

How You "Might" Organize a Junior Fair Board



**2017 Putnam County Fair Junior Fair Board –
15 young people strong.**

- 1) Why do you want to organize a Junior Fair Board? What do you want them to do? Write it down and share it with the County Fair Board, ask the board for input. Make sure everyone understands from the start what the goals are, and what's expected of both youth and adults.**
- 2) What adults have experience working with youth? Designate a Fair Board Member(s) to be Liaison or Advisor to the Junior Fair Board.**
- 3) Create a Application -- establish an age range, i.e. 13 – 19 years old; ask about their activities; civic clubs; church; goals; etc. Make sure parents sign the form also. Sample application at: <http://putnamcountyfair.org/JFB.pdf>**
- 4) Start slow and small -- identify 10-12 young people to start -- you can find them by running an article in the newspaper; ask your Fair Board Members to help identify outstanding young people; Fair Board member's children or grand children; contact your County 4-H Agent and High School Agriculture Teachers; or young people who are already volunteering at your fair.**
- 5) At your first meeting get youth buy-in on goals for the group and what kind of tasks they will be expected to perform; let them decide on the mission of the group; create opportunities for them to get to know each other before the fair; talk about what is to be accomplished; what ideas do they have for new things at the fair; how do they see themselves helping with the fair; and by all means, follow their recommendations whenever possible!**

Treat them as adults and with respect -- and they will respond.

Don't just give them the 'dirty jobs.'

Don't treat them as gophers.

Listen to them!

6) Keep an open mind about the value of their contributions – be flexible and realize your best young people are already involved in ten other things so allow them to participate as they can if you want the best young people.

7) Don't start by electing officers – give them time to decide what kind of leadership structure they want or need.

8) Let them help you decide how much time they will devote to the fair during fair week and at monthly meetings; use monthly meetings for training them in public speaking, parliamentary procedure, etc; during the fair have a sign in sheet for them to track their hours to keep an official record; your schools may ask you to document their time if community service hours are valued; when problems arise let them help handle them, they need the experience and in many cases they will handle their own discipline; they will learn from their stumble more than from their wins.

9) Expect some delays, and set-back – the first year you may have some wins and some losses; one or two that join may find out they don't have the time

or it's not for them; all this is to be expected.

10) Promote them thru your media -- when you plan for publicity make sure there is an article and picture about your junior fair board; help them prepare for radio and TV interviews; have one or two take a formal spokesperson role for the fair; let them MC your events at the fair; put them out front when they are comfortable with being there; don't rush them but you may have push them a little; show them off, be proud of them.



**Make sure they have some fun jobs too!
They are capable, enthusiastic, and creative – take advantage of their talents.**

11) Give them specific roles/jobs at the fair and get out of their way – ask them to help with getting ready for the fair;



In a matter of two hours they turned wooden pallets into staging materials – even sold one to Julie Vaughn and visitors from other fairs.



They manage two fair information booths, create them, staff them and do a great job meeting the public!

Assign them or let them volunteer for your fair/event committees; let them take entries, handout awards, work in the fair office; have them organize Pick TN live Demonstrations;



Volunteer labor to renovate and improve exhibit areas in the grandstands for community service credit at school.

Let them work in the fair office and fair information booths; give them a fair schedule to share with your guests when they get questions; let them meet and greet the public;



They contacted Pick TN Products business owners, scheduled 16 live demonstrations and served as host fore each demonstration.

Ask them to do live demonstrations;



They worked with our dairy and livestock superintendants in creating and conducting live showmanship demonstrations two hours before each of our dairy, beef, sheep and goat shows.



Give them some fun time also to help them bond and get to know each other.



Created, staffed and operate our Farmer for the Day annually.

BUT don't forget to get them a ride armband or buy them tickets for your rides as a reward.



Feeding and caring for the pigs for the Greased Pig Catching Contest – one of last year's most popular new attractions at the fair.

They can do anything a fair board member can do, and by all means let them go visit and thank your fair sponsors.

12) *Identify one or two or three that do an outstanding job and invite them to join the Fair Board – show them you appreciate them and start them on a 'fair career path.'*

13) *Let them help you evaluate your fair by asking them what they like about the fair, what they dislike, and what they would suggest you change to make the fair better or let them ask your fair guests these questions – it's great way to get feedback.*

14) *Remind your adult fair board members that these are young people who will perform based on how they are treated and be prepared for some bruised egos and hurt feelings.*



Our Junior Fair Board members receiving our First Runner-Up Fair Award, AAA Division, in 2016 at the 2017 Tennessee Association of Fairs Association Awards Dinner

*For more information
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The Putnam County Fair Association, Inc. – a non-profit organization dedicated to showcasing Putnam County and Tennessee heritage, agriculture and the arts for over 92 years.

Putnam County Fair Association, Inc., P.O. Box 1001, Cookeville, TN 38501

The Possibilities are Endless,

Their Enthusiasm is Boundless,

Their Joy Infectious.

Remember,

They will inherit your fair one day – you are helping them prepare for that day.