



# 4-H POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

## About 4-H

For over 100 years, 4-H has provided positive youth development programs in the community. It is currently the largest youth-serving organization in the United States and has more than six million youth members who participate in programs in almost every county across the nation. Central to 4-H is an emphasis on a resiliency-based approach to youth programming grounded in positive youth development. While 4-H may be stereotyped with having an agricultural focus, 4-H programs also serve youth in rural, suburban, and urban settings with STEM, healthy living, leadership, and civic engagement content.

## What Makes 4-H Expanded Learning Programming Special

4-H expanded learning programming is grounded in science. Many of our 4-H curricula go through a rigorous peer-reviewed process to ensure a high level of experiential learning for students that is informed by science. Rather than having 4-H deliver the curriculum to students, our trained staff provide “train-the-trainers” to educators to teach them the curriculum and how to deliver the program in a classroom environment. In addition, our continuous quality improvement (CQI) practices allow for ongoing data collection and analysis of student outcome data, which helps inform future program implementations to ensure high program quality. This CQI approach allows 4-H to: 1) assess program quality, 2) create action plans for needed revisions, and 3) improve program quality.

## How 4-H Supports Quality Standards for Expanded Learning Programs

### Standard 1: Safe and supportive environment

Our 4-H Thrive Model of Positive Youth Development emphasizes a healthy developmental context that focuses on a youth's sense of belonging, safety, and identification of student interests. This model undergirds how 4-H designs high-quality programming for students.

### Standard 2: Active and engaged learning

Central to our 4-H curriculum is an emphasis on experiential learning. This educational approach emphasizes the process whereby youth experience an educational event and then reflect upon this experience with others. Students are encouraged to apply what they learned to other areas of their lives to reinforce the key learning objectives.

### Standard 3: Skill building

4-H curricula teach youth a wide array of skills to help them prepare for college or their next professional career. Students learn about leadership, teamwork, goal setting, scientific observation, and problem-solving.

### Standard 4: Youth voice and leadership

A core value of 4-H is an emphasis on adult-youth partnerships. We believe that students should be given opportunities to lead under the mentorship of adults. Our curricula support opportunities for students to play a meaningful role in the learning experience.

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## **Standard 5: Healthy choices and behaviors**

Our 4-H expanded learning programs provide students with opportunities to make healthy choices. Depending on the 4-H curricula, students learn about healthy energy balance-related behaviors, such as reducing sugar-sweetened beverages and increasing moderate-to-vigorous physical activity.

## **Standard 6: Diversity, access, and equity**

4-H is a youth development program that is inclusive of all young people from a wide array of demographics, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Our 4-H program seeks opportunities to serve a diverse population of youth.

## **Standard 7: Quality staff**

While 4-H does not provide direct delivery of services to students, our staff do provide professional development train-the-trainers for school educators and program facilitators.

## **Standard 8: Clear vision, mission, and purpose**

Our 4-H expanded learning programs provide clear measurable outcomes, which drive program implementation and improvement.

## **Standard 9: Collaborative partnerships**

4-H is part of the University of California Cooperative Extension, which is a network of community programs and educational services across the entire state. We value the cultivation of collaborative partnerships.

## **Standard 10: Continuous quality improvement**

As mentioned previously, our 4-H continuous quality improvement (CQI) practices allow for ongoing data collection and analysis of student outcome data, which helps inform future program implementations to ensure high program quality. This CQI approach allows 4-H to: 1) assess program quality, 2) create action plans for needed revisions, and 3) improve program quality.

## **4-H Expanded Learning Opportunity Programs**

### **Get Started Today!**

The following pages list some of our 4-H expanded learning opportunity programs for you to consider. Click the “Get started” link to complete the online questionnaire. Or simply [click here!](#)

Once we receive your information, we’ll contact you to discuss the next steps.

## **Questions? Contact us:**

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# 4-H POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

## Cooking Academy (Healthy Food and Nutrition)

The Cooking Academy Project is a seven-week cooking-based nutrition education program that teaches students (upper elementary) basic nutrition and cooking skills. Students learn about kitchen safety, MyPlate, nutrition education, and how to prepare healthy foods. Teachers can receive a train-the-trainer, a cooking kit, the Cooking Academy curriculum, and ongoing customer support from our 4-H Extension office.



[Get started](#)



## THE EGG STORY



**Lesson Plan**

## Embryology (Biological Science)

The embryology program teaches students (grades 3-8) over the course of three weeks about the development lifecycle of a chicken through a hands-on experiential learning model. Students learn about embryo development, scientific inquiry, organisms, and environments. Teachers can receive a train-the-trainer, an incubator, fertilized eggs, the 4-H embryology curriculum, and ongoing customer support from our 4-H Extension office.

[Get started](#)



## Junk Drawer Robotics (Engineering Design)

Junk Drawer Robotics engages middle school students in engineering design through the use of common household items. The curriculum was developed to focus on scientific and engineering practices; frame activities in the experiential learning cycle; and promote small group collaborative learning. Level 1 discusses robot arms and engineering design. Level 2 discusses robot movement and engineering iteration. Level 3 discusses electronic circuits and mathematical number systems.



[Get started](#)

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# 4-H POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT EXPANDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS

## Learn, Grow, Eat and Go (School Gardening)

This school gardening and healthy eating program teaches students (grades 3-8) about agriculture and nutrition. This research-based, evidence-based curriculum teaches students about gardening, nutrient-dense foods, physical activity, and school/family engagement.



### Get started

\_\_\_\_\_’s  
Garden Journal



A 4-H Primary  
Mindfulness Curriculum

## MINDFUL ME



## Mindful Me/Mindful Mechanics (Mental Health)

The Mindful Me seven-week curriculum has seven sessions that focus on helping students (ages 5-18) with managing goals, developing a sense of self, time management, stress management, emotional regulation, and mindful eating practices.

### Get started



## Water Wizards (Water Conservation)

Water Wizards is a 12-week science education project teaching students (grades 4-6) about water and its importance to the planet. Students will learn about water and the environment, water properties, and the water cycle. Teachers can receive a train-the-trainer, an enviroscape kit, the 4-H Water Wizards curriculum, and ongoing customer support from our 4-H Extension office.

### Get started



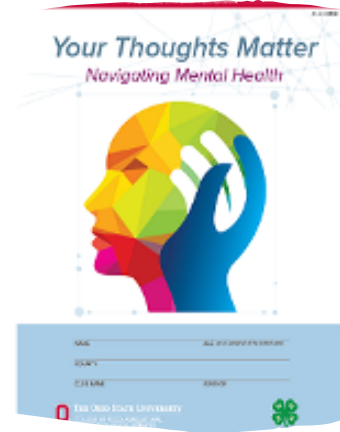
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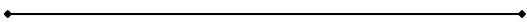
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## Your Thoughts Matter (Mental Health)

This curriculum teaches students (middle to high school) about what mental health means and provides strategies for self-help and helping others. The curriculum has ties to educational standards from the National Health Education Standards (NHES) and Prevention's School Health Education Resources (SHER).



### Get started



## Youth Experiences in Science (Scientific Inquiry)

The YES curriculum has 35 units and is designed to foster inquiry and engage students (ages 5 to 8) in the process of exploration. Students will learn about the scientific process, forming research questions, bubbles, collections, energy, kitchen science, recycling, snails, and worms. A cross-age teaching model engages teenage volunteers as teachers. There is also a teens-as-teachers component. After attending a 10-hour training session (and equipped with the YES curriculum and adult support), the teens-as-teachers work in teams to prepare and deliver weekly science activities.

### Get started



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