

F4E4-HA Literature Award

4-H County Events Blog Post

Sale, M. L.

Situation Statement

In recent years, many families have indicated that they have not signed their children up for County Events because they either did not understand the program, or their children were nervous about speaking in public or performing in front of an audience. This blog post serves as an informative piece aimed at educating families about the benefits of 4-H County Events for youth development. The post emphasizes the impact of this event on confidence, communication skills, leadership abilities, critical thinking, personal growth, and resilience. It also addresses common concerns, such as public speaking anxiety, and provides information on the structure and advantages of participation.

Program Objectives

The primary objectives of the blog post are:

1. To provide detailed information about the structure and purpose of 4-H County Events, ensuring families understand the opportunity available for their children.
2. To motivate parents to involve their children in County Events by highlighting the benefits associated with participation.
3. To alleviate common fears by normalizing them and emphasizing the supportive environment of 4-H.

Program Implementation and Plan of Action

To achieve these objectives, the blog post addresses the benefits of County Events, the event's structure, reasons for participation, and common concerns. The blog outlines six key benefits—confidence building, communication skills, leadership development, critical thinking, personal growth, and resilience—to provide compelling reasons for participation. The post also reassures parents by acknowledging the common fear of public speaking and highlighting the supportive environment that 4-H offers. Additionally, the post gives details about how to participate in the contest, such as how to choose a topic. The blog post was shared before the registration deadline, and the link was posted on social media and sent to all families enrolled in 4-H via 4-H Online Broadcast.

Evaluation

In 2024, 46% of County Events participants were new members who had not participated in the contest in the past. This is increased from 22% new participants in 2023. Additionally, other materials created based on the content of the post were shared widely, including by other counties.

Continuation Plan

The content of this post is easily modified from year to year to be able to be used in the future. The final section of the post with registration information can be updated annually once registration information is available, and then it can be reverted to general information at the conclusion of each year's event. Additionally, other materials can be created with this same content to increase the number of families who view it.

Collaboration

In the future, the post could be used to promote the Florida 4-H Public Speaking Contest Powered by Florida Power & Light. Additionally, there could be partnerships with the public school system and private/charter schools to share this content with teachers and enrolled families to encourage their participation in public speaking events through 4-H.

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Blog Post Link:

<https://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/alachuaco/2024/03/20/4-h-county-events/>

4-H County Events



County Events can change your child's life!

1. **Confidence Building:** County Events provides a platform for youth to overcome their fear of speaking in front of others. Through practice and exposure, participants gradually build confidence in their ability to express themselves effectively.
2. **Communication Skills:** Engaging in County Events hones communication skills such as articulation, clarity, and organization of thoughts. Participants learn how to convey their ideas persuasively and connect with their audience.
3. **Leadership Development:** Public speaking is often synonymous with leadership. By participating in County Events, youth develop leadership qualities such as poise, decisiveness, and the ability to inspire and influence others.
4. **Critical Thinking:** Crafting a compelling presentation requires critical thinking skills. Youth learn how to research, analyze information, and form coherent arguments to support their viewpoints.
5. **Personal Growth:** County Events fosters personal growth by pushing youth outside their comfort zones. Overcoming challenges, receiving feedback, and striving for improvement contribute to their overall development.
6. **Resilience:** Not every presentation will be perfect, but learning to bounce back from setbacks is an essential life skill. Youth develop resilience as they face challenges, adapt to feedback, and continue to refine their speaking abilities.

If all of this sounds like something you want for your child, you may have some questions.

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How does County Events work?

County Events provide a dynamic platform for youth to showcase their talents. On the day of the event, participants will present their prepared speeches or demonstrations. Each presenter will have the opportunity to share their insights with a panel of judges, followed by Share-the-Fun where talents are showcased.

Why should my child participate?

Participating in County Events offers numerous benefits for your child's personal and academic growth. Alumni consistently rank public speaking as the number one skill they learned in 4-H. By participating, your child will cultivate resilience, confidence, and effective communication skills that will serve them well throughout their lives.

What if my child is nervous?

It's completely normal for children to feel nervous about public speaking. In fact, public speaking consistently ranks as the top fear among Americans. However, County Events provides a supportive environment for children to overcome their fears and develop invaluable skills.

What is a Demonstration?

A Demonstration is a presentation that illustrates how to do something. It allows participants to showcase their expertise in a particular subject matter by providing practical demonstrations and explanations.

What is an Illustrated Talk?

An Illustrated Talk is a presentation accompanied by visual aids that educates or persuades the audience on a specific topic. It allows participants to convey their message effectively using images, props, or multimedia presentations.

What is Share-the-Fun?

Share-the-Fun is a talent showcase where participants can showcase their talents in various forms, including singing, dancing, playing instruments, and more. It's a fantastic opportunity for children to express themselves creatively and gain confidence in performing in front of an audience.

What topic should my child choose?

Your child can choose any topic that interests them. However, County Events also offer a chance to enhance their existing 4-H projects. For instance, if your child participated in showing a pig at the fair, they could deliver an Illustrated Talk on pig showmanship, enriching their overall project experience.

What do winners get?

All participants receive recognition for their efforts, with junior-senior participants earning white, red, or blue ribbons based on their performance. Blue ribbon winners are invited to compete at District Events, with senior winners at the district level advancing to the state competition at 4-H University.

Ok, I'm convinced. When is it, and how do I register?

Encourage your child to seize this opportunity to challenge themselves, grow, and showcase their talents! Registration will be available through 4-H Online.