



WHAT IS 4-H?

4-H is a Community

4-H programming is delivered by trained adult volunteers and Cooperative Extension staff. A community of more than 100 public universities across the nation, Cooperative Extension provides resources and experiences where young people learn by doing. Through 4-H, youth complete hands-on projects in areas like health, science, agriculture and citizenship, in a positive environment where they receive guidance from mentors and are encouraged to take on proactive leadership roles. Youth experience 4-H through in-school and after-school programs, community clubs, independent study, special interest groups, and 4-H camps.

National Reach, Local Programs

4-H's reach and depth is unmatched; reaching kids in every corner of America – from urban neighborhoods to suburban schoolyards to rural farming communities. Our network of 500,000 volunteers and 3,500 4-H professionals provides caring and supportive mentoring to nearly 6 million 4-H'ers, helping them grow into true leaders today and in life.



4-H'ers are...

4X

More likely to give back to their community

2X

More likely to make healthier choices

2X

More likely to participate in STEM activities



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ALL ABOUT 4-H!

The 4-H Emblem

The 4-H emblem is a highly valued mark within our country's history. It was granted a very unique status; it is in a category similar to the Presidential Seal and the Olympic emblem. It is protected by the federal government and is under the responsibility and stewardship of the Secretary of Agriculture. The "18 USC 707" code that appears along the right lower leaf protects the use of the clover.

The 4-H Colors

Green is nature's most common color and represents youth, life, and growth. White symbolizes purity and high ideals.

For printing, 4-H green is 100% PMS 347 green.

The 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.



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HISTORY OF 4-H

1914: Cooperative Extension System is Created

The Cooperative Extension System is a partnership of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), more than 100 land-grant universities and more than 3,000 county offices across the nation. Cooperative Extension combines the expertise and resources of federal, state, and local governments and is designed to meet the need for research, knowledge and educational programs.

The passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914 created the Cooperative Extension System at USDA and nationalized 4-H. By 1924, 4-H clubs were formed and the clover emblem was adopted.

4-H Today

Today, 4-H serves youth in rural, urban, and suburban communities in every state across the nation. 4-H'ers are tackling the nation's top issues, from global food security, climate change and sustainable energy to childhood obesity and food safety. 4-H out-of-school programming, in-school enrichment programs, clubs and camps also offer a wide variety of STEM opportunities – from agricultural and animal sciences to rocketry, robotics, environmental protection and computer science – to improve the nation's ability to compete in key scientific fields and take on the leading challenges of the 21st century.



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HISTORY OF 4-H

Late 1800's: Making Connections

In the late 1800's, researchers discovered adults in the farming community did not readily accept new agricultural developments, but found that young people were open to new thinking and would experiment with new ideas and share their experiences with adults. In this way, rural youth programs introduced new agriculture technology to communities. Building community clubs to help solve agricultural challenges was a first step toward youth learning more about the industries in their community.

1902: Youth Clubs are Formed

A.B. Graham started a youth program in Clark County, Ohio, in 1902, which is considered the birth of 4-H in the United States. The first club was called "The Tomato Club" or the "Corn Growing Club". T.A. Erickson of Douglas County, Minnesota, started local agricultural after-school clubs and fairs that same year. Jessie Field Shambaugh developed the clover pin with an H on each leaf in 1910. In 1911, O. H. Benson suggested a fourth H be added to represent "Hustle"; a readiness to serve with health and vitality. By 1912 they were called 4-H clubs.

In Vermont

In 1914, the first local Vermont 4-H club was a girls' group in White River Junction known as the Ellen H. Richards Home Economics Club. Within a year of its formation, 80 other clubs were started in 65 different towns.



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CLOVERBUDS VS. PROJECT MEMBERS

PROGRAM CRITERIA	CLOVERBUD	PROJECT MEMBER
What is the age eligibility? (as of Jan 1 of current year)	Age 5 thru age 7	Age 8 thru age 18
What is the learning focus?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity-centered • Short activities on varied topics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project-centered • Time commitment dependent on project • Club activities challenge & support project learning
Who directs the learning process?	Leader-directed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member self-study • Member & Leader-directed.
What is the basis for the learning experience?	Leader-directed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Manual • Resource Handbooks • Teaching Aids
What animal experiences are possible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small animals, in a group, handled by leader • No large animal experiences permitted 	Small & large animals as selected by member and parent/guardian
What are the evaluation criteria?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation • No competition • Equal recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation • Competition (<i>if desired</i>) • Achievement



WHAT IS A 4-H PROJECT?

What are 4-H projects?

Learning by doing is a philosophy of 4-H. Youth choose projects which become the vehicle for learning a particular subject while also learning life skills and job skills. Short-term programs and projects offer another channel for skill building outside of the club model. Our programs and projects create hands-on, fun learning opportunities. Within a particular project, members find things to learn, to do, to make, and to explore.

How do the projects proceed?

Each year, a 4-H club member enrolls in at least one project. Your project group may meet once a week or as little as once or twice a month. The purpose of these meetings is to guide participants in gaining the knowledge and habits needed to complete their work successfully.

What do you do with project area record books?

Completing a 4-H record book is a process where 4-H members record project and club work. Record keeping has a bonus for 4-H'ers! They gain satisfaction and motivation from observable progress and learning. As they set goals and measure progress, they gain in self-esteem and confidence.

How is project achievement monitored?

We continually recognize 4-H youth for their achievements within the program. Recognition comes in many forms, and can be linked to participation, achievement, cooperation, or competition. The purpose of recognition is to encourage and support the efforts of young people in learning to improve their knowledge and develop their life skills



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STATE DAY & BIG E

4-H State Day

4-H State Day is a capstone experience for 4-H members who advance from county or regional competitions, to share and further compete with their 4-H project work. Participants not only further their self-confidence by sharing their project work with others, but they also benefit from evaluators' feedback on display and exhibit presentation as well areas in which their projects especially excelled. State Day is also a competition where presentations are selected to represent Vermont in the New England Center at the Big E in September.

Below is a list competition categories. **Please note:** Any project submitted must have been created or developed in the 12 months preceding the event.

- Action Exhibits
- Communications
- Photography
- Posters
- Sewing
- Stage Presentation
- Table Tops
- Technology

Eastern States Exposition (Big E)

For those exhibits and/or presentations chosen to represent Vermont at the Big E, a mandatory, local orientation/info session is required. Vermont fills the New England Center on the first Sunday & Monday of the Fair, and youth are expected to arrive by first Saturday for an onsite orientation.

Information about Big E can be found at their website:

www.thebige.com - competitions - 4-H



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FUN AT FAIRS

The county fair is another avenue for youth to expand their knowledge on a specific project area, experience judging and exhibition, and enhance many life skills such as interviewing, public speaking, responsibility, and more.

County fairs also offer an opportunity to educate the public about 4-H and offer all the chance to get involved.

The following counties have fairs with 4-H/youth components:

Addison	Addison County Fair/Field Days
Caledonia	Caledonia County Fair
Chittenden	Champlain Valley Fair
Franklin/Grand Isle	Franklin County Field Days
Lamoille	Lamoille County Field Days
Orange	Connecticut Valley Fair
Orleans	Orleans County Fair
Rutland/Bennington	Vermont State Fair



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BECOME A 4-H VOLUNTEER

4-H Volunteer Leaders are representatives of University of Vermont Extension. To become a 4-H volunteer, you must:

1. Complete the University of Vermont Extension Volunteer Application form and submit it to your County Extension Office.
2. Read and sign the Code of Conduct form.
3. Complete the Vermont Child Abuse and Neglect/Adult Protective Services Registry Form. In addition, please be advised that UVM Extension will conduct a Vermont Criminal Information Check and the State Director will review any convictions listed, using the volunteer criteria:
 - a. Conviction of a criminal offense will not automatically disqualify the applicant from eligibility for a volunteer position.
 - b. The severity of the crime and length of time since the last conviction will also be considered.
 - c. A history of no convictions doesn't necessarily guarantee applicant a volunteer position.
4. Your references will be sent a form to be completed and returned to the Extension Office. **If you have resided in Vermont less than one year, at least one reference must be obtained from previous residence and you will be asked to complete an FBI background check requiring fingerprints. Please let your County 4-H Educator know so they can provide you with directions.**
5. Meet with the County 4-H Educator to complete an interview.
6. Upon acceptance as a 4-H volunteer, you will receive an official appointment letter, 4-H volunteer leader card and a copy of your Code of Conduct.



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SAMPLE 4-H VOLUNTEER DESCRIPTION

Objectives: To promote and foster the development of leadership, citizenship, and life skills. To help make the organized 4-H club program available in the community, and to ensure that the administrative needs are met.

Responsibilities/Goals:

- Serve as liaison between County Extension office and 4-H club .
- Provide enrollment information, financial data or other information, as requested by the 4-H Educator, to county office in a timely manner.
- Attend volunteer leader trainings, meetings and activities as relevant.
- Share 4-H communications.
- Be knowledgeable of, and uphold UVM 4-H policies and procedures, including adherence to risk management protocols.
- Provide equal opportunities for youth.

Support: The University of Vermont 4-H Educator provides support through teaching materials, trainings, newsletters, and answers to specific questions or concerns.

Qualifications:

- To enjoy and respect youth.
- To be detail-oriented, organized and a good communicator.
- Successfully complete volunteer application process .

Time: Hours vary depending on the club and interests of its members. One year commitment is ideal to provide continuity to staff, club members, parents and leaders.

Benefits: 4-H volunteers gain personal satisfaction watching youth learn and grow into knowledgeable, caring individuals. Volunteers also learn youth development principles and age appropriate activities.

More information can be found at our website.



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TEEN OPPORTUNITIES

All youth have leadership potential. Most leadership specialists agree that leaders are made, not born, and that young people can learn and develop leadership attitudes and skills. Becoming a leader is a developmental process but this process is often overlooked in education.

Vermont 4-H offers a wide variety of opportunities which enable teens to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, and aspirations needed for success in the 21st century. Teens can participate in programs focused on LEADERSHIP, CITIZENSHIP, and LIFESKILLS, through exploring a variety of topics.

Our programs include:

- TRY (Teens Reaching Youth) for the Environment
- Youth Environmental Summit
- Natural Resources Management Academy
- Citizenship Washington Focus
- Leadership Washington Focus
- Teen Leadership Weekend
- TRY 4-H!
- VTeen 4-H Science Pathways Café

Other opportunities for teen include serving on state-wide committees and more.

For more details on any of these programs, visit the Teen & Leadership website:

<http://www.uvm.edu/extension/youth/leadership/>



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IMPORTANT DATES

The 4-H year runs from October-September. Below is a generalized list of annual events. Details and more events are announced throughout the year.

October	Enrollment!
November	Youth Environmental Summit State Dairy Challenge Teen Leadership Weekend
December	TRY for the Environment Events
January/February	Regional Livestock knowledge contests
February/March	State Lambing Clinic Poultry Quiz Bowl & Skill-a-thon State Livestock Quiz Bowls
March/April	Regional Days State Day Livestock Approval Forms Due
May/June/July	Regional Livestock Shows
July/August	State Livestock Shows Shooting Sports Jamboree Regional/State Fairs State Dairy Show
September	Eastern States Exposition (Big E) Outdoor Family Weekend
October/November	County/Regional Achievement Awards



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CONTACT INFORMATION

To learn more, or to talk about what kinds of accommodations are available for equal-opportunity learning, contact your local UVM Extension county office:

Addison County	1-800-956-1125
Bennington County	1-800-287-1552
Caledonia County	1-800-545-8920
Chittenden County	1-800-571-0668
Essex County	1-866-260-5561
Franklin County	1-800-639-2130
Grand Isle County	1-800-639-2130
Lamoille County	1-866-260-5603
Orange County	1-866-860-1382
Orleans County	1-866-260-5561
Rutland County	1-800-281-6977
Washington County	1-866-860-1382
Windham County	1-800-278-5480
Windsor County	1-800-278-5471



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