

Investing in Crawford County Youth with 4-H

According to research completed by the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University-

4-H'ers are **4X** more likely to make contributions to their communities, **2x** more likely to be civically active, and **2x** more likely to make healthier choices.



In Crawford County 4-H, we believe in the power of young people. By providing opportunities to learn and lead, 4-H helps youth become informed and engaged community members. While exploring new topics and activities in an experiential way, youth build the skills they need for life.

In 2017, Crawford County 4-H had a total of **twenty-six screened adult volunteers, ninety-six youth enrolled as 4-H club members** and **six youth who attended summer camps** from around the county. In addition, **1,315 children or 51.6% of Crawford County youth aged 5 to 19** took part in learning opportunities with MSU Extension. Essential skills youth develop while participating in 4-H include problem solving, decision making, leadership, resiliency and communication.

4-H is unique in that it offers experiences to young people who live in cities or rural areas by providing the opportunity to participate in community 4-H clubs, learning experiences in school classrooms, day and overnight camps and other special interest events. One example includes MSU 4-H Exploration Days, a pre-college program where over 2500 youth stay in MSU residence halls, take a variety of action packed classes and experience other aspects of a major university. In 2017, **seven youth from Crawford County** attended MSU 4-H Exploration Days.

“Exploration days was fun because I got to see a university and what it is like to stay there and attend classes. It makes me want to go to college.” - 4-H youth member

Beyond the excitement of learning something new through a project, youth have the opportunity to participate in leadership conferences, travel the world, become involved in their community through service, and meet new friends in a safe and comfortable setting. A young person's experiences in 4-H makes a difference for a lifetime by allowing them to grow and appreciate the importance of being a good citizen, strong leader and person of character.

Leaders also help youth achieve their personal goals and provide encouragement and a support system. The relationships built among adult volunteer leaders and youth also have lasting effects. From 4-H experiences, youth gain important leadership, citizenship and life skills that can be applied to daily living, used in their community, in future jobs or when they continue their education. Although it may be years before a youth realizes and truly appreciates the influence of the 4-H leader that served as positive adult role models, one can be certain that volunteer leaders are truly making a difference for life.

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Crawford County 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

BY THE NUMBERS



70+ MSU Extension staff providing education to Crawford residents



1,411+ youth involved in 4-H and other youth development programs



2,160+ Crawford adults and youth in SNAP-Ed programs



77+ adults participated in small group diabetes education classes



MSU Extension website received 1,708 visits from Crawford County; 73% were first-time visitors



8,000 gardening questions answered statewide



MSU disbursed \$300,056 in financial aid to Crawford students



\$1,856,814 total economic impact in Crawford County



\$22,216 spending with local businesses

MESSAGE FROM THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Over the past year, Michigan State University (MSU) Extension partnered with Crawford County to continue strengthening youth, families, businesses and communities. Your MSU Extension staff members, grounded in local relationships, serve by bringing the university's research and resources to provide outreach and education in the areas Crawford County residents need it most.



From diabetes education to 4-H to personal finance programs and from youth to senior audiences, MSU Extension provides education to help Crawford County residents improve their lives. This report highlights just some of the work done last year.

We're passionate about serving Crawford County and are looking forward to a new year. Thank you for your continued support of MSU Extension, your leadership and for partnering with us to make a difference.

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Program Highlights



Diabetes continues to be a health concern for many residents of Crawford County. In 2017 over 75 adults received education from local MSU Extension staff on this topic.



In 2017 the 4-H Yoga Club had 17 members and experienced not only the activity itself—they also learned life skills such as patience, persistence and positive self-talk.



Smart Gardening from MSU Extension is a campaign to help novice and experienced gardeners adopt and implement real-life techniques in their yards and gardens to save time, money and the environment.

Supporting Family Health & Nutrition

Health outcomes in the County Health Rankings represent measures of how long people live and how healthy people feel. According to the 2018 County Health Rankings Report, Crawford County ranks 77 of 83. MSU Extension offers programs to help improve this statistic such as SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) Education. **2,160 Crawford residents participated** in 2017. Also offered are programs like Dining with Diabetes, Eat Healthy Be Active, Cooking Matters, Chronic Pain & Mindfulness and Food Preservation & Safety classes.

Empowering Crawford Youth

From 4-H to Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) Programs to mock interviews, babysitting clubs and robotics, MSU Extension provides learning opportunities that help prepare youth for work, especially for jobs in science, technology, engineering and math.

Over 80% percent of Crawford County 4-H seniors graduating between 2012 and 2017 enrolled in college after high school, while 49.4 percent of 18-24 year olds in the region did so.

Agriculture & Agribusiness

During the past year in Crawford County, MSU Extension provided gardening support and education through individual consultation, workshops, research opportunities, evaluation of practices, articles and more. Topics included vegetable gardening, farmers market education, soil testing, weed management, small farm conferences, pest management, outreach, etc. **Forty Crawford residents** attended, participated or consulted in these programs over the past year.

Program Highlights

MSU Extension & Place-based Stewardship Education (PBSE)

Over thirty four Place-based Stewardship Education Project Teams across eight counties including Crawford were active, supported through the regional NEMIGLSI (NE Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative) network, and directly engaged students in PBSE activities with community partners. PBSE efforts provide opportunities for teachers and students, through their learning, to engage in and lead environmental stewardship projects in partnership with their communities. Over **40 Crawford County youth** had an opportunity to participate in 2017.

Engaging Future Leaders

Research demonstrates that young people who participate in positive youth development programs are significantly more likely to exhibit academic competence. Grayling Elementary School offers an Extended Learning Year (ELY) which begins in August and adds additional days to the school year. Last year MSU Extension provided education to **87 youth** in support of this program. Students had the opportunity to learn about Computer Coding, Roommates, Circuits, and Robotics, just to name a few.

Leadership & Engagement

MSU Extension offers leadership programs, civic engagement education, governmental policy training and more. For example, Communicating Through Conflict, Citizen Planning, Planning & Zoning for Solar in Michigan, Parliamentary Procedure, Township Government Training, Home Ownership & Retirement webinars, workshops on Marijuana Regulation + more. Over **40 residents of Crawford County** participated in programs like these over the last year.



Through MSU Extension 167 NE Michigan teachers were directly supported through professional development activities to help them to implement PBSE as part of their education plans. Two local Crawford County educators participated.



MSU Extension children and youth programming prepares the state's youth for the future.



MSU Extension works to teach citizens how to implement best practices in good governance that keeps communities solvent, productive and engaged.