4-H Common Measures Protocol

Administration of the Common Measures tools is governed by the policies of the IRB at your respective institution. The following document is intended to serve a guide for responding to the application process of your Institutional Review Board. The responses that follow will need to be tailored to the protocol specific to your study. Questions regarding Common Measures can be directed to CommonMeasures@4-H.org, however questions regarding the specific requirements for use at your LGU are best directed to your Institutional Review Board office.

Brief Description

Common Measures is being developed as part of a private-public partnership between National 4-H Council and 4-H National Headquarters/NIFA/USDA. The instruments include a universal tool designed for use with all 4-H audiences and specific tools for each 4-H Mission Mandate area (Science, Healthy Living, and Citizenship) at the 4th and 8th grade levels. The tools measure commonly targeted outcomes of 4-H programs and provide results representing evidence of program impact.

There are no risks associated with Common Measures. The anticipated sample size will secure subjects’ identities and results from this study will only be shared in aggregate form. Subjects will be informed of their participation rights in accordance with IRB approval from each Land Grant Institution. Participation is voluntary and subjects may withdraw from the study at any time, without loss of any services or privileges they would otherwise be entitled to.

Study Goals

The goals of this assessment include: (1) To obtain data on 4-H youths’ outcomes related to Positive Youth Development, 4-H Science, Citizenship, and Healthy Living; and (2) To obtain annual data that will assess the National 4-H program’s progress in achieving the outcomes established in each of the previously mentioned areas. The overall purpose is to inform and improve the replication of 4-H programming.

*Note: The goals and outcomes can be tailored for each survey administration by naming the specific outcomes targeted. See the Common Measures reference page for a detailed list of outcomes.

Recruitment/Audience
The survey will be administered to youth engaged in (insert specific program name or in some way identify the audience you are targeting). Then, further describe if all youth were invited to participate or if there was a purposeful sampling of some type.

Grant: This survey will be administered to 4-H youth engaged in 4-H programs at (insert Land Grant University) as part of the (insert grant name here). Then, further describe if all youth were invited to participate or if there was a purposeful sampling of some type.

* Note: If you are collecting data as part of a multi-state program or grant your IRB may require the listing of the other participating LGU’s.

Audience

The youth target audience is: 1) describe ages; 2) identify the number of youth targeted; 3) describe their participation in your program; and 4) identify if participants of both genders will be recruited and whether or not participation will be limited to certain racial or ethnic groups.

Informed Consent

With a Waiver for Parental Consent: Participants will be asked to voluntarily participate following their participation in the program. Parents/guardians of participants will be informed prior to the date of collection. They will be provided an opportunity to decline participation for their youth prior to the date of the survey administration by contacting the Investigator or Program Site Facilitator. Prior to the administration of the survey, youth will also receive an assent form informing them of their right to decline or stop the survey at any time.

Without a Waiver for Parental Consent: Program sites will collect written consent from parents prior to the administration of the survey and only those youth with a signed consent form will be allowed to participate in the survey. Participants will be asked to voluntarily participate following their participation in the program. Prior to the administration of the survey, youth will also receive an assent form informing them of their right to decline or stop the survey at any time.

Instruments and Procedure

Instrument

The youth instrument measures the following types of information:

- Demographic Information
• Life Skills Development
• Interest/Engagement
• Attitude/Aspirations
• Knowledge, Skills and Abilities related to Science, Healthy Living and/or Citizenship

The youth survey items include multiple choice, yes/no and Likert scale responses. No identifiable data is collected on the survey.

* Note: Tailor this response based on the sections selected in your particular survey.

Procedure

Youth will complete the survey following their 4-H Program. Youth will take an online or paper survey of approximately 15-20 minutes in length.

* Note: Length of time will vary based on the number of items you select from Common Measures.

If the web is not easily accessible, the youth will complete paper surveys which the on-site facilitator will supply. If paper surveys are used, the on-site facilitator will return the completed surveys to the investigator(s). The investigator(s) will then enter paper survey responses via the on-line link, after which they will be stored in a secure location for the length of the study and then destroyed.

There will be no compensation for youth participating in the study. Neither will there be any adverse affects for participation regarding the youth’s relationship with the Land Grant University or 4-H Youth Development. There are no known risks associated with this study. No portions of this study are predicted to produce stress or anxiety, nor are questions considered to be offensive, threatening or degrading. Participation is voluntary, youth will have the opportunity to ask questions and they are free to withdraw at anytime.

On-Site Program Facilitators

*Note: The following description may be useful if the PI at the LGU intends to engage others in the data collection.

Facilitators of this survey will include 4-H County staff and trained volunteers. Facilitators will only carry-out the instructions provided to them by the Investigator(s) of this study. They will read prepared instructions and either assist participants in accessing the link or distribute and
collect surveys and return them to the Investigator. The on-site facilitators will not review the data collected and will not be involved in the analysis in any way.

**Confidentiality and Data Security**

No information obtained in this study will identify an individual child. The data will be stored in a secure location at the offices of the investigating teams and on a secure server and will only be seen by the investigators and the managers of the online site during the study. Demographic information - which does not include personally identifiable information - is not linked to IP address or email address used to disseminate surveys. The information obtained in this study will be analyzed and reported as aggregated data.

All data will be submitted via the online link to the 4-H Common Measures site hosted by National 4-H Council. Staff providing support to Common Measures data collection at National 4-H Council will not be able to trace data back to specific individuals and will not be able to identify individual persons based on their data.

National 4-H Council has completed the industry best practices for physical and technological security of electronic data. Data are hosted on their servers at Peak, LLC, with physical access limited to authorized actors only (Council's Business Technology team and Peak employees). Backups are performed daily, and the backups are stored both on their Peak servers, and on a set of machines physically at Council. They also perform 24/7 monitoring, firewall and antivirus security, and follow industry best practices to protect the integrity and stability of Council’s servers.

The following individuals will have access to the non-identifiable data: (Note: your IRB may or may not require this level of information.)

1. Cindy Sperry, Product Development Coordinator, National 4-H Council
2. Jill Walahoski, National Evaluation Leader - University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Subcontracted by National 4-H Council to provide co-leadership to Common Measures*
3. Suzanne Le Menestrel, NPL for Evaluation and Research - NIFA/USDA, provides co-leadership to Common Measures*
4. Paul Zupan and Lukass Franklin - Peak, LLC (Common Measures site developers)
5. Data Analyst from the University of Arizona*
6. In the case of a grant, the grant manager from National 4-H Council
7. PIs from sub-award land-grant institutions will have access to non-identifiable data for their youth participants only.
The co-leaders and the data analyst have successfully completed Human Subjects training.

**Other IRB Responses**

There is no financial conflict of interest and federal funds are not involved in this study.

The subjects will be fully informed, but will not be formally debriefed following the collection of the data.

The research does not present more than minimal risk.

**Waiver of Informed Consent (Sample Waiver Responses)**

If you are requesting (a) a waiver of informed consent, or (b) a waiver of the consent procedure requirement to include all or alter some or all of the elements of informed consent, you must document your responses to each of the following statements.

Can you answer 'true' to the following questions? If so, the project may be considered for a waiver of Informed Consent. You must justify your responses to each question.

1. The Research involves minimal risks or less. Yes
   Justify your response: This research involves less than minimal risk and does not affect the rights of subjects in any way. Questions are designed to measure positive program impact. We will not be collecting sensitive data and participants could not be identified either directly or indirectly from the data.

2. By Waiving informed consent, the individual will remain unharmed and retain all rights they would normally be entitled. Yes
   Justify your response: Participants in this study will remain unharmed and retain all benefits to which they would otherwise be entitled. Additionally, participants may withdraw from this study at anytime without adversely affecting their relationship with the investigator, the Land Grant University or 4-H Youth Development.

3. It would be unfeasible to conduct the research if informed consent has to be obtained. Yes
   Justify your response: The study could not practicably be carried out due to the non-response of parents and needing to have a full representation of the 4-H group in order to conduct an accurate evaluation of the program. Additionally, this study does not seek sensitive data is and is being administered for the purposes of program improvement and to report positive program impact.
4. Whenever appropriate, subjects will be provided with additional pertinent information before and after their participation. Yes
   Justify your response: Parents/guardians will be provided information regarding the study purpose and a description of participation prior to the time the survey is collected. Additionally, we will distribute a youth assent form.

5. How will informed consent/assent be obtained?
   Parent/guardian information letters will be distributed to parents/guardians of participants prior to the time of collection. They will have an opportunity to decline participation for their child by contacting the program instructor or investigator of this study. Youth assent letters will be distributed prior to completion of the survey. Youth will have an option to participate or decline participation in the survey at any time.

Appendix

Sample Letter for Informed Parental Consent (Appendix A)

Sample Letter for Informed Youth Assent (Appendix B)

Sample Parent Information Letter if Consent is Waived (Appendix C)