



# 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Assuring that all of our nation's young people develop into healthy, happy, and productive citizens is important to all of us. Unfortunately, many of today's youth are failing to develop the competencies and skills that are needed for lifelong success. Research is continuing to show that youth development programs such as 4-H make significant contributions to positive youth outcomes, as well as prevent problem behaviors.

We know that families and schools cannot do it all. Caring communities and other out-of-school activities are important contributions to positive youth development.

Through the 4-H Youth Development Program, youth and adults work closely and develop warm, caring, and long-term relationships that support growth in youth. 4-H also helps to improve youth's interpersonal relationships, self-control, problem-solving, cognitive competencies, self-efficacy, commitment to schools, and academic achievement.

Recent research on youth development documents the important role that programs such as 4-H play in the lives of young people. From this research, four Essential Elements that form the foundation of successful youth development programs have been identified. These include:

- Belonging
- Mastery
- Independence
- Generosity

These are essential elements of the 4-H Youth Development Program and are delivered in the context of:

- Citizenship
- Leadership
- Life Skills



4-H Teens teach about worms at Cirby Elementary after school program. The teens are part of the 4-H Youth Experiences in Science (YES) program. 4-H YES is supported through a grant from H.B. Fuller Company.

## Program Highlights

- ◆ **4-H Youth Members:**  
Placer: 726  
Nevada: 488
- ◆ **4-H Adult Volunteers:**  
Placer: 218  
Nevada: 170
- ◆ **Youth Enrolled in Group and Short-Term Activities:**  
Placer: 4,854  
Nevada: 405
- ◆ **4-H Community Clubs:**  
Placer: 13  
Nevada: 10
- ◆ **4-H Website Visits:**  
Placer: 69,514  
Nevada: 36,844
- ◆ **Training and Workshops:**  
Placer: 69  
Nevada: 59



# Placer County 4-H Community Clubs

***“This is my first year in 4-H. I am 10 years old and in the Poultry Project. I started attending meetings before I got my chickens. I learned so much from the group that made raising chickens easier...Being in 4-H is really fun!”***  
***—Eureka/Granite Bay 4-H club member***



*4-H members learn by doing. This 4-H'er proudly displays her entry for Favorite Foods and Still Exhibits Day.*

## Issue

Young people need opportunities to develop skills, knowledge, and a variety of other personal and social assets conducive to healthy development.

## What Was Done

4-H Community Club Programs provide a community-based learning environment where youth participate in projects, activities, and events that promote leadership, citizenship, community service, and other essential life skills. Caring, supportive adults plan and carry out the program in partnership with youth.

## Impact

- Over 1,500 community members attended the “You-Make-It-Craft Expo”.
- 13 Community Clubs offered 230 different projects.
- 724 youth participated, taking over 2,494 projects.
- 150 youth served as club officers, presiding over meetings and performing the monthly duties of the club.
- 98 youth participated as junior and teen leaders in 134 projects, sharing their knowledge with younger youth.
- 26 County 4-H events and 35 County-wide training workshops were held.
- Over 150 community service activities were held.
- 218 adult volunteers provided over 13,000 hours of mentoring and support for these interactive activities.



# Nevada County 4-H Community Clubs



*Nevada County has an active All Star program. All Stars take a lead role in planning and conducting Achievement Night and provide outreach to 4-H clubs and other groups.*



*Presentation Day helps develop life skills for 4-H members in the area of public speaking. Members have the option of either doing a presentation or a demonstration of some skill they have learned in their project.*

## Issue

Positive youth development occurs from an intentional process that promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, choices, relationships, and the support necessary for youth to fully participate in families and their communities.

## What Was Done

Nevada County 4-H program has 10 Community Clubs. These clubs offered 62 different projects that provide youth with hands-on learning opportunities designed to promote life skills such as public speaking, leadership, and citizenship.

## Impact

- 488 youth participated in the program, taking 1,527 projects.
- 95 youth served as club officers and 80 youth participated as junior teen leaders sharing their project expertise with younger youth.
- Projects organized at least one community service activity, totaling over 59.
- Youth who participated in the Nevada County 4-H Club Program have more positive outcomes such as leadership, citizenship, other life skills development, and lower levels of risk behavior than youth who did not participate in the program.
- The 4-H program builds self-esteem and helps youth realize that their opinion counts and they can make a difference.





# Placer County 4-H Summer Camp



*The High Ropes Course elements are always a big highlight for 4-H campers at Cisco Grove.*



*Activities at 4-H camp emphasize teamwork and working together.*

## Issue

Youth need the opportunity to experience hands-on 4-H SET (science, engineering, and technology) to spark their interest in science and related activities.

## What Was Done

27 camp counselors were trained to teach inquiry-based science in partnership with adults. 152 youth campers participated in activity sessions being piloted for California Camping Association. Activities included:

- Astronomy—solar system map and sky wheel to find constellations while on a night hike.
- Boat building
- Bridge building
- Outdoor cooking over hot coals—cupcakes in fruit covered with foil and bread on a stick.
- Archery
- High ropes course
- Digital photography

## Impact

In a post-test survey administered to camp counselors indicated that:

- 96% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt more confident in their ability to lead science-related activities at summer camp.
- 85% agreed or strongly agreed that their knowledge in and interest of the subject increased.
- 100% agreed or strongly agreed that they feel like stronger leaders.



# Nevada County 4-H Summer Camp



*Summer Camp is a great way for youth to meet new friends, learn new skills, and have fun.*



*The Ropes Course is one of the big highlights at 4-H Summer Camp.*

## Issue

High-quality camp and outdoor adventure programs are beneficial in providing positive youth development experience during out of school hours.

## What Was Done

Nevada County 4-H held a week-long Summer Camp Program. Highly trained 4-H senior youth members organize and implement the camp program with the support and guidance of adult volunteers.

Nature hikes, swimming, kayaking, high ropes course, archery, arts and crafts, team-building games, and astronomy were just a few of the many fun and educational activities for youth. Camp provides a safe environment for hands-on experiential learning as well as developing citizenship, leadership, and life skills.

## Impact

In Nevada County, 107 youth and 19 youth camp counselors, as well as 24 adult volunteers attended camp. In a post-camp program evaluation of youth:

- 97% reported that they were able to find things they were good at.
- 94% learned how to do new things.
- 88% learned how to do things they did not think they could do.
- 78% reported that they learned to value the natural world.
- 97% made new friends.
- Camp counselors showed significant gains in leadership development and decision-making.





# Placer County 4-H Embryology

***“This is such a beneficial learning opportunity that I would not be able to do otherwise. Some students may never experience this again. Thank you!”***

***—Teacher whose class participated in the 4-H Embryology outreach program.***



***Embryology is the biggest 4-H outreach project for the year. The project reached out to over 4,800 youth in schools and home schooled families.***

## Issue

Science literacy among school-age children in the United States is among the lowest in the developed world and the use of traditional teaching methods is a contributing factor.

## What Was Done

A webpage offers the ability to reserve equipment online, watch video clips, and find answers to embryology frequently asked questions. 125 incubators, equipped with automatic turners and fertile eggs available year round supply hundreds of classrooms, afterschool, and preschool programs as well as home schooled families. Locally developed “4-H Embryology...An EGGciting Adventure” curriculum provides numerous opportunities to learn through observation and hands-on activities.

## Impact

- Research shows that youth who report higher levels of these life skills lead happier, healthier, and satisfying lives.
- 555 adult leaders guided 4,894 youth participating in the embryology program this past year.
- 95% of teachers surveyed said that they would do the project again and 100% indicated that they would recommend the project to other teachers.
- Results indicate that the program increases science literacy and helps children develop a wide range of life skills such as critical thinking, managing, caring, and teamwork.



# Nevada County 4-H Embryology



*Nevada County  
home schooled family hatches  
and cares for ducks.*

**15 teachers offered  
the Embryology  
program in their  
classroom, reaching  
405 youth.**

## Issue

Young people need a range of opportunities to develop and practice science skills. Science literacy among school-age children in the United States is among the lowest in the developed world.

## What Was Done

The 4-H Embryology School Enrichment Program provides teachers, educators, and home schooled families with equipment, fertilized eggs, National 4-H curriculum and other educational materials designed to be grade-level appropriate and correlated to the National Science Education Standards.

## Impact

Teachers reported on the following changes in their students:

- 100% increased knowledge of the embryonic process.
- 83% increased appreciation of the value of life.
- 95% increased interest or willingness to care for another living creature.
- 90% increased interest in hands-on science processes.
- 100% increased in science observation skills.
- Results indicate that the Nevada County 4-H Embryology Program increases science literacy and helps children develop life skills.



# Y.E.S. in Afterschool

***Because of 4-H YES,  
one of the afterschool  
sites is seeking a  
grant for a Science  
Center for their room.***



*Learning different ways to create bubbles at Skyridge Elementary School.*

## Issue

Young people need opportunities to become engaged in the process of exploration, to participate in inquiry-based learning and develop critical thinking skills, and to understand and appreciate how science literacy will improve their lives.

## What Was Done

After a successful first year, a second grant was funded through the H.B. Fuller Company Foundation to continue the 4-H Y.E.S. (Youth Experiences in Science) in Afterschool Project which uses curriculum created by the University of California Cooperative Extension developed specifically to engage 5-to 8-year-olds attending local afterschool programs in hands-on science sessions taught by local Teen Teachers.

## Impact

- 30 high school youth were trained as Teen Teachers in the 4-H Y.E.S. curriculum, undergoing an extensive 10-hour training.
- Nearly 600 school-age youth participated in the 10-week programs where weekly lessons centered on the topics of Bubbles, Kitchen Science, and Worms and Recycling.
- Teens reported that 100% of the school-age children demonstrated an increased ability in problem-solving skills.
- 4 adult volunteers from three Placer County afterschool programs were trained and acted as Project Coaches for the Teen Teachers, providing 190 hours of mentoring support.





# Eating Healthy from Farm to Fork

## CYFAR 4-H Project

***“The kids learned that vegetables can come from different parts of a plant”.***  
**—Teen Quote**



*Teen teaching MyPlate food groups to Kindergarten class at Hennessy After School Program.*

***“It is amazing how much the kids retain—they remember everything we taught them the week before!”***  
**—Teen Quote**

### Issue

Studies have shown that garden-based nutrition education can significantly increase children’s knowledge of, preference for, and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. Garden based learning combined with nutrition education is more effective than nutrition education alone.

### What Was Done

A five-year California Youth and Families at Risk (CYFAR) grant was received from USDA to UCCE for Nevada County. The grant is being used for nutrition and gardening education at low-income afterschool sites. 10 high school age youth were trained to teach a Garden and Nutrition curriculum to elementary age students. They volunteered 12 weeks teaching kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students in the Hennessy Elementary afterschool program. The children were taught using hands-on activities around MyPlate food groups, worm composting, and plant parts. Four teachers acted as mentors for the teens. Children spent time weekly in the school garden and went on a field trip to a local farm.

### Impact

52 children in the afterschool program were taught through hands-on Gardening and Nutrition curriculum. Children were engaged by teen teachers and retained the MyPlate lesson information well. Children practiced social skills, plant identification, tasting vegetables and fruit in the garden. 100 children were exposed to radishes, snow peas, turnips, potatoes, tomatoes, strawberries, chives, and more.