



VALUES AND PHILOSOPHIES

4-H Youth Development Programs

Revised December 2004

4-H youth development programs in Wisconsin have a long and rich tradition of encouraging young people to take on challenges and to “learn by doing.” The mission of 4-H guides that tradition. It states: “UW-Extension 4-H Youth Development integrates research, education, and community-based partnerships, enabling youth to learn and practice skills to be productive citizens.” Among youth organizations, the 4-H mission is unique because it combines the strength of community based youth organization with the knowledge gleaned from university research into youth development.

University of Wisconsin-Extension programs in 4-H Youth Development give 251,000 Wisconsin young people opportunities to learn new skills, gain self-confidence and contribute to their communities. Backed by the knowledge and research base of the University of Wisconsin, 4-H Youth Development educators design educational, leadership and citizenship experiences for youth. These programs are delivered directly through 20,000 adult volunteers in neighborhood 4-H clubs or groups and in collaboration with other local organizations.

Research shows that involving young people in experiences that promote healthy development is the surest way to prevent problem behaviors. 4-H provides opportunities for youth to learn through their own experiences and accomplishments, to learn problem solving and decision-making skills in real world settings, to take leadership in their peer groups, and participate in community and civic work as full partners with adults. Research show that young people who get involved in civic affairs and volunteerism stay involved as adults, and the 4-H youth development prepares and places youth in these civic roles.

Through its community clubs and groups and the new 4-H Afterschool programs, 4-H extends its positive youth development reach all across Wisconsin.

Number of youth in Clubs	50,000
Number of youth in non-club activities	200,000
Number of adult volunteers	20,000
Number of clubs	2,100



An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and American with Disabilities (ADA) requirements. © 2004 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. Developed by the Wisconsin 4-H Office, 431 Lowell Hall, 610 Langdon St., Madison, WI 53703. The 4-H name and emblem are federally protected under Title 18 US Code 707.