

**News About
YOUTH GROUP DANCING
Hilton, NY
(March 13, 2003)**

Mike have been working with a teen group for the past year or so. It started out as a "family dance group" but has evolved into a "young-middle aged" teen group. They are lucky to get about 2 squares. The organizing couple has been frustrated by the fact that the Church Hall that we dance at is not available regularly and our group sometimes is not allowed to use the hall at the last minute. Mike suggested that they contact the local Co-operative Extension Office (4H) to see if they would be interested in sponsoring the teens as a part of 4H. Not only was the Co-operative Extension Office hugely interested, they have offered to give the group a hall every Friday night at no charge! It will also be publicized in the 4H catalogue as a part of their many programs for youth. But this is not the end of the story.

In March 2003 one of the local callers had an ongoing square dance beginners' class. In this class are 4 or 5 "home schooled" youth. Our teen group invited them to come over and "bring a friend." They brought 10 other youth last night. Six of them were from a family of 13 kids who are all home schooled!

This situation resulted in two "winning ways" reports:

1. The Co-operative Extension Program in our area is crying for new ideas and ways to attract youth to their programs. Perhaps those of us who are trying to work with youth square dance programs should look into this.

The "home school" youth market is huge with thousands of kids in this area alone. These are the kids that would be interested in square dancing as they don't have to deal with peer pressure in their public schools. As far as I know, this market is "untapped" as far as youth square dancing is concerned, and these are the type of kid who might enjoy this sort of thing.

Information provided by: Mike Callahan