

Defining Michigan 4-H Youth Development

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Children, Youth and Family Programs, Michigan State University Extension

Michigan 4-H Youth Development is part of the Children, Youth and Family Programs of Michigan State University Extension and has programs in all Michigan counties.

WHAT WE BELIEVE

Vision – What we aspire to.

Michigan 4-H Youth Development mobilizes volunteers and communities to meet the needs of youth.

Mission – Our purpose.

Our mission is to create nonformal, educational opportunities to help youth thrive in a complex and changing world.

Programming Philosophy – How we think about our work.

Michigan 4-H Youth Development will involve volunteers in providing positive, experiential, educational opportunities for and with youth aged 5 to 19. Programming will be primarily delivered through 4-H clubs and in- and out-of-school, community-based networks.

Michigan 4-H Youth Development will provide educational opportunities that:

- Target age appropriate life skill development.
- Emphasize research-based experiential learning.
- Involve volunteers.
- Engage a variety of partners.
- Include families.
- Reach both diverse and underserved audiences.
- Are accessible.
- Promote a multicultural perspective and appreciation.
- Are fun.

Guiding Principles – What we promise with our work.

Michigan 4-H Youth Development has committed itself to seven guiding principles that provide the foundation for the educational methods, activities and events that positively affect the lives of Michigan's youth. These are:

- **Youth develop positive relationships with adults and peers.** Sustained relationships with peers and adults nurture positive youth development.
- **Youth are physically and emotionally safe.** Youth will learn more and participate more fully when they feel physically and emotionally safe. A

structured yet flexible environment encourages honesty, trust and respect among all youth and adults.

- **Youth are actively engaged in their own development.** Through a process of identity awareness and discovery, youth increase their personal competence and sense of well-being.
- **Youth are considered participants rather than recipients in their own learning processes.** Opportunities for youth to learn and develop take place in many different contexts and take into account a variety of learning styles.
- **Youth develop skills that help them succeed.** Youth experience and learn from hands-on educational opportunities that help them develop the skills they need to be successful adults.
- **Youth recognize, understand and appreciate diversity and multiculturalism.** Youth will respect differences among groups and individuals of diverse backgrounds. Youth will develop skills and competencies that help them foster social justice in their communities and their world.
- **Youth grow and contribute as active citizens through service and leadership.** Youth feel included and involved in their communities. They have significant roles to play and important contributions to make as stewards of the future. Youth develop personal competencies that foster leadership, caring and citizenship.

WHAT WE DO

Programming Methods – How we do our work.

The vision, mission and guiding principles are accomplished through the following ways:

- Program and Curriculum Development
- Volunteer and Club Development and Management
- Educational Events
- Research and Evaluation
- Resource Development
- Partnerships and Collaboration
- Professional Development and Support
- Communication Strategies and Support

For More Information, Contact:

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Programs – The work we do.

The work of Michigan 4-H Youth Development must be meaningful and fun to attract young people! 4-H provides learning materials and educational opportunities in these and other areas:

- Adventure Education
- Animals and Animal Science
- Clothing and Textiles
- Citizenship and Civic Education
- Communication and Expressive Arts
- Food, Nutrition, Health and Fitness
- Global and Cultural Education
- Natural Resources and Environmental Education
- Personal Development and Leadership
- Plant and Soil Science
- Science and Technology

WHO WE ARE

4-H Youth Development is the youth program of Michigan State University Extension. 4-H staff members work at Michigan State University and in every Michigan county with local volunteers to bring the knowledge of the state's land-grant university to the citizens of Michigan. This work is done in partnership with and uses funding provided by local county boards of commissioners, the state of Michigan and the federal government through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Additional intellectual and programming support and funding is provided by a variety of public and private partners – both at local and state levels – to increase our impact on youth in Michigan communities.

4-H Volunteers

Adult and teen volunteers work at the local and state level to support experiential learning activities for youth. 4-H volunteers are club, group or resource leaders, middle management leaders, advisory council members and Michigan 4-H Foundation trustees.

State and County 4-H Staff

4-H staff members lead and support the work of 4-H volunteers and members in each county. They cooperate with other MSU Extension campus and county staff members, with local, regional and state partners, and are oriented toward a multidisciplinary approach to program design, implementation and evaluation.

State 4-H Specialists

State 4-H specialists have part- or full-time appointments within MSU academic departments including Animal Science, Crop and Soil Science, Family and Child Ecology, Fisheries and Wildlife, Forestry, Food Science and Human Nutrition, Horticulture, Human Environment and Design, Veterinary Medicine and the MSU Museum.

Specialists provide links between academic departments, content area expertise and research opportunities.

WORKING TOGETHER

State and County 4-H Programming Committees

4-H programming committees are composed of 4-H staff and specialists, adult and teen volunteers, and other resource people. 4-H programming committees share a common goal: to design well-balanced and fun 4-H programming for Michigan youth. Committees provide needs assessments, program and event planning, curricula, training, resource development and program evaluation.

Area of Expertise Teams

Area of Expertise Teams (AoEs) are composed of county and state MSU faculty and staff and other resource people. They provide direction and staff development in their specific AoE content areas, such as Human Development, Volunteerism and Youth Development.

State and County Partners and Collaborators

Partners and collaborators include the Michigan 4-H Foundation, county 4-H councils and committees, Michigan State University, other educational institutions and various local, state and national agencies, organizations and governments.

Michigan 4-H Youth Development

Children, Youth & Family Programs



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***For additional information,
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