

Virginia 4-H: Learn by Doing

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



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Let Me Tell You About 4-H: A Message From State 4-H Cabinet President, Sarah Lyons

The 4-H State Cabinet is a group of teen leaders who have been elected by senior 4-Hers at the 4-H State Congress and are working to promote 4-H. We plan Congress and initiate other 4-H events. Cabinet is comprised of three 4-H Ambassadors from each district and four state officers.

Over the next year, the Cabinet is exploring several new initiatives. One of our major initiatives is the *Dimes for Dreams Campaign*, in which the 4-H youth of Virginia are seeking to raise \$10,000 over the course of 10 years to benefit the Virginia 4-H program. Although we have raised more than \$3,200 to date, there is still much work to be done. Other initiatives include a statewide 4-H teen retreat.

Don't forget that we, as members of the 4-H State Cabinet, are your ambassadors. You can contact your District Ambassador who would love to come and speak to your club. Tell us what you think of 4-H and how it could be changed for the better.

You're not yet a member of 4-H? Joining 4-H is simple; just contact your local Virginia Cooperative Extension office to learn more about the exciting opportunities that 4-H has to offer. 4-H has something for everyone. I joined a 4-H horse and pony club so that I could compete in horse shows, learn more about horses, and make friends who also like horses. However, 4-H is more than just than horses, livestock, and agriculture clubs. There are over 200 projects from biotechnology to outdoor adventure for everyone from 5 through 18 years old. Once a member of 4-H, you can participate in different activities like competitions, workshops, and community service. Remember, the purpose of 4-H is to teach leadership, citizenship, and skills that can help you to be successful throughout your life.

So ... don't be afraid to try 4-H for the first time, or to try something new in 4-H that you have never done before. It will change your life!



Virginia 4-H – A Super Place to Learn, Lead, and Get Involved

A Message from the Director

Thousands of youth and adults benefit every year from the wide variety of opportunities provided through the 4-H program. As the youth development program of Virginia Cooperative Extension and a part of the land-grant university system, 4-H provides research-based educational information that youth and adults use to improve their lives. Virginia's land-grant universities are Virginia Tech and Virginia State. The Virginia 4-H program has a place for **you**.

The mission of the Virginia 4-H program is to **develop youth and adults working with those youth to realize their full potential—becoming effective, contributing citizens through participation in research-based, non-formal, hands-on educational experiences.**

The program is available for youth ages 5 through 18 and is in every county and most cities in the state. Presently, there are nearly 200,000 members in the Virginia 4-H program!

4-H is “a community of young people across America who are learning *leadership, citizenship, and life skills*.”

To accomplish this mission, 4-H provides non-formal educational opportunities and experiences designed to address the developmental needs of youth. The essential elements of 4-H are **Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity**.

Belonging (represents the **HEART** of 4-H) – includes a positive relationship with caring adults and an inclusive, safe environment for youth.

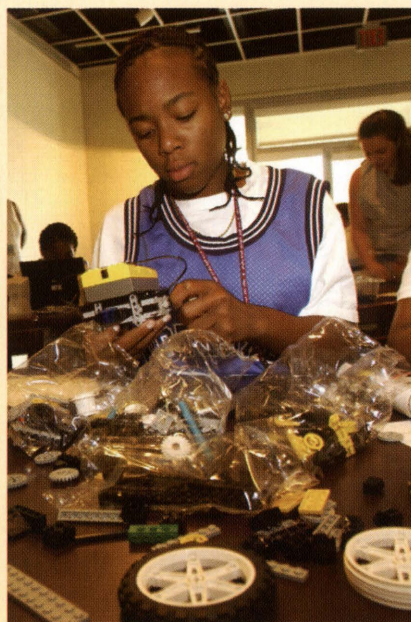
Mastery (represents the **HEALTH** of 4-H) – focuses on constructive learning experiences and includes engagement in learning and opportunities for mastery.

Independence (represents the **HEAD** of 4-H) – focuses on learning and self-determination opportunities to see oneself as an active participant in the future.

Generosity (represents the **HANDS** of 4-H) – focuses on opportunities to value and practice service and generosity to others.

“Through the 4-H program, I have gained confidence, skills, and am now better able to communicate. I am not afraid to get in front of groups, or speak to others.”

12-year-old 4-H'er



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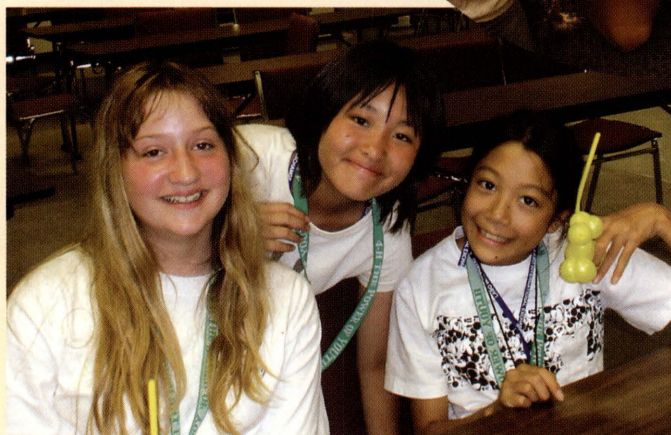
Thus, 4-H provides opportunities for caring relationships, constructive learning, leadership experiences, and service to others and communities. I hope you will join the thousands of youth in the largest non-formal youth program in the state. The 4-H program will teach you to become a better leader and citizen. Together, we are making the best better for the Commonwealth of Virginia!

Dr. Robert Ray Meadows

Associate Director, 4-H Youth Development
Virginia Cooperative Extension

"It felt so good to see the smiles of the families when I delivered the food to them ... especially the children. The work was hard, and I was a bit nervous at first, but the hours I spent in the project were well worth it."

4-H Service Project Member





How Can I Join 4-H?

Contact your local Virginia Cooperative Extension office and ask about the 4-H program. 4-H provides a large variety of educational opportunities and experiences. Leadership, citizenship, and life skills are taught through learn-by-doing 4-H projects in local club programs, in 4-H camps, as well as at county, district, state, and national events.

What kinds of 4-H opportunities are available for me in my community?

Community clubs meet in homes or public buildings, offer a variety of 4-H projects, and have elected youth officers.

Project clubs meet in homes or public buildings, focus on the same 4-H project, and have elected youth officers.

Special interest groups have short-term learning experiences designed to create interest in a subject-matter area, learn about 4-H, and have no elected youth officers.

School clubs meet during school hours, are approved by the school system, and have elected youth officers.

School enrichment clubs meet during school hours and are designed to strengthen members' knowledge of school subject-matter areas.

After-school clubs meet after school hours, usually from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., in a school or public building, use 4-H materials, and may or may not have elected officers.

Cloverbuds are groups of youth 5 to 8 years old who are introduced to 4-H through special learning activities designed for this age group. There are no elected youth officers and no competitive events.

Individual member, also known as "lone-member" 4-H, is a youth of 4-H age who is involved in a 4-H project with guidance from a parent or other adult when there is no organized 4-H program available.

The contact information for your local 4-H agent can be found on the last page of this brochure. Or you can locate the contact information at the Virginia Cooperative Extension website, www.ext.vt.edu, or in your local telephone book under the county government section under Cooperative Extension.

For more information about Virginia 4-H, check the website, www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h. For information on 4-H camping see Benefits of 4-H Youth Camping on page 8.

"4-H Camp Rocks!"

11-year-old 4-H'er



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Leading the 4-H Way: Something Special for 4-H Middle Schoolers and Teens

4-H State Congress for Teens

When you hear the phrase "4-H Congress," you think of a four-day event for teens ages 14 through 18 that takes place on the Virginia Tech Campus in June each year. This past year's theme, "Go Wild with 4-H," brought over 700 teens and volunteers to campus for training, competition, service, and fun! With 35 competitive areas, 18 workshop themes, a Leadership Institute, and service learning opportunities, teens had plenty of choices to meet their interests. Dances, multiple sports competitions, a formal awards dinner, and the "Share the Fun" talent show rounded out the week.

Attendees said:

"It was an excellent experience!"

"I love meeting new people and seeing old friends."

4-H Intermediate Congress

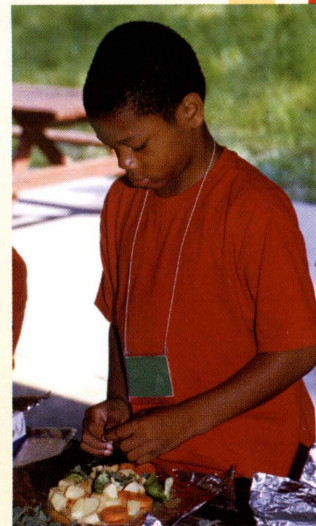
The "Creating Tomorrow's 4-H Leaders" Intermediate Congress for preteens, ages 11 through 13, was held on the campus of Virginia State University in July. Over 50 preteens, teen mentors, and adults participated in this three-day event. They took part in learning experiences that captured their interest and provided training in a variety of skill areas, including leadership and citizenship, and raised their awareness of cultural diversity. There was also time for sports and social activities.

The preteens said:

"I learned to be more caring toward others who are different from me."

"I learned how to manage time better."

"I decided that I want to go to 4-H Congress next year to see what that is all about!"



"I enjoy meeting new friends, doing new things, and having fun."

Female 4-H'er

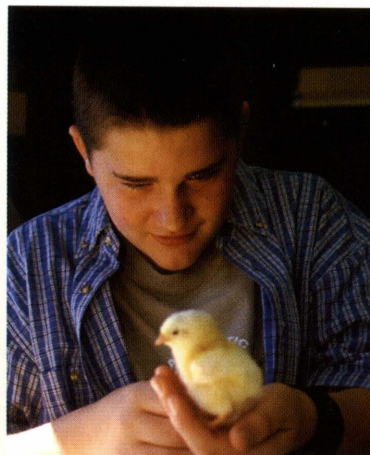


2005 Intermediate Congress Participants

What kinds of "learn by doing" projects are available?

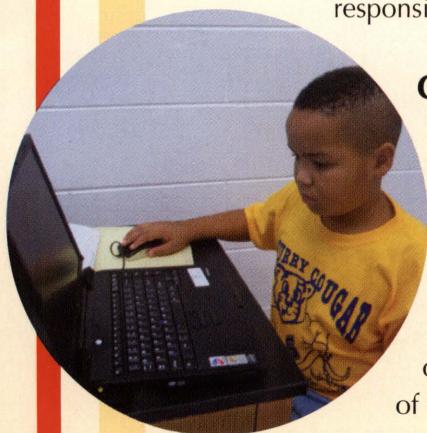
Animal Sciences

The 4-H Animal Science programs teach you to make informed decisions, keep records, manage resources, use scientific principles, and develop oral and written reasoning skills. You can learn about animals without having to own one. Those who choose a "live animal" project can practice and demonstrate what they have learned at numerous supporting activities such as fairs, judging contests, shows, educational bowls, and competitions. These programs also help you become aware of career opportunities in animal agricultural industries.



Careers and Economic Education

Projects in 4-H Careers and Economic Education help you understand how abilities and interests play a role in choosing a career. They can also help you prepare for financial and credit responsibilities, learn how to make time and money go further, and learn how to exercise consumer rights and responsibilities. The concept of "Youth as Entrepreneurs" is emphasized.



Citizenship

The 4-H Citizenship Program stresses community mindfulness by teaching you to make connections with local, state, and federal governments, voicing concerns and offering pro-active solutions to community problems. Service learning projects are encouraged. 4-H also offers intra- and inter-state as well as international exchange opportunities to increase diversity awareness and appreciation of other cultures.

Communication and Expressive Arts

4-H projects in this area include creative and performing arts, photography, presentations, and public speaking. Your ability to communicate effectively is a basic skill for success in life and in relationships with others. It is also a desirable "soft skill" sought by employers. Public speaking is a cornerstone of 4-H. A presentation component is encouraged in all 4-H projects.

Family Sciences

The 4-H Family Sciences projects offer opportunities in the areas of: self-care, personal presentation, sewing, consumer clothing purchases, babysitting, working with older adult friends, responsibility in being home alone, and interior design.

"4-H has helped me to take better care of my things, to help others, and to be a person of character ... this should be a program for every youth."

9-year-old 4-H'er

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Foods, Nutrition, and Health

Foods, Nutrition, and Health projects emphasize dietary guidelines, food preparation skills, and healthy lifestyles. Many projects incorporate the food cycle from farmer to consumer, food buying skills, and label reading. Food safety is stressed. Food, as part of our international culture/heritage, is included. Fitness and positive body image are emphasized.

Leadership and Personal Development

4-H members learn that there are many ways to be a leader and you have the opportunity to practice skills that build self-confidence. 4-H clubs give you the chance to learn the ground rules of conducting a meeting and serving in different officer roles. You are also taught the building blocks of good character – Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring and Citizenship through participation in CHARACTER COUNTS!™, a research-based character education program used by 4-H in clubs and school.



Natural Resources and Environmental Education

The Natural Resources and Environmental Education program of 4-H offers a vast array of projects in wildlife, forestry, fishing, outdoor adventure, and environmental education. You are challenged to think critically about the natural world. Shooting education, water and energy conservation, global positioning systems (GPS), and aquatic and marine sciences add exciting experiences and teach you how to protect our environment while using its resources.

Plants, Soils, and Entomology

In these project areas, 4-H'ers explore the world of horticulture, soils, and insects. The value of knowing about the world of plants and soils includes being able to raise a garden for home use and growing plants for profit. Land appreciation and soils judging provide you with the opportunity to study characteristics of soils, compare different types of soils, and determine their best uses. Entomology projects include learning important science inquiry skills through collecting, preserving, identifying, and classifying insects. In these projects you learn about the natural world and how to conserve the beauty of the environment.

Science and Technology

4-H helps you learn high-tech skills and practical hands-on application of science skills including biotechnology, robotics, computer technology, space and flight, and engineering sciences.

"I think the 4-H team challenge was excellent; my daughter continues to use good team problem-solving skills learned through 4-H."

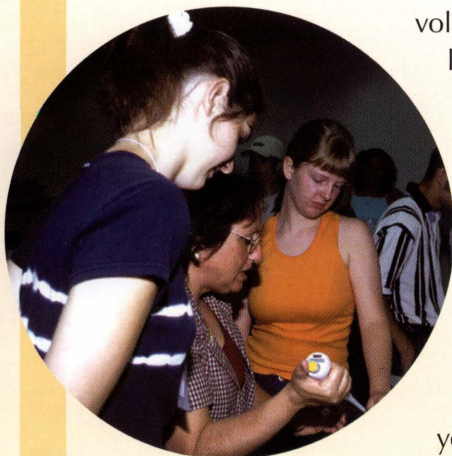
4-H Parent



Volunteers Helping Virginia Youth Learn: A Message to Future Volunteers

Does it excite you to see youth motivated about learning and doing? Do you think it might be fun to help a group of young people learn about energy, or nutrition, or raising livestock?

If making a difference in the life of a young person appeals to you, become a 4-H volunteer leader. 4-H adult and teen volunteers work with Extension agents to provide leadership to 4-H groups. With training, supervision and support from Extension Agents, volunteers add their own expertise, talents, and experiences to the 4-H activities.



Most 4-H clubs are volunteer led, and last year more than 16,000 adults and teens volunteered in Virginia 4-H. Their contributions made 4-H clubs possible, and their caring attitudes contributed to a positive youth-adult partnership.

Volunteer leaders work with 4-H members who are their neighbors, family members, and friends. Because they are from the same community, leaders know what is important in their region. They know what the youth are dealing with in their lives and can understand how to help.

Become committed to the 4-H mission. Help youth acquire knowledge, life skills, and attitudes that will enable them to be self-directing, contributing and productive members of society. Be a 4-H volunteer leader.

To volunteer, contact your local Virginia Cooperative Extension office.

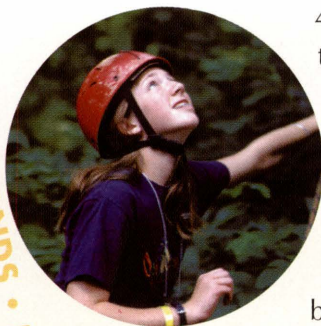
Opportunities for volunteer training and networking are available through the Virginia Association of Adult 4-H Volunteer Leaders (VAA4-HVL). Find more information at www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h/volunteers.html.

"Due to my child's medical needs, she doesn't get the opportunity to go away without her parents that often... 4-H allows her the opportunity to be a 'normal' kid and do the activities that her non-disabled peers get to do without any problems. Thank-you! Thank-you! Thank-you for allowing her to experience 4-H."

4-H Parent



Benefits of 4-H Youth Camping



4-H camping is cooperative group living in a natural environment that focuses on developing life skills, social, spiritual, mental, and physical development.

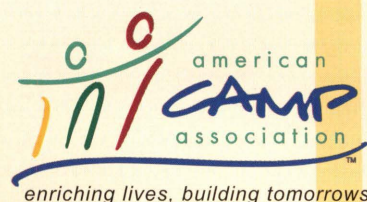
In 2005, approximately 26,000 youth and teens participated in 4-H camping at six 4-H educational centers. These 4-H centers provide opportunities for you in three ways: 4-H residential camping, 4-H specialty/day camping, and 4-H school enrichment based upon the Virginia Standards of Learning.

The programs include leadership development, environmental and aquatic science, performing arts, shooting education, forestry, outdoor adventure, primitive skills, journalism and broadcasting, horsemanship and animal science, aerospace, wildlife, canoeing, swimming, leathercraft, fishing, tennis, and creative dance.

As campers you are supervised by caring teen and adult volunteers, who support, teach, and guide you through new experiences.

A study* of Virginia 4-H camping conducted in 2003 with youth campers ages 9 to 13 from across the state found that 4-H camp participation helped youth to learn to make new friends, develop new skills, and become more independent and able to take care of themselves.

A study of 363 parents/guardians of Virginia 4-H campers found that 4-H camp participation changed youth's behaviors in the areas of taking care of their own things (self-responsibility), becoming more independent (taking initiative), and sharing.



All six 4-H Centers are accredited by the American Camping Association (ACA), a national organization which establishes programmatic and operational safety standards based upon the best practices of the camping industry.

For more information

Contact your local Virginia Cooperative Extension office or 4-H Educational Center.

Airfield 4-H Educational Center	(757) 899-4901
http://www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h/airfield/	
Holiday Lake 4-H Educational Center	(434) 248-5444
http://www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h/holiday/	
Jamestown 4-H Educational Center	(757) 253-4931
http://www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h/jamestown/	
Northern Virginia 4-H Educational Center	(540) 635-7171
http://www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h/northern/	
W.E. Skelton 4-H Educational Center at Smith Mountain Lake	(540) 721-2759
http://www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h/smithmt/	
Southwest Virginia 4-H Educational Center	(276) 676-6180
http://www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h/southwest/	

Who to Contact

For further information or to locate the local Virginia Cooperative Extension office, visit www.ext.vt.edu/offices, or look in the government section of the phonebook under Cooperative Extension.

Accomack	(757) 787-1361	Lancaster	(804) 462-5780
Albemarle	(804) 984-0727	Lee	(540) 346-1522
Alexandria	(703) 519-3325	Loudoun	(703) 777-0373
Alleghany/Covington	(540) 962-0276	Louisa	(540) 967-3422
Amelia	(804) 561-2481	Lunenburg	(804) 676-2497
Amherst	(804) 946-9365	Lynchburg City	(804) 847-1585
Appomattox	(804) 352-8244	Madison	(540) 948-6881
Arlington	(703) 228-6400	Mathews	(804) 725-7196
Augusta	(540) 245-5750	Mecklenburg	(804) 738-6191
Bath	(540) 839-7261	Middlesex	(804) 758-4120
Bedford	(540) 586-7675	Montgomery	(540) 382-5790
Bland	(540) 688-3542	Nelson	(804) 263-4035
Botetourt	(540) 473-8260	New Kent	(804) 966-9645
Brunswick	(804) 848-2151	Newport News	(757) 591-4838
Buchanan	(540) 935-6254	Norfolk	(757) 683-2816
Buckingham	(804) 969-4261	Northampton	(757) 414-0731
Campbell	(804) 332-9538	Northumberland	(804) 580-5694
Caroline	(804) 633-6550	Nottoway	(804) 645-9315
Carroll	(540) 728-7611	Orange	(540) 672-1361
Charles City	(804) 829-9241	Page	(540) 778-5794
Charlotte	(804) 542-5884	Patrick	(540) 694-3989
Chesapeake	(757) 382-6348	Petersburg City	(804) 733-1880
Chesterfield	(804) 751-4401	Pittsylvania	(804) 432-7770
Clarke	(540) 955-5164	Portsmouth	(757) 393-5125
Craig	(540) 864-5812	Powhatan	(804) 598-5640
Culpeper	(540) 727-3435	Prince Edward	(804) 392-4246
Cumberland	(804) 492-4390	Prince George	(804) 733-2686
Danville	(804) 799-6558	Prince William	(703) 792-6289
Dickenson	(540) 926-4605	Pulaski	(540) 980-7761
Dinwiddie	(804) 459-4514	Rappahannock	(540) 675-3619
Essex	(804) 443-3551	Richmond City	(804) 786-4150
Fairfax	(703) 324-5369	Richmond Co.	(804) 333-3420
Fauquier	(540) 341-7950	Roanoke Office	(540) 772-7524
Floyd	(540) 745-9307	Rockbridge	(540) 463-4734
Fluvanna	(804) 589-8122	Rockingham	(540) 564-3080
Franklin	(540) 483-5161	Russell	(540) 889-8056
Frederick	(540) 665-5699	Scott	(540) 452-2772
Giles	(540) 921-3455	Shenandoah	(540) 459-6140
Gloucester	(804) 693-2602	Smyth	(540) 783-5176
Goochland	(804) 556-5341	Southampton	(757) 653-2572
Grayson	(540) 773-2491	Spotsylvania	(540) 582-7096
Greene	(804) 985-5236	Stafford	(540) 899-4020
Greensville/Emporia	(804) 348-4223	Suffolk	(757) 923-2050
Halifax	(804) 476-2147	Surry	(757) 294-5215
Hampton City	(757) 727-1401	Sussex	(804) 246-5511
Hanover	(804) 752-4310	Tazewell	(540) 988-0405
Henrico	(804) 501-5160	Virginia Beach	(757) 427-4769
Henry	(540) 634-4650	Warren	(540) 635-4549
Highland	(540) 468-2225	Washington	(540) 676-6309
Isle of Wight	(757) 365-6257	Westmoreland	(804) 493-8924
James City	(757) 566-1367	Wise	(540) 328-3699
King and Queen	(804) 785-5979	Wythe	(540) 223-6040
King George	(540) 775-3062	York	(757) 890-4940
King William	(804) 769-4955		



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Contact Information

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