Topic: Creating a Welcoming Environment from the Beginning

Age Level: Teens

Time Limit: 15 minutes

Supplies: blank papers and markers

Overview:

Can you define a welcoming environment? Is there even one specific definition? A welcoming environment is comprised of various components. One component might be that first impression. Think of a welcome mat. Welcome mats come in all kinds of different shapes, sayings, and materials. It kind of sets the tone for what you might find behind that door.

You could tell if it is a friendly house by the look of the welcome mat or if they just want to be left alone. You can see if they have a particular interest, like an animal person who has a paw print welcome mat.

What might your welcome mat be at your 4-H program? What tone would be set?

Activity:

On a blank sheet of paper, write or illustrate a collage of words or drawings depicting what a welcome mat into a positive youth development program should look like.

Things to think about:

* If you were brand new to a program, what would you want to see?
* What types of things make you feel welcomed in a new place?

Reflection:

1. Select two words/illustrations that best describe your welcome mat.
2. Why are those traits/qualities important to you?
3. How do these traits/qualities encourage people to want to come back to the next 4-H program you will offer?