounds – university campus. ^a
- Don't have a collaboration yet. ^a
- Partnered with 4-H grant because they had a Walmart grant, the partnership added health ambassadors the first year; the second year, 4-H was able to give money and the 4-H ambassadors, these ambassadors range in age of 13 – 18, most were 13 and 14; the ambassadors were initially allowed to do the physical activity part and some expanded their duties, some ambassadors came from EFNEP recipient families; the partnership will continue, though funding is lower; the younger kids look up to the teens
- What worked best: both entities brought a piece to the table, the 4-H collaborator was easy to work with, they did a great job working with youth and trained staff on how to work with youth.
- Had college interns, teens, and paraprofessionals working together to work with the kids, more hands-on activities (food prep), were able to work with upward bound youth; we had health ambassadors too but what worked best is the multi-generational influence; should consider youth participatory research; should evaluate the influence of the multi-generational approach
- There is no competition because both groups are working together
- Instructors taught the youth skills that were taken home, the kids brought home their cooked meals, we were able to connect with the parents
- A group of students worked at one site and they took their knowledge with them to school and shared what they learned
- One of the best farmers offered paraprofessionals \$50 - \$200 to purchase beef and educate others about healthy ways of cooking beef, 4-H was asked to join the opportunity
- There is a 4-H club that participates, they are educated about nutrition and we learn about 4-H leadership
- Mutual sharing of staff, knowledge, and funding

What are your challenges?

- Evaluation!!! 2 different systems ^a
- A willingness to share and realize working together increases reach and improvements along with opportunities for the youth. ^a

- Defined boundaries between the two program – who is responsible for program activities, implementation, and evaluation leadership^a
- Lack of consistency of 4-H clubs.^a
- 4-H brings in money that they're not willing to share, programs not reaching same targets^a
- The state 4-H program focuses on STEM and the kids having final projects, we haven't found a way to partner. Also we have found it challenging to keep the kids for several lessons so we could conduct evaluations^a
- Audience disparity (4-H in NM may not serve many low-income populations), evaluation disparity (4-H asks for information EFNEP does not) – currently 4-H asks for EFNEP numbers but offers nothing in return^a
- 4-H focuses on STEM model and EFNEP is not sure how they can partner with that model, there are limited opportunities and matches of programs regarding STEM; the willingness is there but we are not sure how to partner
- Challenges with understanding different program policies and changes in curriculum; struggle with which curriculum to use; there are audiences that we cannot serve; conflicting/competing evaluation tools
- Conflicts with evaluation tools; 4-H wants to change the tools, for example: have tried changing response values

What would your ideal partnership with 4-H look like?

- Share what each are doing^a
- Partner to reach the youth instead of trying to compete for the same youth^a
- The end result is that we are enhancing each other^a
- EFNEP comes in the fold of 4-H activities as EFNEP, four core areas are part of 4-H's mission versus the other way around. Provide EFNEP's direct nutrition education within 4-H's youth clubs and use this opportunity to recruit parents for EFNEP lessons – yet no consistent 4-H program exists; 4-H to access EFNEP's audience^a
- Would like some flexibility in trying to develop a joint program. 4-H staff are pretty rigid in their model^a
- Need a common EFNEP/4-H curriculum.^a
- Ideally 4-H could be encouraged to serve EFNEP-appropriate audiences, with a collaboration of evaluation tools that meets the EFNEP mandate. This partnership must be a fair exchange, a "win-win"^a
- Commitment to relationship, planning for long term influence of the program
- Buy-in is a challenge
- There needs to be better communication between the two programs, we are both trying to address similar issues with different approaches
- Develop a common time frame, evaluation measures, and curriculum; challenges with double counting
- Who is reporting what, when, and how often
- In the past, the local 4-H program asked for our data. We do not know how the data were used. Data sharing is only happening one way
- Because 4-H is perceived as the youth development program leader for cooperative extension, some people think it is the source for youth development data

Can you provide examples of other successful partnerships that may serve as a model?

- EFNEP and SNAP-Ed in states complement each other ^a
- Any EFNEP program that has partnered with 4-H. Common curriculum used by both 4-H and EFNEP ^a
- We would love to see a youth ambassador program as was described in this meeting, hearing the other states' stories is very inspirational ^a
- We collaborated with SNAP-Ed

Contact Information:

Name	Email	Phone
Kimberly Wilson-Sweebe	Kimberly.wilson-sweebe@sdstate.edu	605-688-4440
Tanisha Afflagne	taflagne@triton.uog.edu	671-735-2026
Maizy Wilson	WilsonM@unce.unr.edu	702-257-5507
Maris Stevenson	mjs@nmsu.edu	315-278-5773
Lisa Morales	Lisa.morales1@upr.edu	787-462-2073

Note:

^a - Responses shared on paper

Responses from total of 8 participants