



COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT Connection

ISSUE 006 - MARCH 2024



COUNTY EXTENSION AGENT
CONNECTION

MAKE PLANS TO JOIN US!

CEA CONNECTION

-  **In Person @ District Office** **MAR 19**
Topics: Volunteer & Youth Buy-in to your program
-  **Virtual Via Teams** **MAY 23**
Topics: Putting your planning to work for you
-  **In-Person Location TBD** **SEPT 19**
Topics: Creating Committees, Working with Officer Groups, & Making sure the boxes are checked
-  **Virtual via Teams** **NOV 14**
Topics: Creating partnerships & telling your program story

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mental Health Awareness

Recognize your Volunteers

Tying real life to 4-H projects

Meet your Coworkers

Resources of the month

Navigating Mental Health During the Stock Show Season: A Guide for County Extension Agents

In the whirlwind of stock show season, where the excitement and demands can stretch both time and energy thin, it's crucial for county extension agents to remember one key aspect of their well-being: mental health. Juggling the responsibilities of mentoring, organizing events, and supporting participants can be immensely rewarding, yet equally taxing.

Prioritize Self-Care: Amidst the hustle, self-care often takes a backseat. However, integrating simple self-care practices into your daily routine can significantly impact your mental health. This could be as straightforward as ensuring you get enough sleep, eat nutritious meals, or take short walks between shows. Remember, caring for yourself is not a luxury; it's a necessity for maintaining your energy and enthusiasm throughout the season.

Set Realistic Expectations: Accept that you can't do everything perfectly. Set achievable goals and remind yourself that it's okay to delegate tasks, leaning more on your volunteers and office staff to keep the program running at home. Acknowledging your limits and setting realistic expectations can prevent burnout and keep stress levels manageable.

Build a Support Network: Lean on your colleagues and volunteers for support. Stock show season provides a lot of opportunity for you to network and fellowship with your fellow agents. Sharing responsibilities, experiences, and even concerns with trusted individuals can lighten your load and provide valuable perspectives. A supportive community can also offer encouragement and understanding, reminding you that you're not alone in this journey.

Take Time to Unwind: Find activities outside of work that relax and rejuvenate you. Whether it's taking the time you need in between shows to take care of your personal life, walking through the exhibit hall, or finding that gem of a place to eat, take time to step away from the show for a moment and just breathe. These moments of leisure are vital for mental health, offering an escape and helping to recharge your batteries.

Seek Professional Help When Needed: If you find the stress overwhelming, don't hesitate to seek professional help. Talking to a mental health professional can provide strategies to manage stress and cope with the challenges you face. Remember, seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

In the end, the stock show season is a testament to the hard work and dedication of county extension agents, who play a pivotal role in the success of these events. By taking steps to care for your mental health, you ensure not only the success of the events you oversee but also your own well-being. Let's embrace this season not just with determination and resilience but also with mindfulness and self-compassion.

Thankful for you!

Megan

Recognize your Volunteers

County Extension Agents play a vital role in the 4-H program, often relying on the dedication and passion of volunteers to deliver educational opportunities to youth. Recognizing and showing appreciation for these volunteers not only boosts their morale but also ensures the sustainability of the 4-H program. Here are some effective strategies for Extension Agents to acknowledge their invaluable volunteers:

Personalized Acknowledgment: A personalized note of thanks highlighting specific contributions can make volunteers feel seen and valued.

Public Recognition: Use local media, social media, and newsletters to spotlight volunteers, sharing their stories and contributions with the community.

Appreciation Events: Host annual appreciation events or informal gatherings, like a picnic or coffee meet-up, to celebrate volunteer efforts in a social setting.

Awards and Certificates: Implement an awards system to recognize outstanding volunteers annually, offering certificates, plaques, or small tokens of appreciation.

Professional Development Opportunities: Offer workshops or training sessions as a way to invest in volunteers' personal growth and show appreciation for their commitment.

Feedback and Involvement: Actively seek volunteers' input on programs and decisions, demonstrating respect for their insights and fostering a sense of ownership.

Celebration of National Volunteer Week: Organize special activities or recognition during National Volunteer Week to join the nationwide effort in celebrating volunteerism.

Don't forget that **National Volunteer Appreciation Week is April 21-27, 2024!** What can you do to recognize those volunteers in your program?

CONNECTING 4-H PROJECTS TO REAL LIFE

How can you add in a career component to your project experiences to better connect these projects to opportunities our youth might explore in the future? Try inviting a local business person in to speak to your group. Talk to your local Chamber of Commerce to make a connection with other businesses and members in town.



Texas 4-H Workforce Preparation Project

Project Description

What do you want to be when you grow up? Want to explore careers and develop workplace skills? In this project you have the option of learning about jobs and areas of interest with a group or on your own.

This is a great way to learn the requirements for your dream job.

From exploring potential jobs to starting your own business, these activities will develop your skills and knowledge in career exploration. You will learn about career choices, meet future employers, and plan for a successful career as you:

- Learn about your dream job from an industry professional
- Tour facilities
- Develop a resume
- Practice interviewing skills

Basic

- Finding projects that are of interest to you
- Attending workshops/seminars that help you identify your interests
- Shadowing professionals
- Taking interest assessments
- Researching possible careers

Intermediate

- Interviewing professionals who work in your areas of interest
- Attending College Career Days to learn more about any further education you need for your dream profession

Advanced

- Serving as a project area Ambassador for Texas 4-H
- Interning

The Workforce & Career Prep page on the Texas 4-H website has this one-pager to help you better explain the connection between career prep and 4-H Projects.

District 8 4-H
Making the best better



MEET YOUR COWORKERS

HANNAH HOFFMAN



- 1. What is your official job title?**
 - a. CEA-FCH
- 2. How long have you been in Extension?**
 - a. 3 years on March 1st
- 3. What is your biggest program?**
 - a. My biggest program is probably our Career Exploration program with Granbury ISD's Extended School Day
- 4. What is your most favorite program?**
 - a. My favorite program is also the Extended School Day Program, the kids are so fun and are so welcoming and look forward to every time we come!
- 5. Where did you go to college?**
 - a. I went to Texas A&M University... twice lol! I just couldn't get enough 😊
- 6. What is your degree(s) in?**
 - a. I have my Bachelor of Science in Public Health and my Master of Public Health in Health Promotion and Community Health Sciences.
- 7. Who makes up your immediate family?**
 - a. My immediate family is myself, my fiancé Will and our sweet little boy, Reid.
- 8. What are you most passionate about?**
 - a. I am most passionate about working with kids, instilling healthy habits and positive work ethics at a young age so they aren't working twice as hard to break bad habits as adults.
- 9. Are you an early bird or a night owl?**
 - a. If you had asked me a year ago, definitely a night owl, but in Reid's 7 months of life I am forced into being a morning person and I'm not a fan.
- 10. When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?**
 - a. I was not a kid who knew what I wanted to be... I didn't even know what I wanted to be as a college student, hence the 5 different majors I floated through in my 4 years.
- 11. What is the most fun part of your job?**
 - a. The most fun part of my job is that it is the perfect mix of everything I love. I worked in childcare forever and didn't want to leave working with kids behind, but also knew I wanted to get into the health education world and use my degree. After a long journey, I found this job and now love every day getting to do what I think is so much fun!

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District 8 4-H

Making the best better

MEET YOUR COWORKERS

JOSH EVANS

1. What is your official job title?

a.1.County Extension Agent for Agriculture and Natural Resources in Milam County

2. How long have you been in Extension?

a.1.I have been with Extension for 7 and ½ months.

3. What is your biggest program?

a.1.The Central Texas Cow Calf Clinic which we do in conjunction with the AgriLife Extension offices of Bell, Burleson, Falls, Robertson and Williamson county.

4. What is your most favorite program?

a.1.My favorite program is the Bell-Milam Youth Agribusiness Tour!

5. Where did you go to college?

a.1.I attended Texas A&M University for both my Bachelor's and Master's degrees.

6. What is your degree(s) in?

a. Bachelor's in animal science , Bachelors in Agri Business & Masters in Agriculture

7. Who makes up your immediate family?

a.1.My immediate family consists of myself, my mom and dad, as well as an older brother, sister-in-law, a niece and a nephew

8. What are you most passionate about?

a. Cattle production; I am heavily involved in helping to grow my family's operation and love getting the chance discuss the operations of people in Milam County.

9. Are you an early bird or a night owl?

a.1.For me it depends, at the moment I am definitely a night owl!

10. When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

a.1.As a kid I was split between bull rider and baseball player.

11. What is the most fun part of your job?

a. The most fun I have is getting to spend time with the youth watching them grow into impactful members of the community



Milam Co

District 8 4-H
Making the best better



LEARNER TYPES

Kinesthetic Learners

Kinesthetic/tactile learners are those who learn best through touching, feeling and experiencing that which they are trying to learn. Kinesthetic learners prefer role plays, experiments, simulations and other hands-on activities.

Kinesthetic learners typically...

- Move around a lot
- Like to touch people they're talking to
- Tap their pencil or foot while doing schoolwork
- Enjoy physical activities
- Take frequent breaks when studying
- Do not spend a lot of time reading
- Have difficulty spelling correctly
- Like to solve problems by physically working through them
- Like to try new things
- Are coordinated and agile
- Express their feelings physically
- Dress for comfort, instead of style
- Excel in athletics and the performing arts

Educational processes for kinesthetic learners

- Create opportunities for youth to act out what they have learned—use a skit or a television commercial
- Break up a large project into several shorter projects
- Allow time for breaks
- Use dramatic scenarios for solving problems
- Encourage youth to find a place where they are comfortable—on the floor, standing or using a bean-bag chair—rather than sitting at tables and chairs
- Use field trips to have youth explore different topics
- Give instructions using physical examples
- Need manipulatives



Let's talk about learner types. The way in which a person learns significantly impacts the way they will respond to the programs you offer. Kinesthetic learners are the most common type of learners. These learners learn by doing.

As you prepare to conduct project meetings, contest trainings, adult workshops, camps, and programs in the classroom, think about ways that you can adapt your materials to better reach those who learn differently.

