



4-H and Youth Development

Photo by Mike Mareen

Montana youth are thriving in 4-H programs. 4-H offers a powerful connection to the community and the opportunity for youth to gain employable skills that last a lifetime.

4-H is Life Skills Through Project-Based Learning

17,917 Montana youth enrolled in animal and vet science projects, from lizards to llamas and snakes to steers, learning responsibility, goal setting, record keeping and resiliency. Youth enrolled in animal projects mastered skills such as self-motivation and discipline. These are transferable skills as youth reach higher education and a career.

6,504 Montana youth enrolled in environment, educational, and earth science projects have gained an understanding and appreciation for Montana's natural resources.

4-H is Employable Skills

The 4,977 youth enrolled in food and nutrition projects, 3,544 youth enrolled in plant science and weeds projects, and 1,607 youth enrolled in technology and engineering 4-H projects are exploring rewarding career opportunities and finding passion in employable fields at early ages.

The knowledge and skills gained mastering 4-H projects like crop science, robotics and food science prepares youth for meaningful employment later in life.

QUICK FACTS

20,000 youth in 4-H and afterschool programs learning life skills through hands-on projects.

4-H members contribute thousands of hours back to communities every year.

4,000 adult volunteers sharpen leadership skills and contribute to growing kids and communities

4-H is Communication Skills That Can Be Applied in All Parts of Their Future

An average 4-H member has multiple opportunities to present and interview throughout the 4-H year. These unique opportunities add up and allow 4-H'ers to develop confidence and skills communicating in both prepared and spontaneous settings.

"I have participated in multiple presentations, from one person in the audience to hundreds. If I had not done 4-H I would not have [had] these opportunities to develop my speaking and listening skills."

— Gallatin County 4-H'er, age 13

4-H is a Connection to Community

4-H brings youth together with caring adults and peers, both face-to-face and virtually, to ensure belonging and connection to their community. Youth who feel connected are less likely to suffer from severe depression or attempt suicide.

A recent study indicated that participation in 4-H during the COVID-19 pandemic contributed to keeping communities connected during isolation. This might have been a virtual activity, a call from a 4-H volunteer, or service project done at home. 4-H'ers helped themselves, their friends and their community during challenging times.

4-H is Learning to Lead in Their Own Communities

3,785 Montana youth enrolled in the leadership project develop character, focus on personal growth, and practice goal setting. 4-H members identify needs in their community and are encouraged to mobilize and lead members to meet those needs through community-based projects.

4-H members execute a project to make a difference in their community, reflect on what they have accomplished and identify what they can do differently to increase impact.

4-H is Being a Good Citizen

4 H programs empower youth to be well-informed citizens who are actively engaged in their communities and the world. Youth build decision-making skills and develop a sense of understanding and confidence in relating and connecting to other people.

Over 44% of surveyed 4-H youth in grades 7-12 credit their 4-H experience for providing a greater opportunity to learn about people who are different from them.

4 H members contribute hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours back to communities every year.

Over half of grade 3-6 4-H members indicated they had more opportunity to help plan a community service project since joining 4-H, while 24% reported having led a community service project as a member of 4-H.



4-H members. Photos by Allyssa Zoern and JaNaie' Godin

