

## Council Quotes

### County Extension Leaders Support Youth:

“Youth provide a unique perspective that aids in council decision-making.”

“Youth open the doors on things we do not know. They have a voice; let us hear what they have to say.”



“It is important that we as council youth and adults alike use the talents best suited for each person. That makes committed, passionate members on committees and councils.”

“Councils who do not have youth on councils are really missing out. I feel our council is more in tune with what our youth need in our community because of the younger voice.”

### Council Roles Impact Younger Members:

“I would serve on my County Extension Council again because it allows me to be a voice for the youth in our county.”



“Extension Council has opened my eyes not only about Extension, but about 4-H and community happenings.”

“I would serve on the County Extension Council in the future because it gives me a new perspective on issues happening near me, and I get the opportunity to help those situations.”

## For More Information

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**ECYL Resources:**  
<https://tinyurl.com/extcouncilyouth>

**ECYL Training for Councils:**  
<https://tinyurl.com/extcounciltrain>

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# ECYL

## Extension Council Youth Leadership



**Engaging Future Leaders  
of MU Extension Today**

## What is ECYL?



The Extension Council Youth Leadership (ECYL) program supports County Extension Councils in diversifying their membership to include youth and young adults on councils.

Through ECYL, councils gain fresh ideas, new energy, and generational insights from youth and young adults. Having young people serve on councils leads to enhanced dialogue and decision-making, and increases council linkages to other youth and adults in the community.

Youth and young adults serving on Extension councils are 4-H members and young alums who have stepped into public leadership roles in their counties.

ECYL also partners with counties to recognize young people who have served on councils, following research which underscores “public acknowledgement of youth contributions” as a key motivation for continuing civic involvement (Brennan, Barnett, and Baugh, 2007).

## Youth on Councils

Each county sets its own criteria for which youth ages 14-17 serve on the County Extension Council. Criteria that counties frequently use include:

- Youth 4-H leadership/involvement
- Youth FFA leadership/involvement
- School or community affiliation
- Youth extracurricular activity involvement
- Junior Leader roles (County 4-H Council)
- Other leadership roles (club or council officer)

Most ECYL counties have two or more youth who serve in 1-2 year staggered terms to maintain continuity. The ECYL program also assists counties with methods of identifying and engaging young adults ages 18-25 to serve on councils. Young adults are recruited by counties and serve on equal terms as other voting members.

*“ECYL is helping more youth to become aware of what Extension is and does in the county. We have some who are asking, “How can we serve on council?”*



## First Steps

1. **Talk it over with your council.** Are members aware of the value in having younger generations at the table supporting Extension?
2. **Reach a consensus on opening up council roles to younger citizens.** Are council members ready to involve youth and young adults? Are staff supportive?
3. **Reach out to ECYL contacts** for information on resources to assist your council and to identify next steps (see back panel).

## Resources

- **Training Resources**—contact ECYL about training resources for councils, which can be introduced by MU Extension faculty and/or council leaders.
- **Youth Orientation Packet**—includes information for youth on their role as an ECYL and gives them a better understanding of Extension (see back panel for web link).
- **Other councils**—over 60 Extension Councils in Missouri have had youth and/or young adults serve as members, and can share experiences and advice with your county.
- **State events**—state events including MU for You and Youth Civic Leaders Summit can help your council enhance team-building and youth-adult partnerships among members of all ages.