



# 4-H Youth Development





## *In the Beginning...*

In the early years, most clubs were organized through schools, with teachers serving as leaders. Nationally, the beginning of 4-H dates back to 1902, when A.B. Graham organized the first 4-H club in the basement of the Clark County Courthouse in Springfield Township, Ohio. The first 4-H club in Arizona was organized as the Boys Cotton Club in Chandler by George Peabody in 1913.

After the passage of the U.S. Smith-Lever Act in 1914, 12 cotton, corn, and grain sorghum 4-H clubs were formed in Arizona. Canning, swine, and poultry clubs were organized in 1915 by Leland Park. He became the first employee to devote full time to clubs for boys and girls.

The 4-H pledge was written by Kansas 4-H leader Otis Hall and was adopted during the first national 4-H Club Camp in Washington, D.C. in 1927.

***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 the world (added in 1973).***

Boys' and girls' clubs became known as "4-H Clubs" in the early 1930's. 4-H was originally designed not only to educate youth, but also so that these young men and women would bring information home to their parents.

## *University Research Makes the Difference*

**U**niversity approved curricula is designed for non-professional use, so that it is easy for anyone to pick up and use at club meetings, after-school programs or in the classroom. Hands-on learning is the basic design of 4-H educational programs. Participants learn by doing projects that are designed to fit the needs of youth at different ages. Most 4-H programs have been designed so that older youth can learn skills and teach younger participants.

While 4-H in Arizona had its beginnings in rural areas, 4-H now serves young people and volunteers from the major urban centers and suburban communities. Today's 4-H still has science and technology as its foundation. In addition, many projects are in personal growth and development and healthy lifestyle education.

The University of Arizona is the land grant institution of the state of Arizona which has a three-pronged mission: Teaching, Research and Outreach. 4-H Youth Development is the youth outreach component of Cooperative Extension which is the major outreach component of the University.

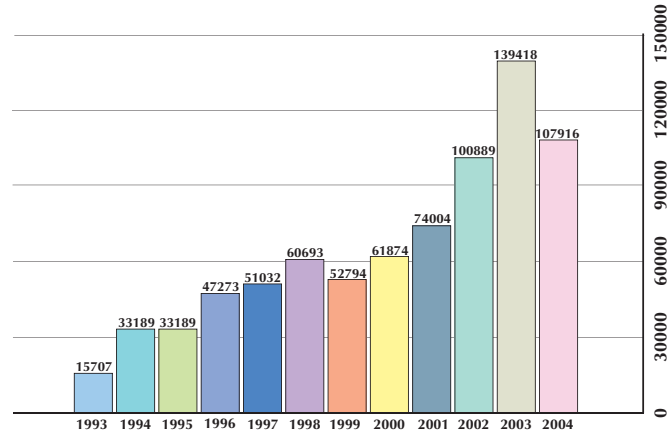


**4-H** is the only youth program with direct access to technological advances in agriculture, life sciences, human development, social sciences and related areas which result from land-grant university research. 4-H Youth Development is helping young people become mature, competent adults capable of participation and leadership in their communities with valuable skills on entry into the workforce.



The one element which sets 4-H apart from other youth serving organizations is its focus on educational programming based on research accomplished in concert with university faculty in the field and on campus. 4-H was originally founded to address scientific issues related to agriculture.

## Arizona 4-H Youth Development Participation Twelve Year Comparison



**“To Make The Best Better”  
is the motto of 4-H**

The 4 H's represent the four-fold training and development that 4-H'ers receive. Together the 4 H's symbolize: the development of HEAD, to think, plan and reason; the HEART, to be concerned with the welfare of others, accept the responsibilities of citizenship, and develop positive attitudes; the HANDS, to be useful, helpful, and skillful; and HEALTH, to practice healthful living, enjoy life and use leisure time productively.

Results of a national research impact assessment project, led by the University of Arizona, were distilled down to four topic areas considered essential to positive youth development: Mastery, Generosity, Belonging and Independence.

The question asked was—What positive outcomes in youth, adults and communities result from the presence of critical elements in a 4-H experience?





“When I was growing up I thought that 4-H was only about cows, hogs, and pigs so I did not want to be a part of that. Now that I’ve really come to learn and understand what it’s all about, I’ve become more involved to the point that I want to see every child learn to become a great helper, servant, leaders and partners to everything that is a positive side to their life to succeed.”

-Mrs. Robinson, Ft. Huachuca 4-H military volunteer

# Mastery

## CONSTRUCTIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

By exploring 4-H projects and activities, youth master skills to make positive career and life choices. To do so, youth must have access to quality research-based content and have the opportunity to learn by doing, ensuring workforce preparation.

### 4-H Technology Project

Arizona has formed a statewide 4-H Technology Program which is investigating learning opportunities in a number of emerging fields. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Global Positioning Systems (GPS) are being used in applications such as road construction and compiling census information and maps.

In Arizona, training young people for high-tech careers has been identified as a need of the Colorado River Indian Tribe (CRIT), whose representatives wanted their tribal members to become employable while also developing technological job opportunities on the reservation. UA campus-based researchers work with field faculty to develop programs.

## The Arizona Youth Livestock Quality Assurance and Food Safety Program

Emphasizing good management practices in the handling and use of animal health products encourages young livestock producers to review their approach to health programs for their animals. All youth livestock exhibitors are required to attend a “Quality Assurance and Food Safety” certification workshop prior to participating in their county fair and/or the state fair.

Youth livestock producers are one link in the chain of wholesome food production. Following good health, nutrition and management practices can ensure that animals perform at their highest level, and are a safe, wholesome product for consumers.

## Agricultural Literacy

With increasing urbanization, children as well as adults are unaware of not only the importance of agriculture to Arizona’s economy but where food and fiber actually comes from.

In 1998, the first year of operation of the Farm Ag-Ventures Program at the University of Arizona’s Maricopa Agricultural Center, 1,800 teachers and school children attended the educational programs. Since then, the numbers have increased to about 4,000 people on an annual basis. The educational events are adjusted to age, grade level and season. Seventeen different stops on an educational trail represents different vegetative zones of Arizona, including an area featuring information on crops grown by Native American tribes in the Southwest.

The subject matter skills taught in 4-H projects are the foundation for the youth development that can be of economic, social and/or personal value to youth in their future.

Technology, and the adoption of innovative technologies, has always been a key component of the 4-H Program.

By participating in club projects and activities members are given the opportunity to explore possibilities for future careers. Many 4-H alumni report that the enjoyment and sense of mastery they experienced through their most successful 4-H project work laid the seed for future employment.

“I am very fortunate to have had so many opportunities to learn new things, meet new people and make my town and state a better place, because of what 4-H has done for me.”  
-Samantha Morriss, Santa Cruz 4-H member



# Generosity

## SERVICE TO COMMUNITIES

Youth need to feel their lives have meaning and purpose. By participating in 4-H community service and citizenship activities, youth can connect to communities and learn to give back to others. These experiences provide the foundation to understand the “big picture” of life and find purpose and meaning. Youth learn that they do not live in a secluded world, but, instead, a global community, which requires awareness and compassion for others.

Over 3,000 adult and youth volunteers serve the mission of 4-H in Arizona which is to provide educational opportunities for youth to become capable and contributing members of a global society.



### Youth and Adult Partnerships

In Arizona, the 4-H Youth Development Program has implemented a Youth Adult Council to bring youth and adults together to provide direction for the 4-H program statewide. In addition, 4-H faculty and youth volunteers are participating in the Governors Youth Development task force. These efforts give youth voice in decision making and allow them to participate in political action democratic processes.



## Character Education

Arizona school personnel report that disruptions in the classroom due to behavior problems reduce the number of effective teaching hours in a school day.

As one of the pre-approved providers under the Arizona Department of Education grant (with the Arizona K-12 Center), 4-H Youth Development consults with school districts on character education. Teachers from throughout the state included character education concepts— Respect, Responsibility, Trustworthiness, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship—in curriculum and also infused the concepts through aspects of school culture such as signage.

The Arizona 4-H Youth Development programs put together “Hero Packs” designed to boost the morale of families of deployed soldiers. They were distributed by 4-H offices in Arizona counties where Army and Air Force bases are located. The packs contained items such as an e-camera, 4-H backpack, assorted toys and other 4-H items, and a hand-written letter to the service member of their family.

**4-H** is designed to support the positive and successful development of all youth. 4-H volunteer leaders are essential partners in creating a positive environment by focusing on the strengths of youth.

**4-H** is leading a nationwide movement to give youth a more active voice in public decision making and engaging diverse youth in governance work in partnership with adults.

“We decided as a school to adopt the six pillars of character building. Our teachers have attended training and we all are using the same vocabulary. We reinforce it through ceremonies, skits, reward for positive behavior and civic behavior.”

**-Payson elementary school teacher**



# *Independence*

## **LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

Creating opportunities for youth to develop skills and confidence for leadership and self-discipline is a cornerstone of 4-H. 4-H helps young people recognize the connection between independence and responsibility. Through 4-H leadership opportunities, youth mature in self-discipline and responsibility, learn to better understand themselves and become independent thinkers.

## **The Mini-Society**

Youth have the opportunity to experience the roles and responsibilities associated with a mature society. By creating a simulated society youth are able to explore experiences associated with choosing government leadership, creating businesses, solving social problems and experiencing the consequences of one's decisions.

In La Paz County, using curricula developed by the Kaufman Foundation, 16 different programs were implemented and conducted in five different schools and with two different youth agencies. Evaluations were conducted and Mini-Society students showed an increase in positive attitudes toward school and learning in general.

## **JOLT (Journey of Opportunities for Leaders of Tomorrow)**

This annual Arizona Teen Leadership camp includes activities designed to promote trust-building, leadership and communication skills. Teenagers aged 14-18 of various backgrounds gather from across Arizona to develop open-minded and positive attitudes, develop a strong sense of teamwork, and learn to reject selfish actions that only benefit individuals. Conflict resolution skills and relationship building skills help participants enhance their interpersonal skills and strengthen their communication abilities.

More than 1,400 teens have attended JOLT over the past 16 years.

Teens who were youth staff members have gone on to serve as state 4-H Ambassadors and state 4-H Teen Council officers and representatives. Participants reported increasing their leadership skills and abilities by 19 percent; ability to trust others by 15 percent, and ability to logically solve problems in a group by 13 percent.

**4-H** Youth Development educates adults on important youth development principles and practices. This ensures that 4-H Youth Development programs create positive opportunities for young people to reach their full potential.

*"We are thankful that our 18-year-old son is so focused on this leadership opportunity and not troubled like others we see and hear of. We feel blessed that we have JOLT and 4-H in our kids' lives."*

**-Mother of a 2003 JOLT youth staff member**

*"The greatest satisfaction is seeing teens serve on staff and watch them grow by developing leadership skills through planning and implementing programs for their peers. Most youth staff begin with limited understanding and skills and by the time camp is over they are confident and competent leaders."*

**-JOLT advisor.**

*"4-H changed my life in many ways, but no other thing has changed my life in a positive way as much as JOLT. I will use the skills I learned there for the rest of my life."*

**-Tanner Hebert, Cochise County 4-H member**



"4-H is not only for children; it is a family affair. This program has been a good influence in my children's lives and the experience has given our family a chance to bond and work together. 4-H has been a great learning opportunity for our children; it has shown our children responsibility and independence, and a sense of belonging."

-The Valtierra Family, Gila County

## *Belonging*

### **CARING RELATIONSHIP**

Youth need to know they are cared about by others and feel a sense of connection to others in the group. Research suggests that a sense of belonging may be the single most powerful positive ingredient in the lives of children and youth.

### **Project LEAP (Leadership Education Adventure for Pre-teens)**

Because adolescents are often testing boundaries and their role in the adult world, they may leave behind the groups in which they were previously involved, but haven't found a suitable replacement niche. Providing alternative opportunities not only gives pre-teens a sense of belonging (thus promoting 4-H youth development and helping to ensure membership as an older teen) but offers valuable life skills development.

Youth were taught numerous physical activities to encourage productive, healthy lifestyles. They were trained to identify current activities and skills needed to avoid risky behaviors. They had an opportunity to interact with people of diverse cultures and make new friends. Youth and adults alike were trained in safe camping practices in preparation for the time when the youth will attend 4-H teen and leadership camps.

## 4-H Military

In Arizona, 4-H works with five military installations and is serving as a host for four Air Force bases overseas providing predictable, consistent youth programs on Army installations worldwide. A key benefit is that soldiers can focus on their mission, knowing that their children are in safe, supervised environments with caring adults.

In Cochise County, the Arizona 4-H Military partnership resulted in 150 new 4-H club members, which is an increase in Cochise County traditional club membership of 30% in one year. Eleven 4-H clubs offered projects such as photography, exploring your environment, arts & crafts, needle crafts, woodworking, computers and foods and nutrition.

## San Carlos Indian Reservation 4-H Program

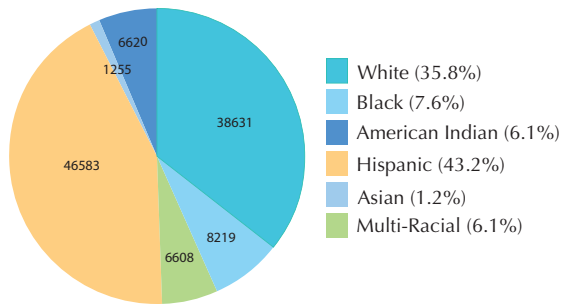
The 4-H program on the reservation was revamped to encourage stronger leadership and collaboration among leaders specific to the cultural needs of the San Carlos Apache Tribe. A new set of 4-H Youth Development record books for San Carlos Apache youth were developed using the model and colors of the four geographic directions so that 4-H club members construct not only their projects, but learn about their traditional culture while continuing to be a part of the larger 4-H world. The elements of the record book meet the Gila County Fair 4-H record book requirements, but in a different format.

Organizational skills, patience and group dynamics are key traits learned that become priceless assets to youth as they mature into contributing adults in society.

4-H is the largest youth serving organization in the world as well as in Arizona. With its programming in venues such as school enrichment, special interest, 4-H clubs, school-aged child care education, and camping, 4-H is able to partner with many other youth serving organizations to help young people develop life-long skills.



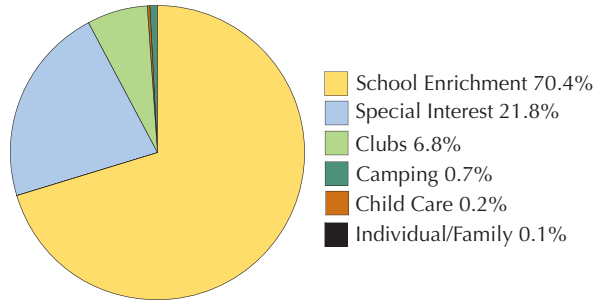
## How 4-H programs reach youth



Total = 107,916 

Benefits offered by 4-H programs have been tested with diverse audiences, have met stringent educational objectives and are research-based.

4-H in Arizona consistently reaches over 100,000 children from the ages of 5 to 9 with over half of the participants being of color.



# Ensuring the Future of 4-H

Additional financial support for the future of Arizona's 4-H programs is provided through annual donations to the Arizona 4-H Youth Foundation, and through planned gifts of stocks, bonds, property, or life insurance policies. Currently, over 60 endowments have been established to ensure the future of Arizona 4-H.

- The Colorado River Indian Tribe (CRIT) tribal council established an endowment to support youth programs throughout La Paz County.
- A 4-H scholarship endowment for Pima County 4-H'ers was created in memory of a long-time 4-H leader who worked with swine projects, shooting education and at camp for 30 years.
- Additional classroom space was recently opened to school tours at the Maricopa Agricultural Center. Due to the commitment and generosity of private donors, an educational learning facility called the Faul Ag-Village (right) has been developed to carry out Ag Literacy efforts. A support endowment for the program will continue teaching young people about the importance of agriculture.
- A state 4-H museum was created at the Maricopa Agricultural Center to document and promote the rich history of Arizona's 4-H Youth Development Program. The museum houses over 1,000 historic 4-H photos, record books, and other memorabilia.



- Youth participate in 4-H school enrichment programs—which include a sequence of learning experiences in cooperation with school officials during school hours.
- Youth meet for day camps—centered around a special interest; participation is generally short-term.
- Youth meet in organized 4-H clubs—led by an adult with a planned program that is carried on throughout all or most of the year.
- Other—after school child care education, camping and individual/family efforts.

**For more information on 4-H Youth Development programs in Arizona:**

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La Paz  
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(928) 753-3788

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**Indian reservation offices**

Colorado River Indian Tribe  
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This publication is dedicated to Bill Peterson, 4-H Youth Development Program Leader from 1994-2005

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