

Positive Youth Development

By Jane Stueve, Adolescent and School Health Consultant

A delegation from Kansas was one of six states selected to participate in a workshop hosted by the Building Partnerships for Youth project. This project is a partnership between the National 4-H Council and the University of Arizona. Funding was provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The goal of this time is to increase the integration of positive youth development (PYD) principles statewide through awareness activities, professional development opportunities and potential policy work.

Over the next 18 months, the Kansas delegation will receive in-depth training and technical assistance from staff at the University of Arizona. The purpose of this training and assistance is to develop each statewide team's ability to develop and implement a statewide action plan around PYD.

PYD is a process by which all young people seek ways to meet their basic physical and social needs and to build the competencies (knowledge and skills) necessary to succeed in adolescence and adulthood.

There are eight critical elements to PYD:

1. A relationship with a caring adult
2. A safe environment--physically, emotionally and psychologically
3. An inclusive environment to experience a sense of belonging
4. Opportunities for mastery
5. Engagement in learning
6. Opportunities for self-determination
7. Opportunities to see oneself as an active participant in the future--sense of hope
8. Opportunities to value and practice community service

At the conclusion of the workshop, the Kansas team had developed a ground framework for a state plan to integrate PYD into communities to maximize collaboration and sustainability.

For information on Positive Youth Development go visit the Act for Youth, Center of Excellence website at www.actforyouth.net/default.asp?ID=youthDevelopment. More information on Positive Youth Development will be coming to your communities soon.

The team was led by Dr Elaine Johannes, Asst. Professor and Extension Specialist with the School of Family Studies and Human Services, Kansas State University. Other members of the team included: Peggy Berrier-Boyd, Extension Agent, 4-H Youth Development of Wyandotte County; Malissa Martin-Wilke, President of Communities in Schools of Kansas; Ella Todd, Director of the Kansas Mentors with KDHE; Jane Stueve, Adolescent and School Health Consultant with KDHE; Lyndsie Oathout, youth representative from Southwestern College of Kansas and; Ariel Anib, youth representative from Kansas State University.



Kansas team pictured left to right: Front row: Ella Todd, Ariel Anib. Back Row: Jane Stueve, Malissa Martin-White, Lyndsie Oathout, Elaine Johannes and Peggy Berrier-Boyd.