



#### 4-H Mission:

4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential, working and learning in partnership with caring adults.

#### 4-H Statistics:

Youth: 6.5 million  
Volunteers: 540,000  
Staff: More than 3,500  
Alumni: 60 million

#### 4-H Youth Demographics:

##### Gender:

Female: 52%  
Male: 48%

##### Race:

White or Caucasian: 77%  
Black or African American: 15%  
Asian, Native Hawaiian,  
Pacific Islander: 2%  
American Indian, Alaskan  
Native: 1%  
More Than One Race: 2%  
Undetermined: 3%

##### Ethnicity

Hispanic or Latino: 13%

##### Residence:

Cities, towns, suburbs: 55%  
Small towns, farms: 45%

#### 4-H Locations:

All 50 states, U.S. territories and military installations worldwide.

#### 4-H Pledge:

"I pledge...  
my head to clearer thinking,  
my heart to greater loyalty, my  
hands to larger service and my  
health to better living  
for my club, my community, my  
country and my world."

#### Web Sites:

[national4-headquarters.gov](http://national4-headquarters.gov)  
[fourhcouncil.edu](http://fourhcouncil.edu)

#### Find 4-H Near You:

[csrees.usda.gov/  
Extension/index.html](http://csrees.usda.gov/Extension/index.html)

## 4-H Youth Development: An Overview

Young people become confident, mature adults ready for success in today's challenging world through 4-H, the only youth development program with a direct connection to technological advances from research conducted at state land-grant universities.

Studies show that the more than 6.5 million youth participating in 4-H 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.

Boys and girls of all races and ethnic backgrounds in urban, suburban and rural communities across America and on U.S. military installations worldwide participate in 4-H experiences. 4-H programs are offered through school-based, after-school and camp settings and community clubs.

### Contemporary Focus

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

4-H has three mission mandates: **science, engineering and technology**; **healthy living**; and **citizenship**. Youth learn leadership, citizenship and life skills through more than 1,000 projects with topics as varied as rocketry, GPS mapping, DNA analysis, public speaking, photography, nutrition and community service.

### Positive Youth Development

Educators at 106 land-grant universities operate 4-H programs in every state and U.S. territory, alongside trained youth and adult volunteers. Learning opportunities are designed around four essential elements necessary for positive youth development. 4-H offers youth 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.

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; Cooperative Extension educators at land-grant universities; National 4-H Council; 4-H associations and foundations; and volunteers.

### An American Institution

The 4-H youth development movement began more than 100 years ago. It evolved from rural youth programs created by land-grant college and university researchers and the United States Department of Agriculture to introduce new technology to what was then a country of primarily rural communities. As our nation's economic and demographic profiles become more diverse, 4-H adapts and expands to meet the needs of all youth.