Evaluative Paper

The Youth Development Specialization Pilot
In Grant and Lafayette Counties

By
Tom Schmitz
Professor
Department of Youth Development
University of Wisconsin-Extension

March 2006

Published by
Department of Youth Development

UW-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming including Title IX and ADA.
ABSTRACT

In the spring of 2001, the Extension Education Committees in Lafayette and Grant Counties, along with the UW-Extension Southern District Office and the Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development program area, entered into an agreement to pilot the concept of specialization in youth development programs. The pilot was designed to determine if economies of scale could be achieved while the quality of programming was improved. In addition, the pilot sought to identify shortcomings associated with agent specialization across county lines. A variety of staffing options and ongoing evaluation were used to test and modify the pilot’s staffing patterns. A pre and post survey of clientele along with input from Extension Education Committee members and other decision makers indicated that the pilot met its objectives. This paper examines the objectives, methods and results of this four-year pilot.
**SITUATION**

Dwindling public resources and the demand for continued quality services require that all government agencies search for ways to become more efficient in delivering the programs they offer. UW-Extension is no different. Successful pilots of agricultural specializations have shown that there is more than one model for delivery of high quality UW-Extension educational programs. Yet, specialization had never been tried in the 4-H Youth Development Program within UW-Extension.

Although each local situation is unique, specialization in youth development programming across county lines is worthy of consideration. In 4-H, the wide variety of state 4-H program opportunities is somewhat consistent across county lines. Issues of leader training, new family orientation and providing educational guidance to youth and adult leader councils are comparable. Traditionally, one agent in each county worked on these issues. The specialization hypothesis was that the opportunity for one agent to focus on these similar issues across county-lines would result in higher quality programming, opportunities for more cross-county programming, expansion of programs to new clientele and enhancement of program delivery.

Community based youth development programming also requires a unique local approach,
although the programming issues across county lines can be similar. Faculty and staff in many counties are involved with community coalitions, school based programming, teen courts and youth in governance. In addition, each local CESA (Cooperative Educational Service Agency) serves several counties and many community agencies have a multi-county mission. It was theorized that the opportunity for one agent to focus on these similar issues across county lines through agent specialization would result in higher quality programming, more opportunities for multi-county programming, expansion of programs to new clientele and enhancement of program delivery.

The opportunity to pilot specialization staffing in 4-H Youth Development presented itself in 2001 when the Lafayette County Youth Development Educator was about to have 80% of her time purchased for special projects. Because Grant and Lafayette Counties are neighboring counties, the potential for a successful pilot seemed reasonable.

Grant and Lafayette Counties are predominately rural counties located in southwest Wisconsin. Grant County has a population of just under 50,000 people; Lafayette has just over 16,000. At the start of the pilot in 2001, Lafayette County 4-H had 11 4-H clubs, 309 4-H members and 98 4-H leaders, while Grant County had 20 4-H clubs, 600 members and 238 leaders. Also in 2001, Lafayette County UWEX served 7 school districts with approximately 3300 students while Grant County UWEX served about 6500 students in 11 school districts.

Youth development faculty in both counties had a strong interest in specialization. Lafayette and Grant Counties were collaborating on the Teen Assessment Project, Friends Helping
Friends and the Violence Prevention project. Both counties worked with local coalitions aimed at positive youth development. Representatives from several agencies were involved in coalitions and programming in both counties. In addition, Grant and Lafayette counties were partners in 4-H camp, had worked together in moving exhibits to state fair and had often shared chaperones for the Wisconsin 4-H and Youth Conference and the Wisconsin State Fair.

In the spring of 2001, the Extension Education Committees in Lafayette and Grant Counties, along with the UW-Extension Southern District Office and the Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development Program, entered into an agreement to pilot the concept of specialization in 4-H youth development programs. The pilot was to be reviewed annually by each county’s Extension Education Committee and the Southern District Director as part of the faculty and staff performance review process. At that time, all parties would have to agree to continue the pilot for another year or the pilot would be terminated.

The parties agreed to extend the pilot on four different occasions. Over its four-year duration, the pilot tested a variety of staffing strategies and saw several personnel changes. Throughout these changes, the author served in the role of team leader for Grant and Lafayette County UWEX Youth Development programming efforts and oversaw the progress of the pilot.

**OBJECTIVES**

As a result of the pilot:

1. Economies of scale will be realized and those efficiencies will be used to strengthen
2. Higher quality programming will be achieved in the traditional 4-H program;

3. Higher quality programming will be achieved in community based youth development programming; and

4. The potential shortcomings of an agent specialization program delivery model will be identified.

METHODS

In early 2001 an internal document was developed and presented to the Wisconsin 4-H Program office, the UW-Extension Southern District Office and to the department heads in each county office (Appendix A). The document was modified (Appendix B) and presented to a joint meeting of the Grant and Lafayette County Extension Education Committees in March of 2001. At that meeting both committees agreed to enter into the pilot and both committees signed memorandum of understanding in the April of 2001 (Appendix C).

Under this agreement, the author would work with an existing 50% 4-H Program Advisor in Lafayette County and the existing Lafayette County Youth Development Educator who would focus her limited time in Lafayette County (20%) on the department head role. (The Lafayette County Youth Development Educator subsequently left the county altogether in November of 2001). A combination of student interns and an increase in hours for the Grant County Youth Assistant would serve to backfill for the author in Grant County.

On July 1, 2001, the author began programming 30% time in Lafayette County and 70% time
in Grant County as the Grant/Lafayette Youth Development Educator. His role focused on
Grant and Lafayette County community youth development efforts including the Teen
Assessment Program Survey (now known as the Southwest Wisconsin Youth Survey or
SWYS), the Southwest Wisconsin Violence Prevention Project and supporting tobacco-free
coalitions. The author also worked with the Lafayette County Student Services Committee,
the Roundtable of Grant County, Grant County Safe and Stable Communities and served as
team leader for all youth development efforts in both counties.

After the departure of the Lafayette County 4-H Program Advisor in July of 2001, UWEX
hired a Lafayette/Grant 4-H Program Advisor in September of 2001. The 4-H Program
Advisor had 60% of her position allocated to Lafayette County and the remaining 40% of her
time allocated to Grant County. Student time and the additional Youth Assistant hours were
decreased in Grant County. The Program Advisor’s main focus was on the 4-H club
program. The Advisor also worked with the Family Communication Workshop in Lafayette
County.

The author shared the broad parameters of the pilot with the new Lafayette/Grant 4-H
Program Advisor as part of the orientation process. Because the Lafayette County 4-H
community was worried that the pilot was designed to remake Lafayette County 4-H in the
image of Grant County and because an experienced, capable support staff existed in both
counties, the advisor was given a great deal of independence and very little guidance as to
how to manage each county’s 4-H program. While the author made himself available when
the 4-H Program Advisor sought counsel, the author rarely initiated these meetings.
The 4-H Program Advisor resigned effective December 31, 2002. That staffing change provided an opportunity to assess the status of the pilot. Three lessons were taken from the pilot at that point:

1. Economies of scale had been, and could continue to be achieved in community youth development programming;

2. Economies of scale were not achieved in the community 4-H club program and would likely not be achieved even if cross county sharing in this area continued; and

3. More leadership needed to be exerted by the lead educator to build and strengthen the youth development teams in both counties. A further explanation follows:

• **Lesson 1 - Economies of scale had been and can be achieved in community youth development programming.** Large-scale programs including SWYS and the Violence Prevention Project had resulted in economies of scale being achieved. In the violence prevention area, programs were held for schools from both counties at the same time and a national expert was brought in to inform the schools about best practices in the field. Under the one agent per county model, each agent would be individually spending the same amount of time as the Youth Development Educator did to cover two counties. With SWYS, public awareness efforts, which were about to begin, would not be duplicated in each county. Presentations in one county could be utilized when developing presentations in the other.

With both programs, the Youth Development Educator’s level of knowledge was
enhanced by the ability to focus and the educator was seen as an important resource by the clientele. Even with community coalitions like the tobacco-free coalitions, knowledge learned in one county was shared with the coalition in the other. Networking across county lines was enhanced as evidenced by the multi-county collaboration of community coalitions planning to hold a youth leadership conference in the summer of 2002.

• **Lesson 2 - Economies of scale were not achieved in the community 4-H club program and would likely not be achieved even if cross county sharing in this area continued.** Among the lessons learned from 4-H Program Advisor’s experience, was that the economies of scale to be achieved through specialization in the 4-H program were over shadowed by the extensive meeting schedule 4-H presented. Also, the autonomy of each county’s 4-H program made it difficult to cooperate on learning events and activities across county lines. Only 4-H camp and state 4-H Youth Conference became areas in which the economies of scale were realized. A third problem was that despite having hired a very talented person, the learning curve for the 4-H program made it difficult to take advantage of the potential for economies of scale.

• **Lesson 3 - The need for the Youth Development Educator to provide strong leadership for the 4-H program was not fully understood until it was too late.** Weekly meetings of the youth development teams in both counties should have been held throughout the pilot to build the team. Political concerns over re-making the
Lafayette County 4-H program in the image of the Grant County 4-H program were not handled optimally by the Youth Development Educator. Because of this, the Educator did not fully engage the 4-H Program Advisor in staying on task to meet the pilot goals. Rather, after providing orientation for the 4-H Program Advisor, the Educator falsely assumed that the Advisor was on task to carry out the mission with limited support.

In Grant County, the 4-H team (4-H Program Advisor, Youth Assistant and Support Staff) experienced confusion as to who was playing what role. Again this was due in large part to a lack of leadership on the part of the Youth Development Educator who chose to turn the assignment of staff roles over to the 4-H Program Advisor. Despite having an administrative background, the 4-H Program Advisor’s lack of experience with 4-H and the longevity of the Grant County 4-H staff prevented the advisor from developing a plan to optimally utilize the talents of the Grant County 4-H staff. The Youth Development Educator should have provided more direction to the staffing and the program in general.

In addition, the lack of team meetings tended to separate the 4-H program from the community youth development efforts. While this separation was necessary from the standpoint of specialization, it did not allow for a strong sense of team that was needed.

Input was sought from 4-H Youth Development clientele in Lafayette County through letters
and comments at a public meeting. Based on the support expressed, Lafayette County
Extension Education Committee decided to pursue continuation of the pilot by incorporating
what was learned into a modified staffing plan.

Mindful of the lessons learned in the first year and a half of the pilot, a new staffing plan was
forged to improve the success of the pilot. The staffing plan was developed in consultation
with the Extension Education Committees in Grant and Lafayette County, the State 4-H
Program Area and the Southern District Director. Features of the plan included:

• Reallocation of the Youth Development Educator’s time (75% in Grant County, 25%
in Lafayette County). The Youth Development Educator continued to serve as the
faculty presence in both counties.

• Hiring of a 60% Academic Staff 4-H Program Advisor for Lafayette County to focus
on the community 4-H Club Program in Lafayette County under the mentorship of
the Youth Development Educator. This Extension Associate position was to become
a tenure track faculty position upon completion of a Masters Degree and
stabilization of funding.

• Utilization of a combination of student interns and limited term employees to
backfill for the Youth Development Educator in Grant County.

• In Grant County, the Youth Development Educator was to reassume the role of
advisor to the 4-H Leaders Association and team leader for 4-H programming. The
role of the Youth Assistant was modified to provide more direct supervision of 4-H
interns and LTE’s as they work with volunteers to coordinate activities.
To avoid the pitfalls of the previous experience, the author took a much more aggressive approach in providing guidance, support and direction of the youth development teams in both counties. Not waiting for staffing changes, the author began conducting weekly staff meetings prior to the departure of the Program Advisor. All staff and students with 4-H Youth Development responsibilities in Grant County attended these meetings. In addition, the author reaffirmed the chain of command, placing supervision responsibilities for student interns largely in the hands of the Youth Assistant and having the Administrative Support Assistant provide back up.

In June of 2003 a new 4-H Program Advisor began in Lafayette County. The author initially held mentoring sessions every week and as the 4-H Program Advisor became more comfortable with her role, the sessions dropped to about once every two weeks. In addition, frequent phone calls and e-mails were used to stay in touch and answer questions. Finally, the experience and talents of the Grant County team were made available to the Lafayette County Advisor because they were more involved in day-to-day operational details of the 4-H Program.

When additional dollars became available in January of 2004, the Lafayette County advisor’s appointment was increased to 75%. During the time of her employment, she pursued a master’s degree. The advisor resigned in July of 2005 to relocate for personal reasons. That effectively ended the pilot, as following her resignation, the parties involved agreed to discontinue the pilot and purse other staffing options.
RESULTS

To help establish a baseline for 4-H youth development programming, the Assistant State Program Leader for Wisconsin 4-H/Youth Development Programs and the author developed a programming survey. The survey assessed the status of programming efforts in both Grant and Lafayette County at the start of the pilot (Appendix D). By surveying all 4-H club leaders in both counties, key members of the county 4-H leader associations, a random group of 4-H project leaders, parents and members as well as key community youth development contacts and participants, a baseline for the quality of youth development programming in each county was established. The survey was conducted again in the fall of 2004 with a comparable group of clientele to measure the progress of the youth development program after three years of the pilot. In 2001, 208 surveys were mailed and 87 were returned for a response rate of 42%. In 2004, 176 surveys were sent and 83 were returned for a response rate of 47%.

The pilot was reviewed annually by the Grant and Lafayette Counties’ Extension Education Committees and based on those reviews the pilot was renewed four times. Additionally, Department Heads and Extension Committee members who served throughout the pilot were sent a questionnaire as to the pilot’s impact near the end of the pilot (Appendix E). The District Director and the Program Area were asked to provide input on the overall pilot as well. In all, ten questionnaires were distributed and seven were returned.

Objective 1 - **Economies of scale will be realized and those efficiencies will be used to strengthen programming.**
TABLE 1 – Economies of Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Number*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The pilot was less efficient than one agent per county model</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pilot was no more or no less efficient than the one agent per county model</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pilot was slightly more efficient than the one agent per county model</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pilot was significantly more efficient than the one agent per county model</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* - One respondent marked two responses to this question. The person felt that the initial phase of the pilot was inefficient with regard to the 4-H program, but that with regard to the community youth development program and the second phase of the 4-H program, it was significantly more efficient.

Responses from the post-pilot questionnaire are shown in Table 1. While responses to the question “which best describes how you feel about economies of scale or efficiencies with regard to the pilot” varied significantly, the responses tended to skew to the side of being more efficient. The author acknowledges the initial phase of the pilot did not achieve economies in the 4-H Club program; the second phase of the program pilot did bring efficiencies to 4-H Club program. It is the author’s assessment that throughout the pilot, community youth development programming achieved economies of scale.

Objective 2 - **As a result of the pilot, higher quality programming will be achieved in the traditional 4-H program.**

The results of the post-pilot questionnaires are found in Table 2. In both counties the worst that could be said about the pilot was that it had no impact on the quality of traditional 4-H programming and the majority of those that were able to assess program quality saw enhancements in the programming.

TABLE 2 – Quality of Traditional 4-H Programming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>N=7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post Pilot Questionnaire, July 20005 – N=7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grant Lafayette

Don’t know 2 2
Quality of 4H programming diminished greatly
Quality of 4H programming diminished somewhat 1 1
Quality of 4H programming diminished slightly
The pilot had no impact on the quality of 4-H programming 1 1
Quality of 4H programming increased slightly 1
Quality of 4H programming increased somewhat 2 2
Quality of 4H programming increased greatly 1 2

Results of the pre and post pilot programming survey (Table 3) show an improvement in the overall quality of traditional 4-H programs in both counties. The pre and post survey asked respondents to rank the frequency of occurrence of 28 quality youth development practices such as youth involvement, youth decision-making, youth community service, structure of programs, adult guidance, staff vision, staff communication and staff performance. A five-point scale was used and the average overall rankings were compared in the pre and post survey. Lafayette County 4-H Clientele responses indicated a 0.69 increase in overall programming while Grant County saw an overall increase of 0.32. While the greatest programming improvement occurred in Lafayette County, the quality of 4-H programming in Grant County was also enhanced.

*TABLE 3 – Frequency of Selected Quality Youth Development Practices in 4-H Pre/Post Clientele Survey, July 2001 (N=77) and October 2004 (N=83)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Lafayette County</th>
<th>Grant County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Diff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth contribute ideas for programs which are accepted and implemented</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth are encouraged to “give back to their community”…</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>4.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults provide guidance through coaching, feedback and discussion…</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Youth Development staff develops</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Youth Development staff is able to provide sound information on issues facing local youth.

Programs offered by Youth Development staff are well organized.

The Youth Development Staff members are effective teachers.

**OVERALL AVERAGE**

*Table 3 highlights seven youth development practices that showed significant change in at least one county’s 4-H or community youth development programs. The overall average is the mean of all 28 youth development practices measured.*

**Objective 3** - **As a result of the pilot, higher quality programming will be achieved in community based youth development programming.**

Both Grant and Lafayette Counties had quality community Youth Development programs in existence at the beginning of the pilot. As Table 4 demonstrates, department heads, extension committee members who could speak to the quality of community youth development programs tended to report an increase.

**TABLE 4 – Quality of Community Youth Development (CYD) Programming**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Grant</th>
<th>Lafayette</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of CYD programming diminished greatly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of CYD programming diminished somewhat</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of CYD programming diminished slightly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pilot had no impact on the quality of CYD programming</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of CYD programming increased slightly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of CYD programming increased somewhat</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of CYD programming increased greatly</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*TABLE 5 – Frequency of Selected Quality Youth Development Practices in CYD**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Lafayette County</th>
<th>Grant County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth contribute ideas for programs which are</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Youth are encouraged to “give back to their community”…

Adults provide guidance through coaching, feedback and discussion…

The Youth Development staff develops programs that are based on county needs

The Youth Development staff is able to provide sound information on issues facing local youth

Programs offered by Youth Development staff are well organized

The Youth Development Staff members are effective teachers

OVERALL AVERAGE

*Table 5 highlights seven youth development practices that showed significant change in at least one county’s 4-H or community youth development programs. The overall average is the mean of all 28 youth development practices measured.

The results of the pre and post pilot programming survey (Table 5) show a slight overall improvement in the quality of community youth development programming as measured by clientele perceptions of the frequency of youth development practices.

Objective 4 - As a result of the pilot, a determination will be made as to the potential shortcomings of an agent specialization program delivery model.

Responses to open ended questions on the post pilot questionnaire shed some light as to the viability of an agent specialization program delivery model. The initial 4-H staffing pattern, which had one individual covering both county programs, was criticized. Also the issue of time devoted to each county was raised. Additionally the limited appointment had the potential to compromise the key step of developing relationships. All of these points are germane to the shortcomings of the pilot. Still, all seven post pilot questionnaire respondents said “yes” when asked if they would recommend specialization as a 4-H staffing model.
Several of these “yes” responses were qualified in that they indicated that the personnel and situation needed to be right.

While the pilot achieved its objectives in large part, the importance of the department heads, the Extension Education Committees, the District Director, and the program area cannot be understated. Both committees remained open to the pilot and worked with department heads, the district directors and the program area to develop and adjust the pilot.

Despite challenges with early staffing patterns, staff played a major role in accepting and embracing changing roles and responsibilities. Grant County UW-Extension had experienced support personnel for 4-H Youth Development programming. The county-funded full-time Youth Assistant had been on staff since 1989. Also the Administrative Support Assistant, which is shared with two other program areas, had been in the Extension Office supporting 4-H since 1978. Lafayette County had two long time secretaries who had been with Lafayette County since the 1960’s. These folks played a major role in keeping the ongoing programs running during staffing changes and while the author assumed other responsibilities.

Finally, the author acknowledges that the skills he brought to the pilot were critical to its success. The author had served as a department head in the early 90’s and had 11 years of experience as a 4-H Youth Development Agent when the pilot began. He also had gained insight to Lafayette County schools through the violence prevention program, the Teen Assessment Program and through other shared county programming efforts over the years.
The perspective of the author is that the second phase of the pilot was the most feasible. Clearly the nature of the 4-H program and the uniqueness of each county’s 4-H program made it unworkable to have one person to be deeply involved with two county programs. Travel time, especially in winter, occasionally became an issue for the author’s efforts in community youth development. Often commitments in both counties made it impossible to spend a full day in Lafayette County. Additionally, the home office held the files, resources and references used in both counties. This made office time in Lafayette County less productive and as a result, most of the time in Lafayette County was committed to developing relationships. Finally, rising mileage reimbursement rates and decreasing budgets stretched county dollars near the end of the pilot.

**IMPLICATIONS:**

- This agent specialization model provided new staff with more frequent mentoring. If the right person is in the lead role, it can be very beneficial to new staff.
- Backfilling with students in the lead educator’s county allowed college students to experience Extension work and Extension to make an assessment of the potential of the student interns. Under this model, quality interns could be recruited for permanent positions within Extension.
- Backfilling the lead educator position with college students provided new excitement for existing 4-H program for two reasons. First, youthful energy and enthusiasm were
infused into the program and second, the college students became respected role models for the 4-H members.

- The 75% appointment of the 4-H Youth Program Assistant provided a humane schedule for the staff person to obtain her masters degree, while the 25% presence of the team leader allowed for full-time coverage in the county.

- Under the right circumstances and with the right personnel, the pilot may provide the basis for a viable staff model in times of tight budgets. The key is to match programming needs with staff skills.

- It would be worthwhile to explore having program assistants handle the day to day operations of multi-county 4-H programs and have faculty-provided educational leadership for these counties.

- In a relatively flat organization with few opportunities for new challenges, variations of this model could provide new challenges for staff who ache for a break from the routine.
APPENDIX A

PROPOSAL FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
AGENT SPECIALIZATION PILOT IN
GRANT AND LAFAYETTE COUNTIES

This document outlines a proposal for a UW-Extension 4-H Youth Development Agent specialization pilot in Grant and Lafayette Counties. It proposes to take advantage of the upcoming limited term vacancy in the Lafayette County Youth Development Educator position which provides a rare opportunity to pilot a different staffing model for UW-Extension 4-H and youth development programming. The proposal allows for agent specialization in two different areas of programming, 4-H community club programming and community based youth development programming. It builds on existing staffing patterns and the strengths of the individuals in those positions. This proposal outlines the rationale, staffing patterns and evaluation for the proposed pilot.

RATIONALE:
Dwindling public resources and the demand for continued quality services, require that all government agencies search for ways to become more efficient in delivering the programs they offer. UW-Extension is no different. Successful pilots of agricultural specializations have shown that there clearly is more than one model for delivery of high quality UW-Extension educational programs. This proposal seeks to apply a similar model of agent specialization to 4-H and other youth development programming in an attempt to answer the following questions:

Λ Are there economies of scale to be realized with agent specialization in 4-H and other youth development programs? If so, what are they? Can these efficiencies be used to strengthen programming?
Λ Will the quality of youth development programming be enhanced under an agent specialization program delivery model?
Λ Can youth development programming be expanded to new clientele while maintaining the quality of existing programs under an agent specialization program delivery model?
Λ What are the potential shortcomings of an agent specialization program delivery model?

Although the issue of distance and orientation to new counties will need to be overcome, we believe that there are economies of scale to be gained through agent specialization, that the quality of youth development will be enhanced through agent specialization and that programming can be expanded through this model.

Although each local situation is unique, there are similar issues across county lines in
youth development programming. In 4-H, the wide variety of state 4-H program opportunities are consistent across county lines. Issues of leader training, new family orientation and providing educational guidance to youth and adult leader council are comparable. In addition, Grant and Lafayette counties are partners in 4-H camp, have worked together in moving exhibits to state fair and have often shared chaperones for the Wisconsin 4-H and Youth Conference. Currently one agent in each county works on these issues. The opportunity for one agent to focus on these similar issues in both counties through agent specialization should result in higher quality programming, opportunities for more two county programming, expansion of programs to new clientele and enhancement of program delivery.

Community based youth development programming also requires a unique local approach, but the programming issues across county lines are again similar. Lafayette and Grant Counties are currently collaborating on the Teen Assessment Project, Friends Helping Friends and the Violence Prevention project. Both counties work with local coalitions aimed at positive youth development. Some of the players like CESA #3 and Safe Passages are the same in both counties. Currently one agent in each county is working on these issues. The opportunity for one agent to focus on these similar issues in both counties through agent specialization should result in higher quality programming, opportunities for more two county programming, expansion of programs to new clientele and enhancement of program delivery.

PROPOSED STAFFING:
The following chart outlines the proposed staffing patterns. The proposal outlines the current staffing patterns and proposed staffing patterns beginning July 1, 2001 and January 1, 2002.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Staffing</th>
<th>Grant Co. 4-H</th>
<th>Grant Co. Community Youth Development</th>
<th>Lafayette Co. 4-H</th>
<th>Lafayette Co. Community Youth Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schmitz- 40%</td>
<td>Schmitz-60%</td>
<td>Olson-40%</td>
<td>Olson-10% Curtis-50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McPhail-95%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-1-01</td>
<td>Schmitz-10%</td>
<td>Schmitz-50% Student-20% (TAP)</td>
<td>Olson-40% Schmitz (Mentor) Schmitz-40% Student-20% (TAP) Olson-10% (Court kids, Banana splits refusals)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>McPhail-110%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Student-30%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-1-02</td>
<td>McPhail-95% Academic Staff-40% Schmitz-5% (Mentor) Student-?</td>
<td>Academic Staff-40% Schmitz-5% (Mentor)</td>
<td>Schmitz-40% Academic Staff - 10% Student - ?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tom Schmitz - is the current 4-H Youth Development Agent in Grant County. Beginning in July of 2001 he would assume the role of Interim Youth Development Educator for Grant and Lafayette Counties. In this role, Schmitz would provide leadership to existing community youth development programming efforts in Grant and Lafayette Counties including the Teen Assessment Project, the Violence Prevention Program, Friends Helping Friends, Banana Splits, Divorce Parenting Class in Lafayette County, Grant County Teens web site and community youth development coalitions. Schmitz would also provide support and mentorship to both counties’ 4-H community club programs.

Stephanie Olson - is currently serving in an interim role with Lafayette County 4-H Youth Development and Agricultural programs on a 50-50 basis. She would continue in that role through the end of her contract which ends December 31, 2001.

An Interim 4-H Youth Development Academic Staff position with primary responsibility for providing leadership to the Grant and Lafayette County 4-H programs would be created beginning January 1, 2002. The position would also have minor responsibilities in the community youth development efforts in both counties.

Cathy McPhail - is the current Youth Assistant in Grant County. About 5% of her time is spent on administrative functions including budget summaries for the Grant County Extension Office and support staff functions. Mrs. McPhail would be hired by UWEX as an Instruction Specialist Interim Backfill at 15% time (5 hours per week) for the period July 1, 2001 through December 31, 2001. During this six month period, she would provide additional support to the Grant County 4-H program. On January 1, 2002 Mrs. McPhail would revert back to her role as Grant County Youth Assistant.

Student Help - would be used to support 4-H and community youth development efforts as budget dollars allow. These students would be recruited through the UW-Extension Engaged University project at UW-Platteville.

**PROPOSED EVALUATION:**

Evaluation of this model should occur on an ongoing basis. The State 4-H Youth Development program area would accept responsibility for conducting an evaluation that includes constituent response from community collaborators as well as key adult and youth volunteers in both county 4-H community club programs. This effort will likely include a survey sent from the state office to independently collect the data and insure anonymity. A report would be developed and shared with members of the Grant and Lafayette Counties’ Agriculture and Extension Education Committees, along with Office Chairs from both counties, the Southern District Director on an annual basis. Agent reports to Grant and Lafayette Counties’ Agriculture and Extension Education Committees should also be used to update the progress of the pilot.
APPENDIX B

DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
AGENT SPECIALIZATION PILOT IN
GRANT AND LAFAYETTE COUNTIES

RATIONALE:
- Dwindling public resources and the demand for continued quality services, require that all government agencies search for ways to become more efficient in delivering the programs they offer.
- Successful pilots of agricultural specializations have shown that there clearly is more than one model for delivery of high quality UW-Extension educational programs.
- This proposal seeks to apply a similar model of agent specialization to 4-H and other youth development programming.

KEY POINTS:
- We believe that there are economies of scale to be gained through agent specialization.
- There are a wide variety of state 4-H program opportunities across county lines. (Leader training, new family orientation and providing educational guidance to youth and adult leader council are comparable.)
- Grant and Lafayette counties are partners in 4-H camp, one agent could handle this.
- Lafayette and Grant Counties are currently collaborating on the Teen Assessment Project, Friends Helping Friends and the Violence Prevention project. One agent could handle these for both counties.
- We believe that the quality of youth development will be enhanced through agent specialization and that programming can be expanded through this model.
- The model could lead to more two county programming in 4-H and community youth development.
- We will use technology (phone, fax and computers) to overcome the obstacle of distance whenever possible.
- Schmitz would commit 30% of his time to Lafayette County working mostly on TAP and the Violence Prevention project, time permitting he would also work on Banana Splits. The 70% remaining for Grant County would focus on TAP, the Violence Prevention project, Friends Helping Friends, Judge Curry’s Round Table and working with the tobacco and other coalitions. He would also continue to provide leadership for the 4-H program.
- Many of Schmitz’s 4-H efforts in Grant County would have to be handled through a combination of increased time for Cathy McPhail (Grant County Youth Assistant), student help and/or academic staff.
- Curtis would work with the Banana Splits program in Lafayette County and office administration.
- Olson would commit 10% time to the court mandated programs and other community youth development efforts. 40% time of her time will be committed to the 4-H community club program in Lafayette County.
APPENDIX C

Grant County, Lafayette County and UWEX
Memorandum Of Understanding
RE: Purchase of Tom Schmitz’s Time as a Partial Backfill for Sue Curtis
April 2001

The Grant County Agriculture and Extension Education Committee, the Lafayette County Agriculture and Extension Education Committee and UWEX-Cooperative Extension have agreed to allow Lafayette County UWEX to purchase 30% of Tom Schmitz’s time for the period of July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002. The terms of this agreement are as follows:

☐ During the period of July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002, Schmitz will spend 30% of his time working on the Teen Assessment Program and the Violence Prevention project in Lafayette County. Additional programming in Lafayette County may be undertaken by Schmitz if time permits.

☐ The cost to Lafayette County for backfilling Sue Curtis’s time will include the purchase of Schmitz’s time and academic staff backfill for 4-H and other youth development plus $1700.00 for travel and phone. This cost will not exceed the current allocation for Sue Curtis’s salary and benefits plus pay plan increase for FY2002.

☐ During the period of July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2002, Schmitz will spend a total of 70% of his time programming in Grant County. Schmitz will spend 10% time on providing leadership to staff working with the 4-H community club program and 60% time programming in community Youth Development programs including the Teen Assessment Program, the Violence Prevention project, Friends Helping Friends, Judge Curry’s roundtable and working with the Tobacco and other coalitions.

☐ The cost to Grant County for backfilling Tom Schmitz’s time (this includes the purchase of student time, additional Youth Assistant Time and academic staff backfill plus $1700.00 for travel and phone) will not exceed the current allocation for Schmitz’s salary and benefits plus pay plan increase for FY2002.

☐ A close working relationship between Sue Curtis, Tom Schmitz and the Grant and Lafayette County Agriculture and Extension Education Committees will need to be developed and enhanced to monitor the success of the project.

☐ The UWEX Southern District office will compensate Schmitz with a temporary salary increase. The cost of this increase will be born entirely by the Cooperative Extension. Neither Lafayette or Grant County will have any financial liability for the increase.

We the undersigned agree to the terms outlined in this memorandum of understanding:

Grant County Agriculture and Extension Committee Chair

Lafayette County Agriculture and Extension Committee Chair

UWEX Cooperative Extension Southern District Director
APPENDIX D

SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

Tell us about yourself by checking all that apply:

( ) I am a youth
( ) I am an adult
( ) I am a 4-H member and/or 4-H volunteer
( ) I am a school/community agency representative

Please help us determine the quality of opportunities that are available to young people in your county through 4-H Youth Development programs. Please circle the most appropriate response to the questions in each category. Use the following scale for each question. Feel free to add additional comments to any item you wish:

1 Rarely
3 Sometimes
5 Almost Always
NA Not applicable/not able to judge

# The activities and experiences encourage curiosity, questioning, experimentation and exploration.

# There are opportunities for youth to make choices and decisions about the things they want to do.

# Youth contribute ideas for programs and activities which are accepted and implemented.

# Youth are able to participate in the program without fear of being excluded, harassed, or intimidated.

# Youth are encouraged to “give back to their community” through activities such as teen mentoring, “adopt a highway,” etc.

# There are opportunities for youth to develop and practice job-related skills.

# Caring adults are available to provide guidance and support.
Adults model appropriate ways of dealing with anger, frustration and conflict.  
5  NA

There are consistent messages about how to participate and succeed in the program.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

There are program guidelines, rules, and disciplinary consequences that are fairly and consistently enforced.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

There are opportunities for youth to grow by taking on new responsibilities and broader roles within the program.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

The things youth learn in the programs will help them succeed in other places (such as home, school, or work).  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

Adults provide guidance through coaching, feedback and discussion, rather than by telling youth what to do.  
1  2  3  4  5 NA

The Youth Development staff develop programs that are based on county needs.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

The Youth Development staff involve others in making program decisions.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

The Youth Development staff offer “vision” for the future of the program.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

University and community resources are used by the Youth Development staff in the programs they conduct.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

The Youth Development staff is able to provide sound information on issues currently facing our local youth.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

Youth Development staff offer creative programs to address current youth issues.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

Programs offered by the Youth Development staff are well-organized with positive results.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

The Youth Development staff are effective teachers of youth.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

The Youth Development staff are effective teachers of adults.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

The Youth Development staff involve the audience in learning.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

The Youth Development staff make learning fun.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

The Youth Development staff listen and respond to concerns.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA

Written and oral communications from the Youth Development staff are clear.  
1  2  3  4  5  NA
# The Youth Development staff develop productive relationships with professionals, community leaders and volunteers.

# The Youth Development staff are professional, courteous and responsive.

How familiar are you with the work of the current 4-H Youth Development staff?

- Never had any contact
- Limited contact (1 or 2 direct contacts over the past year)
- Occasional contact (3 or 4 contacts over the past year)
- Frequent contact (5 or more contacts over the past year)

Please answer these questions if you participate in a 4-H club, check all that apply.

4-H clubs in our county give service to:

- people in need and/or the elderly
- to the community and/or environment

4-H club officers know their duties and complete them:

- Always
- Sometimes
- Never

Most of the time our 4-H meetings are run by:

- 4-H club officers
- 4-H leaders
- 4-H parents

Who plans the yearly 4-H club program and activities:

- Youth
- Officers
- Leaders
- Parents

Please feel free to share any comments to help us better understand the quality of opportunities that are available to young people through 4-H Youth Development programs in your county.
APPENDIX E

Grant and Lafayette County
Youth Development Specialization Pilot Questionnaire

Please complete the following youth development pilot questionnaire. The results of this evaluation will be used to write a final report on the pilot and to share that information with other youth development colleagues. Your participation in this evaluation is voluntary and confidential to the extent allowed by law. Your responses will be combined with the responses of all other participants and you will not be individually identified on any report prepared. If you have questions, please contact Tom Schmitz, Grant/Lafayette Youth Development Educator at 608-723-2125. Completion of this questionnaire implies your consent to participate.

Please return your completed questionnaire to Tom Schmitz as soon as possible.

What is your connection to the pilot?

___ Department Head
___ District Director
___ Extension Education Committee member
___ Program Area Representative

Part of the purpose of the pilot was to see if economies of scale could be achieved. Which best describes how you feel about economies of scale or efficiencies with regard to the pilot?

___ I do not believe economies of scale were achieved, in fact the pilot was less efficient than the one agent per county model.
___ The pilot was no more or no less efficient than the one agent per county model
___ The pilot was slightly more efficient than the one agent per county model
___ The pilot was significantly more efficient than the one agent per county model

What impact do you think the pilot had on the quality of the traditional 4-H program in Grant County?

___ Don’t know
___ The quality of 4-H programming diminished greatly as a result of the pilot
___ The quality of 4-H programming diminished somewhat as a result of the pilot
___ The quality of 4-H programming diminished slightly as a result of the pilot
___ The pilot had no impact on the quality of 4-H programming
___ The quality of 4-H programming increased slightly as a result of the pilot
___ The quality of 4-H programming increased somewhat as a result of the pilot
___ The quality of 4-H programming increased greatly as a result of the pilot

over
What impact do you think the pilot had on the quality of the traditional 4-H program in **Lafayette County**?

- [ ] Don’t know
- [ ] The quality of 4-H programming diminished greatly as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of 4-H programming diminished somewhat as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of 4-H programming diminished slightly as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The pilot had no impact on the quality of 4-H programming
- [ ] The quality of 4-H programming increased slightly as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of 4-H programming increased somewhat as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of 4-H programming increased greatly as a result of the pilot

What impact do you think the pilot had on the quality of community youth development programming (coalitions, school based programming, etc) in **Lafayette County**?

- [ ] Don’t know
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming diminished greatly as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming diminished somewhat as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming diminished slightly as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The pilot had no impact on the quality of community youth development programming
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming increased slightly as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming increased somewhat as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming increased greatly as a result of the pilot

What impact do you think the pilot had on the quality of the community youth development programming (coalitions, school based programming, etc) in **Grant County**?

- [ ] Don’t know
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming diminished greatly as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming diminished somewhat as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming diminished slightly as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The pilot had no impact on the quality of community youth development programming
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming increased slightly as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming increased somewhat as a result of the pilot
- [ ] The quality of community youth development programming increased greatly as a result of the pilot
The quality of community youth development programming increased slightly as a result of the pilot.

The quality of community youth development programming increased somewhat as a result of the pilot.

The quality of community youth development programming increased greatly as a result of the pilot.

What did you see as the pilot’s greatest strengths?

What did you see as the pilot’s greatest weaknesses?

Would you recommend using specialization as a 4-H Youth Development staffing model to other counties?

Any additional comments: