



# 4-H VOLUNTEER INFORMATION SERIES

Nebraska 4-H Youth Development

## How Kids Develop - Ages 9-11, Middle Childhood

### Understanding and Working with Youth: What are they like?

| <u>Characteristics of Age Group</u>  | <u>Implications and Applications</u>  |
|--|---|
| Are quite active with boundless energy.  | Emphasize active learning experiences.  |
| Like group activity. Group and club membership is important.                   | Emphasize group learning experiences.   |
| Like to be with members of own sex.  | Encourage learning experiences to be done with members of the same sex.   |
| Have interests which often change rapidly, jumping from one thing to another.  | Encourage many brief learning experiences.  |
| Usually do best when work is presented in small pieces.                        | Need simple and short directions.   |
| Need guidance from adults to stay at a task to achieve their best performance. | Work closely with this age group.   |
| Admire and imitate older boys and girls.                                       | Encourage apprenticing with older youth.  |
| Are easily motivated and eager to try something new.                           | Provide a wide variety of learning experiences.   |
| Do not like to keep records and do not see the value in them.                  | Need assistance and close supervision in completing records.  |
| Like symbols, ceremonies, and songs.   | Hold initiation and installation ceremonies for new members and officers.   |
| Are extremely curious, 9 to 11 year-olds constantly ask "why."                 | Do not answer all their questions. They will learn by finding some answers on their own. Encourage a few to find answers and report to the group.                   |
| Enjoy Cooperation.   | Plan activities so that youth work together sometimes.  |
| Show independence by disobedience, back talk, and rebelliousness.              | When you notice these characteristics, allow youth to show independence. Ask them in which activities they would like to participate and give individual attention. |
| Need recognition and praise for doing good work.                               | Present recognition in front of peers and parents.  |
| Have feelings of competence that enhance self-concept.                         | Provide activities that will let youth succeed. Recognize them for their accomplishments.   |
| Don't like comparisons with others.  | Instead of comparing youth to each other, compare present to past performance of the individual.  |
| Can direct a single familiar activity.   | Need adult support.   |
| Have limited decision-making ability.  | Need adult guidance. Need to know steps and how to follow-through.  |

Query, S. How kids develop. Iowa 4-H volunteer. Revised: Levings, J. 2006. Iowa State University Extension.  
<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4H/Documents/V1950902FAgesStages.PDF>



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

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