



Kids' Community

Youth Connect Communities With New Technology

(NAPSA)—From blogging to podcasting to creating online videos, 4-H youth are leading the way, using new media and communication tools to share breaking news, event coverage and educational information with their community.

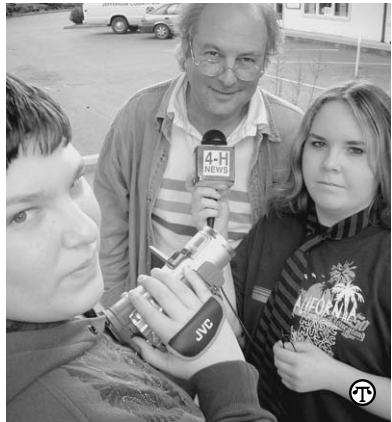
For example, the 4-H News technology club in Jefferson County, Wash., provides on-the-spot reports through video clips and podcasts posted to their 4-H Network News Web site. Club members have covered a fire in an historic hotel and a Red Cross disaster training exercise and conducted interviews with local business leaders.

The youth are hands-on in every step of putting together the one-to-two-minute news segments. “We get ideas about what we’ll do and who we’ll interview, then we take the camera, tape footage, put it on the computers and edit it,” 15-year-old Sophie Gilbert said.

Gilbert first created a video about a school reunion but quickly saw the educational value for her community. She has produced segments about avoiding drugs and alcohol and a beach restoration project. “There is a need for us to talk about some of the important things going on in our county and in the world,” she said.

The club came together as a collaboration among the local 4-H club, the Washington State University Extension office and the local newspaper. Jack Olmsted, 4-H leader for the club, Pamela Roberts, 4-H coordinator for the Jefferson County 4-H office, and the newspaper’s publisher work closely with the youth.

“Online media can be a priceless resource to capture not only



Podcasting reporters from 4-H send their stories to an international audience.

the value of the 4-H experience, but also for our community, country and the world,” said Olmsted. “The youth are getting the process down and planning segments while making them enjoyable but also informative.”

The 4-H reporters publish their stories to an international audience using tools that are readily available in homes and offices—a video camera, computer linked to the Internet and telephone. “It is important to show the world that this can be done and it’s easy for anyone to do,” said 13-year-old Daniel Bryant.

Club members see themselves as a resource to others who want to start using online media. They also improve their public speaking skills and build self-esteem as they teach adults how to create and post news segments.

4-H is a community of young people across America who are learning leadership, citizenship and life skills. Learn more about 4-H technology programs at 4husa.org.