

Ohio State University Fact Sheet

State 4-H Office

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What Is 4-H Youth Development?

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4-H Youth Development Focus

Youth development is the reason for the Ohio 4-H Program. Both the Ohio 4-H mission statement and the 4-H Pledge illustrate that youth development is the central focus of Ohio 4-H. The mission of the Ohio 4-H Youth Development program is to enable youth to reach their fullest potential as capable, competent, caring, and contributing citizens. The 4-H Pledge highlights the development of the head, heart, hands, and health.

4-H is many times recognized by its emblem, a four-leaf clover with an "H" in each leaf. The letters on the emblem stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health. These form the foundation for all 4-H programs.

The 4-H Youth Development program encompasses the cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development of young people. The 4-H pledge helps to emphasize how young people grow and learn through 4-H.

Development of Head for Clearer Thinking . . .

(cognitive development)

Practicing skills to develop competent citizens.

Examples are:

- a. Acquire skills and knowledge in subject matter areas such as agriculture, family and consumer science, science and technology.
- b. Develop leadership skills and fulfill leadership roles.
- c. Explore and evaluate career and job opportunities.

Development of Heart for Greater Loyalty . . .

(emotional development)

Practicing skills to develop caring citizens .

Examples are:

- a. Learn to respect and get along with people.
- b. Develop volunteers as individuals and leaders for 4-H and the community.
- c. Participate in community affairs.

Development of Hands for Larger Service . . .

(social development)

Practicing skills to develop contributing citizens.

Examples are:

- a. Learn the value of community service.
- b. Learn communication and teamwork skills.
- c. Take pride in workmanship, practicing "good work ethic."
- d. Learning to value and appreciate diversity.

Development of Health for Better Living . . .

(physical development)

Practicing skills to develop capable citizens.

Examples are:

- a. Develop a positive self image.
- b. Use leisure time productively.
- c. Develop and practice responsible environmental skills.

For . . .

- ! The betterment of clubs, communities, the country, and the world.
- ! Changing and improving our diverse society.
- ! Strengthening family relationships, solving issues and problems, and developing life roles.

The Purpose of 4-H

The purpose of 4-H is to provide learning experiences and opportunities for youth which will help them grow and develop to their fullest potential. The 4-H youth development program encourages individuals to reach their potential through:

- ! Hands-on and experiential learning that encourages learning by doing.
- ! Growth through successes and challenges.
- ! Exploring a wide range of opportunities.
- ! Providing supportive and nurturing environments, and relationships that empower people to voluntarily help themselves and each other.

4-H Volunteers

The success of the 4-H youth development program is attributed to its volunteers. A 4-H volunteer is anyone who contributes time, energies, or talents to the 4-H program and is not paid by Ohio State University Extension funds.

Specific 4-H volunteer roles may include:

- ! Club advisors/leaders
- ! Middle managers/key leaders
- ! School enrichment volunteers
- ! Special emphasis volunteers
- ! Committee members
- ! Youth volunteers

4-H volunteers enrich the youth development program through teaching, developing programs and 4-H projects, securing resources, and providing positive life experiences for young people.

The 4-H Structure

- ! Four-H is a part of The Ohio State University Extension of The Ohio State University, the Federal Extension, and the United States Department of Agriculture. Many Extension personnel are faculty members of the University.
- ! Four-H is tax supported, with combined county, state, and federal efforts.
- ! Governments have permitted 4-H to develop into a practical, educational program based on everyday living.
- ! Four-H is global. All 50 states and many countries throughout the world are actively involved in 4-H.
- ! 4-H members are involved in one of several ways.
 - 9 - community club
 - 9 - special interest groups
 - 9 - school enrichment programs
- ! Four-H makes effective use of volunteer leadership to expand the total youth's development effort.

The 4-H Motto in Youth Development

The 4-H motto, "To Make the Best Better," was established in 1927. It infers that each person will do the "best" that he or she possibly can in whatever is attempted, then will try to improve the next time to make it even "better." The motto has remained the same through the years and carries a great deal of meaning for millions of 4-H members.

References

The Ohio 4-H Agents Program Book, 3rd edition (1994). The Ohio State University.

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Building Leadership and Skills Together. (1992). The Ohio State University.

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