



4-H Talking Points

4-H is one of the largest youth development programs in America with more than 6.5 million young people, ages 5-19, and 540,000 youth and adult volunteers.

4-H has three primary program areas: science, engineering and technology; healthy living; and citizenship.

4-H is the only youth development program with direct access to technological advances from university research.

Youth learn leadership, citizenship and life skills through more than 1,000 projects with topics as varied as rocketry, GPS mapping, computer game design, public speaking, photography, nutrition and community service.

4-H's learning opportunities are intentionally designed around four essential elements necessary for positive youth development by providing youth with: supervised **independence**, a sense of **belonging** with a positive group, a spirit of **generosity** toward others and a wide variety of opportunities to **master** life challenges.

The fundamental 4-H ideal of practical, "learn by doing" experiences encourages youth to experiment, innovate and think independently.

4-H programs are offered through community clubs; school-based, after-school and camp settings; and U.S. military installations worldwide.

4-H is in every community across America. During 2005, 25 percent of 4-H members lived in urban communities, 32 percent in suburban communities and 43 percent in rural communities. 4-H is located in all 50 states, Washington, D.C. and U.S. territories and U.S. military installations worldwide.

Studies show that 4-H members do better in school, are more motivated to help others, feel safe to try new things, achieve a sense of self-esteem, and develop lasting friendships.

4-H is operated and supported by a shared leadership of public and private partners including National 4-H Headquarters, USDA within the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service; 3,500 Cooperative Extension educators associated with 106 land-grant universities; National 4-H Council; 4-H associations and foundations; and trained youth and adult volunteers.

More than 60 million young people across America have been 4-H members since the 4-H Youth Development program began in 1902. Famous alumni include Al Gore, Faith Hill and David Letterman. Also, 14 governors, 33 university presidents and chancellors, 31 CEOs and four astronauts are 4-H alumni.