Experience Florida 4-H Youth Development Program

HEAD HEART HANDS HEALTH
4-H is a national organization that helps young people develop knowledge and skills to become productive members of society. 4-H helps youth to meet the diverse challenges of today’s world by building self-confidence, learning responsibility and making positive decisions. In a safe environment, 4-H brings youth and adults together to learn everyday skills for living.

Florida 4-H Guiding Principles

Florida 4-H is:
Based in the community with needs determined locally
Operated by volunteers under the guidance of Extension professionals and staff.
Coordinated and managed by the professional staff of the University of Florida.
Supported by the land-grant university research base to meet the need of local Florida citizens.

To join Florida 4-H Youth Development, contact your local Extension office or visit us at florida4h.org

What can I do in 4-H?

Florida 4-H offers a variety of opportunities for youth, ages 5 to 18, to learn and get involved in their community. No matter where you live in Florida (cities, suburbs or rural communities) there is a 4-H program nearby.

Some of the things you can do in Florida 4-H, include:

- Community service
- Public speaking
- Small animal projects
- Gardening
- Gain leadership skills
- ATV safety
- Career development
- Performing arts
- Photography
- Livestock projects
- Robotics
- Teen council
- Sewing
- Money management
- Consumer education
- Marine science
- 4-H Camp
- Woodworking
- Operation: Military Kids
- Train your dog
- Share the Fun
- 4-H/Tropicana Public Speaking
- Astronomy
- Sport fishing
- Food and nutrition

Youth experience Florida 4-H through non-competitive and competitive projects, events and programs at the local, county, district, state and national level. Opportunities like project books, field days, talent shows, fairs and contests offer ways to learn new skills and meet new friends.

There is so much to do in Florida 4-H!
Florida 4-H offers opportunities!

Youth can get involved in Florida 4-H through a variety of ways:

4-H Clubs

4-H clubs are the most popular way to get involved. A 4-H club usually focuses on one or more topics of members’ choice, such as gardening, small animals, photography, livestock, etc. 4-H members have the opportunity to build leadership by electing officers, conducting project-related activities, holding business meetings, and working together in the community.

4-H Afterschool

The 4-H Afterschool program fosters a unique combination of fun and learning that helps youth develop lifelong skills, such as leadership, critical thinking and teamwork. It’s a great way for busy families to experience 4-H. 4-H Afterschool is offered in select afterschool program sites throughout Florida.

4-H in the Classroom

Florida 4-H offers curriculum for teachers to use in the classroom. Developed through research at state universities across the nation, 4-H curriculum can help make classroom learning fun and exciting. Select curriculum meets Sunshine State Standards. Some of the more popular school based programs include 4-H/Tropicana Public Speaking program, Ag in the Classroom, Embryology, Junior Master Gardeners, Healthy Lifestyles and Energy Encounters.

4-H Camps

Florida 4-H provides day and residential (overnight stay) camps throughout the state. In a safe, fun environment youth build relationships and learn about the outdoors at camps for environmental education, healthy lifestyles, swimming, kayaking and more. Florida 4-H camps are Camp Cherry Lake in Madison, Camp Cloverleaf in Lake Placid, Camp Ocala in Altoona, and Camp Timpoochee in Niceville.

4-H Military Programs

Florida 4-H offers 4-H programs on all Air Force and Navy installations in Florida. In addition, Florida Operation: Military Kids provides youth programs to serve the Active, Guard and Reserve units of Air Force, Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and Accessions Commands throughout Florida that are not located on installations. Florida 4-H’s mission is to provide support to children of deployed armed service members through day camps, residential camps, workshops, and much more. Visit www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org and www.operationmilitarykids.org for more information.
Florida 4-H prepares youth for life’s challenges

The Florida 4-H youth program address the needs of young people by focusing on their strengths and capacities and the essential elements of positive youth development. The four essential elements of a 4-H experience are the “best practices” that staff and volunteers address as the basics of developmental needs of youth – independence, mastery, belonging and generosity.

I pledge my head to clearer thinking...

Independence

**Opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future**

**Opportunity for self-determination**

*Futuristic.* The ability to see oneself in the future is to harness the hope and optimism to shape life choices to facilitate the transition into active participation in future events. 4-H allows for the development of independence.

*Self-determination.* Youth need to know that they are able to influence people and events through decision-making and action. Believing that one has impact over life’s events rather than passively submitting to the will and whims of others is self-determination. By exercising independence through 4-H leadership opportunities, youth mature in self-discipline and responsibility, learn to better understand themselves and become independent thinkers.

I pledge my heart to greater loyalty...

Belonging

**A positive relationship with a caring adult**

**A safe environment**

**An inclusive environment**

*Caring adult.* Current research suggests that a sense of belonging may be the single most powerful positive ingredient 4-H can add into the lives of children and youth. Youth need to know they are cared about by others and feel a sense of connection to others in the group. A caring adult acts as an advisor, guide and mentor. The adult helps set boundaries and expectations for young people. This “partnership” has always been an important part of a 4-H experience.

*Safe environment.* 4-H gives youth the opportunity to feel physically and emotionally safe while participating in the 4-H experience, whether from the learning environment itself, adults, other participants, or spectators.

*Inclusiveness.* An inclusive environment is one that allows a sense of belonging to develop, encourages and supports its members, and offers encouragement with positive and specific feedback. In 4-H healthy groups celebrate the success of all members taking pride in the collective efforts of all.
Generosity

Opportunity to value and practice service for others

Service. 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 that helps youth understand the “big picture” of life and find purpose and meaning.

Mastery

Opportunity in learning

Opportunity for Mastery

Mastery. In order to develop self-confidence youth need to feel and believe they are capable and they must experience success at solving problems and meeting challenges. By exploring 4-H projects and activities, youth master skills to make positive career and life choices.

Engagement. Youth need to have a safe environment for making mistakes and getting feedback, not just through competition but also as an ongoing element of participation. In 4-H, youth are exposed to the breadth and depth of topics that allow them to pursue their own interests.

…for my club, my community, my country and my world.
Florida 4-H volunteers make a difference

People volunteer for 4-H for many reasons. However, there is a special sense of accomplishment in helping a new generation of young people grow and learn. Each of us has individual perspectives, knowledge, skills and talents that have been gained through life experiences. More and more youth need the values, skills and guidance 4-H volunteers offer.

Volunteers and professionals have a great deal of latitude in determining when, where and how 4-H “learn-by-doing” activities take place. As a 4-H volunteer, 4-H faculty and professionals provide support and training through the local Extension office.

Many adults in your community are already involved in 4-H – making friends, having fun and working together to make a difference in the lives of others. Just think how much the next generation could benefit from your lifetime of experience.

Great opportunities are available to you in Florida 4-H. Contact your local Extension office or visit us online at

florida4h.org

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florida4h.org

4-H is a community of young people across America learning leadership, citizenship and life skills.

The University of Florida is an equal opportunity institution.