4-H Civic Engagement

4-H COMMON MEASURES 2.0, 2019-20
4-H learning experiences are based on the principles and practices of Positive Youth Development (PYD). The structured learning, encouragement, and adult mentoring that young people receive through their participation in 4-H programs play a vital role in contributing to their personal and leadership development\(^1\) to help them achieve future life success. PYD views young people as vital resources with assets and potentials to be developed rather than as problems to be managed. 4-H Citizenship programs empower young people to be well-informed citizens who are actively engaged in their communities and the world. By providing them with opportunities to connect to their communities and adult leaders, youth gain a clear understanding of their role in civic events and are able to build their decision-making ability. This solid foundation helps youth understand and acquire the skills that will allow them to be astute leaders now and in the future.\(^2\)

This report summarizes the findings from a Civic Engagement survey completed by a sample of 4-H members for the 2019-20 program year. The Civic Engagement/Citizenship survey is a part of the National 4-H Common Measures 2.0 developed to measure PYD outcomes. The Civic Engagement survey focuses on the citizenship indicators primarily related to community awareness and youths’ interest in community service.

### Participants' 4-H Experience

#### Demographics

In total, 197 youth completed the Civic Engagement survey. Youth were between the ages of 10 and 19, with the average age being 13.1 years (standard deviation = 2.2 years). Nearly 81.5% of respondents spent three or more years in 4-H. The sample was 71% female and 29% male, and 27.4% Hispanic or Latino and 72.6% are not Hispanic or Latino. The racial breakdown of the sample was: 76.9% White, 3.4% African American, 6.8% Asian, 10.3% Multiple, and 6.8% Undetermined. Youth reported living on farms (23.5%), rural areas (16.8%), towns (29.4%), suburbs (16%), and city areas (14.3%). Youth were asked a number of questions about what they may have learned during this program. Results are shown in the figures that follow. (Percentages may add up to 99% or 101% due to rounding.)

#### Interest in Community Service and Giving Back

*Do you like helping people in your community?*

- Yes: 82%
- Usually: 17%
- Not Really: 1%
- No: 0%

*Are you interested in a community service project where you would organize a drive for clothing, toys, books or food?*

- Yes: 60%
- Usually: 36%
- Not Really: 4%
- No: 0%
Are you interested in a community service project where you would serve meals at a homeless shelter?

- Yes: 51%
- Maybe: 37%
- No: 12%

Are you interested in a community service project where you would teach younger kids?

- Yes: 64%
- Maybe: 30%
- No: 6%

Are you interested in a community service project where you would pick up trash outside?

- Yes: 57%
- Maybe: 33%
- No: 10%

Are you interested in a community service project where you would visit people in a nursing home?

- Yes: 53%
- Maybe: 35%
- No: 12%

Are you interested in a community service project where you would plan a fundraiser?

- Yes: 55%
- Maybe: 34%
- No: 11%

Are you interested in a community service project where you would serve meals at a homeless shelter?

- Yes: 64%
- Maybe: 30%
- No: 6%

Are you interested in a community service project where you would teach younger kids?

- Yes: 78%
- Maybe: 15%
- No: 7%
Because of 4-H, did you meet leaders in your community?

- Yes: 53%
- Sort of: 30%
- No: 17%

Have you encouraged others to volunteer in your community?

- Yes: 52%
- Sort of: 33%
- No: 15%

Have you ever done a community service project?

- Yes: 86%
- Sort of: 0%
- No: 14%

Have you ever helped plan a community service project?

- Yes: 44%
- Sort of: 26%
- No: 30%

Have you ever led a community service project?

- Yes: 24%
- Sort of: 18%
- No: 58%
Community Awareness

At 4-H, did you talk about needs in your community?

- Yes: 50%
- Sort of: 34%
- No: 16%

At 4-H, did you talk about needs across the country?

- Yes: 17%
- Sort of: 34%
- No: 49%

At 4-H, did you talk about needs around the world?

- Yes: 13%
- Sort of: 33%
- No: 54%

When you learn about a problem in the community, do you look for ways to help?

- No: 4%
- Not really: 21%
- Usually: 48%
- Yes: 27%

When you learn about a problem across the country, do you look for ways to help?

- No: 11%
- Not really: 39%
- Usually: 38%
- Yes: 12%

When you learn about a problem around the world, do you look for ways to help?

- No: 18%
- Not really: 39%
- Usually: 26%
- Yes: 17%
Youth-driven 4-H experiences help youth develop life skills, competencies and resiliency to address life's challenges to actively contribute to society. The 4-H activities through clubs and camps contribute to creating an environment that fosters responsible citizenship. 3 4-H experience inspired youth to volunteer in their communities. Community service projects support the development of a sense of belonging and contributing. 4 Youth expressed their interest in community service projects and helping people in their communities. The structured learning, encouragement, and adult mentoring that youth receive through their participation in 4-H plays a critical role in assisting them to achieve future life successes.

Conclusion

Civic Engagement
References


