Communications Toolkit

Fun, Skill-Building Activities to Do With Kids!

- Written Communications
- Vocal Expression & Public Speaking
- Visual Communication & Graphic Design
- Video, Media & Technology

New from Michigan 4-H Youth Development!
The Communications Toolkit...

- Was developed and piloted by Michigan 4-H Youth Development volunteers, young people and staff.

- Was previously available in “pilot” form in all Michigan 4-H county offices (as “The Communications Box.”)

- Is now available as a publication for purchase in the MSU Extension bulletin system. (Bulletin # 4-H 1560 — $14 Michigan county cost; $25 retail)

- Has earned the National 4-H Juried Curriculum “seal of approval.”
Why get involved in Communications?

“Employers tell us that what they’re looking for are workers who can solve problems, who have critical thinking skills — but more important than any of that (are) their basic communication skills.”


The Communications Toolkit provides skill building information and activities in four key communications areas that are important for young people in school now and in the jobs of the future...
Each section contains...

- **What Leaders Need to Know**— Life skills, glossaries and other general information on working with teens on activities in each communication area.

- **Skill Sheets**— Handouts with information on important skills for each communication area.

- **Icebreakers and Activities**— ”Learning by doing” group and individual activities to help teens get comfortable and have fun while developing their communication skills. Instructions are also provided for adapting activities to different situations.

- **Beyond the Toolkit**— More Ideas and Resources— Project ideas, publications, websites and ideas on how to use resources in your community.
Written Communications

• The writing process
• Creative writing
• News writing
• Steps to creating a newsletter
• Group story writing
Vocal Expression & Public Speaking

- Introductions
- Delivering a speech
- Using visual aids
- Overcoming stage nerves
- Writing for public speaking
- Planning and producing demonstrations
Visual Communications & Graphic Design

- Using design elements (line, shape, texture, space, size, color and value) and principles (emphasis, rhythm, unity and balance)
- Using type
- Designing symbols and logos
- Designing presentation graphics
- Designing posters, fliers and exhibits
Video, Media & Technology

• Using the Internet safely
• Shooting and editing videos
• Scriptwriting for video
• Speaking skills for video
• Designing graphics for video
• Interviewing skills for video
• Producing a commercial, talk show, documentary
• Electronic pen pals
• Media relations
The Communications Toolkit is designed for flexible use!

You can...

• Use the leader information and skill sheets to jumpstart your understanding of communications and learn ways to introduce concepts to young people (aged 12 and up).

• Use icebreakers, warm-ups and other short activities to get your group warmed up and expand their comfort zones in any of the communication areas. Create a fun “skill-a-thon.”

• Use the major projects to help your group when real communication needs arise—such as delivering a speech, writing awards documentation, designing a poster or display, shooting a video or using the Internet safely.

• Plan several meetings around a communications area your group is interested in. Go through an in-depth series of activities including “Try This Too…” and career exploration suggestions.