



4-H & Guide Dogs for the Blind Staff Memo

1/2010

To: 4-H YDP Staff and Guide Dog for the Blind Staff
From: Carole MacNeil, Statewide Director, 4-H YDP and Brent Ruppel, Director of Puppy Raising and Dog Placement, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Inc.
Date: January 15, 2004
Re: 4-H YDP Collaboration with Guide Dogs for the Blind

Dear 4-H YDP and Guide Dog Staff:

For those of you who have been conducting collaborative projects with the 4-H Youth Development Program (4-H YDP) and Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB), we are happy to announce a new model for the collaboration. We are optimistic that this new structure will address some of the longstanding issues and conflicts that we have faced in our partnership.

Background

Throughout Program Year 2002-03, an ad hoc statewide committee (consisting of 4-H YDP staff and volunteers, and GDB staff and volunteers) has been reviewing the existing collaboration and the conflicts that have come up as a result of having different missions, policies, and practices. In response to a mutually shared desire on the part of 4-H YDP and GDB to continue and strengthen the partnership, and our desire to bring the program into alignment with the 4-H YDP Mission and Direction, the committee developed a new model for the collaboration. The committee then presented the model to the 4-H Program Advisory Committee (who enthusiastically endorsed it), and piloted the model in several counties. As a result of these efforts, we are adopting the model statewide. We expect this model to be mutually beneficial for the 4-H YDP and GDB.

The New Model

Under the previous model, meetings for 4-H and GDB participants were mixed, often resulting in conflicting policies, membership rules, educational goals, fundraising goals, etc. Please see the attached chart for specific examples. The new model is a “meet and adjourn” model, in which a clear line is drawn between the 4-H YDP meeting (or portion of the meeting) and the GDB meeting (or portion of the meeting). In this model, the meeting of the 4-H YDP project on guide dogs follows the same mission, educational, and policy guidelines as any other 4-H meeting. The program focuses on our youth development mission (for example, understanding blindness or disabilities; animal care and nutrition; social issues faced by persons with disabilities, etc.), but there is no puppy training or training instruction at the 4-H meeting. The facilities use is arranged by 4-H for the 4-H meeting only, and participants are insured for the 4-H meeting only.

The GDB meeting will be conducted as a separate meeting, which may take place in a different location and different time, or may take place immediately after the 4-H YDP meeting in the same location. If the GDB meeting immediately follows the 4-H YDP meeting, the 4-H meeting would officially adjourn, and the GDB would officially begin (the “meet and adjourn” model). At that point, it is no longer a 4-H activity; GDB will have its own facilities use agreement, insurance, liability, leaders (some of whom may not be 4-H leaders), and members (some of whom may not be 4-H members, especially adult puppy-raisers). While this may seem somewhat artificial, both organizations agree that it is a relatively simple way to distinguish which organization has the authority and responsibility at which time. It will help the 4-H YDP stay true to our educational mission and work within our existing policies. Please see the attached chart for a summary of the roles and responsibilities of each organization according to the new model.

Implementation

As you begin to develop new 4-H/GDB groups, please follow this model. We expect that this will be “phased in” over the course of this 4-H program year, so that by the beginning of 4-H PY 04-05, all collaborative 4-H/GDB projects will be in line with the new model.