

PERCEPTIONS OF 4-H RECORD BOOKS AS PART OF THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE

Background

- This research was conducted among Lewis and Clark County 4-H youth and volunteer members in and around Helena, MT.
- The 4-H program runs on the foundation of the Experiential Learning Cycle
- The 4-H record book forms offer a mode of reflection and closure, but is not utilized to its potential in modern 4-H programming.

Record Book Form & the Experiential Learning Cycle



Figure 1. Non-Animal Journal and Financial Record Book Form ("Non-Animal", 2016)

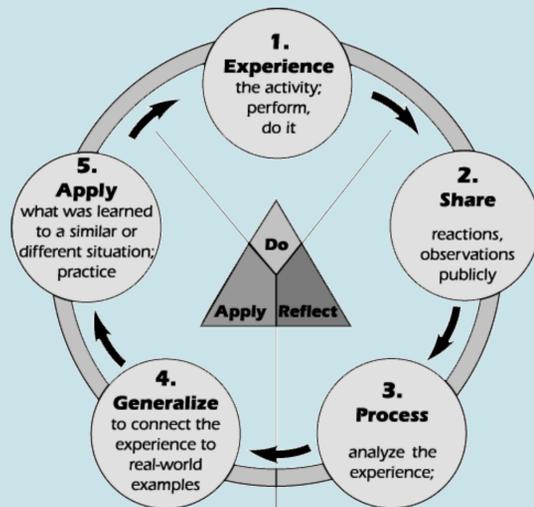


Figure 2. Experiential Learning Cycle(University of Tennessee, n.d.)

Research Questions

- How do 4-H youth member perceptions of record books before and after treatment change?
- How do 4-H volunteer perceptions of record books before and after treatment change?
- Does the perceived value of club meetings and project workshops improve after treatment?
- Does the perception of growth in a project area improve after treatment?

Results

- The results of combined youth and adult 4-H members perceptions from the pre- versus post-Treatment Record Book Survey indicated significant changes when participants were asked to rank their agreement with using record books weekly to record goals (Statement 11), using record books monthly to record goals (Statement 12), and consulting record books when they have questions about progress (Statement 13) (Figure 3). Fisher's Exact Test p-values comparing pre- and post-treatment responses for statements 11, 12, and 13 were 0.004, 0.0002, and 1.217e-06 respectively.

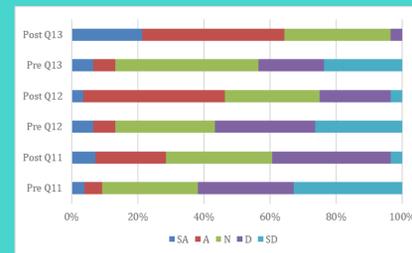


Figure 3. Overall record book perceptions for statement 11, "I/we use record books weekly to record goals," statement 12, "I/we use record books monthly to record goals," and statement 13, "I/we consult record books when we have questions about progress" (N=140).

References

- Photo Credit: Non-Animal Project Journal & Financial Record. (2016). Retrieved June 7, 2019, from http://www.montana4h.org/documents/resources/record_books/4H_NonAnimal_Project_Journal_2016.pdf
- Photo Credit: University of Tennessee Extension, (n.d.). Experiential Learning [Web log post]. Retrieved from <https://4h.tennessee.edu/Pages/experientiallearning.aspx>

- The most statistically significant results of this study came from comparing adult versus youth 4-H member responses of the Pre-Treatment Record Book Survey (Figure 4). Seventy-one percent of the 14 questions on the Pre-Treatment Record Book Survey had statistically significant responses with p-values below 0.05 (N=114), while 0% of Post-Treatment Record Book Survey responses comparing adult versus youth members were statistically significant (N=28).

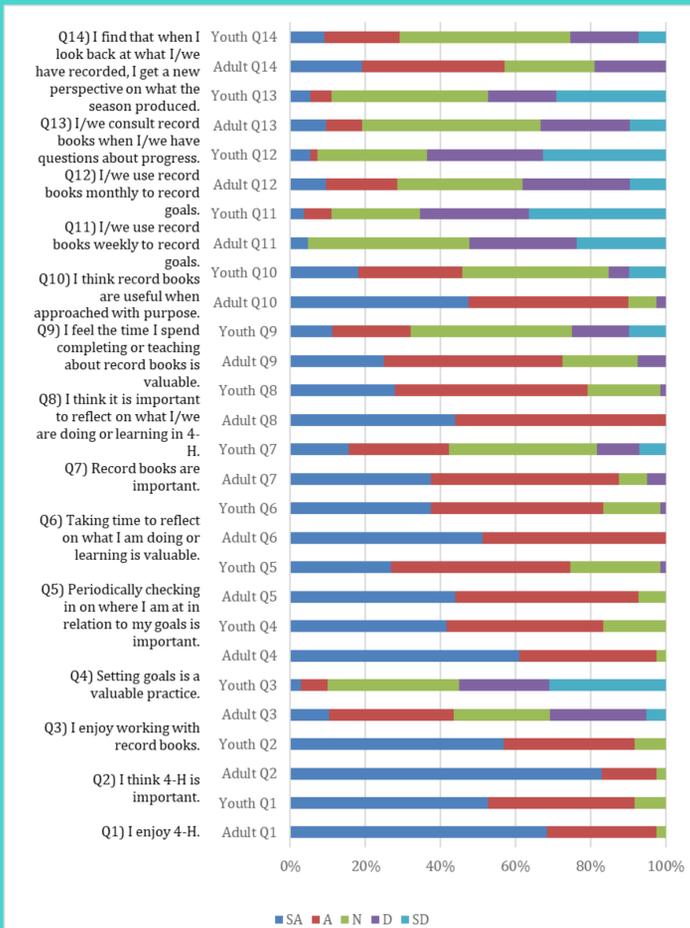


Figure 4. 4-H Adult and Youth Member Pre-Treatment Record Book Survey Responses, (N=113).

Methodology

- This study was conducted on 46 adult 4-H volunteers and 95 youth members.
- Volunteers were expected to implement 4-H record books as the reflection portion of the Experiential Learning Cycle in their activities
- Observations on record book implementation were recorded during subsequent project workshops and club activities to determine pre-versus post-treatment
- I administered surveys and interviews both before and after record books were incorporated to assess perceptions

Conclusions and Implications

- There was a significant difference in most of the responses of youth versus adult 4-H members in the Pre-Record Book Survey, with p-values falling below 0.05, but no statistical difference between the two groups in the Post-Record Book Survey. These findings imply youth improved their perceptions of 4-H, record book completion, setting goals, and reflection in comparison with their parent's perceptions following treatment
- The data suggests youth and adult 4-H members used record books more often following treatment to record their goals and reflect on their progress. While their enjoyment working with record books, using record books to check where they are in relation to their goals, perceiving that taking time to reflect on what they are doing or learning is valuable, and the importance of record books were reported to be statistically insignificant post-treatment versus pre-treatment, there was a minor shift toward enjoying working with record books more post-treatment, and a more defined shift toward putting more importance on periodically checking in with goals, perceiving reflection on their learning (in general and in 4-H) as valuable, and perceiving record books and their completion as being important and valuable, especially when approached with purpose.