

4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Program Highlights

- ◆ **4-H Youth Members:**
Placer: 924
Nevada: 626
- ◆ **4-H Adult Volunteers:**
Placer: 254
Nevada: 181
- ◆ **Youth Enrolled in Group and Short-Term Activities:**
Placer: 5,665
Nevada: 405
- ◆ **4-H Community Clubs:**
Placer: 13
Nevada: 10
- ◆ **4-H Website Visits:**
Placer: 59,837
Nevada: 36,844
- ◆ **Training and Workshops:**
Placer: 58
Nevada: 13

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.

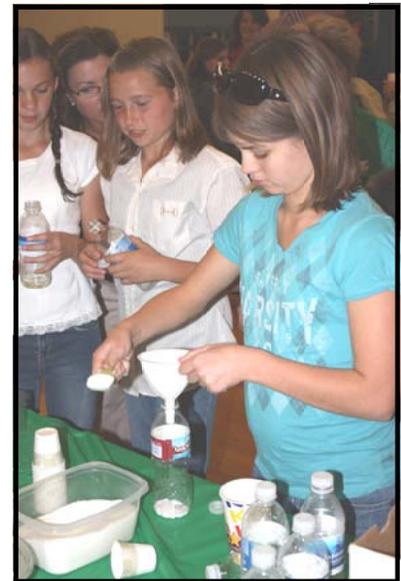
We know that families and schools cannot do it all. Caring communities and other out-of-school activities are important contributions to positive youth development. Through the 4-H Youth Development Program, youth and adults work closely and develop warm, caring, and long-term relationships that support 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 members participate in a science experiment at a 4-H community event.



Placer County 4-H Community Club Program

Issue

Young people need opportunities to develop skills, knowledge and a variety of other personal and social assets conducive to healthy development. Programs that offer young people safety, supportive and caring relationships with adults and peers, involvement in decision-making, opportunities for leadership, community involvement, and skill building lead to positive youth and early adult outcomes.



4-H Club assembling cookie mix jars to give to the Children's Receiving Home.

What Was Done

The 4-H Community Club Program provided a community-based learning environment where youth participated in projects, activities, and events that promoted leadership, citizenship, and other essential life skills designed to lead to the development of positive youth development. Projects offered range from Beekeeping to Public Speaking, Animal Science, Drama, Guide Dog Training, Rocketry, Computer Science, and Sewing. Caring, supportive adults planned and carried out the program in partnership with youth leadership teams.

Each aspect of the program integrates service learning opportunities. For example, the “You-Make-It Craft Expo” is an annual event sponsored by Placer County 4-H club members. Almost 1,500 community members attended to assemble craft projects for holiday gift giving. There were over 50 different craft projects led by trained 4-H’ers and adult volunteers.

Impact

- 13 Community Clubs offered 202 different projects.
- **764 youth participated, taking over 2,261 projects designed to foster citizenship, leadership, and other life skills development.**
- 168 youth served as club officers, presiding over meetings and performing the monthly duties of the club.
- 83 youth participated as junior and teen leaders sharing their learning with younger youth.
- **236 adult volunteers provided over 28,080 hours of mentoring and support for these interactive activities.**
- 33 County 4-H events and 53 County-wide training workshops were held.
- Over 200 community service activities were held.
- **Youth who participated in the 4-H Club Program had more positive outcomes such as leadership, citizenship, and other life skills development and lower levels of risk behavior than youth who did not participate in the program.**



Nevada County 4-H Community Club Program



4-H member shows garment entered into Fashion Revue.

Issue

Positive youth development builds on young peoples' strengths and assets. It is development that is healthy and productive for both the youth and their families. 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 59 different projects that provide youth with hands-on learning opportunities designed to promote life skills such as public speaking, leadership, and citizenship. Adult volunteers work with youth members on projects that include Clothing and Textiles, Rocketry, Computer Technology, Public Speaking, Animal Science, and Community Pride.

Nevada County 4-H Community Club and Project Leaders provide youth with the structure and support to take on new challenges and learn new skills. Clubs and projects meet on a regular basis throughout the year and provide a supportive learning environment. Leadership opportunities are also provided to youth members at the project, club and County level. 4-H also emphasizes youth decision-making at all levels guided by caring adults.

Nevada County 4-H holds annual events to showcase the youth's accomplishments in their projects. For example, Presentation Day provided an opportunity for 4-H members to demonstrate and practice their public speaking skills, and over 30 youth entered garments in the Fashion Revue.

Impact

- **513 youth participated in the program, taking 1,410 projects.**
- **157 adult volunteers provided over 18,840 hours of support and mentoring.**
- 83 youth served as club officers and 112 youth participated as junior or teen leaders sharing their project expertise with younger youth.
- 15 County 4-H events and 13 County-wide training workshops were held.
- Projects organized at least one community service activity, totaling over 59.
- **Youth who participated in the Nevada County 4-H Club Program had more positive outcomes such as leadership, citizenship, and 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

Issue

Every year millions of youth spend at least part of their vacation in some camp setting. High-quality camp and outdoor adventure programs are beneficial in providing positive youth development experiences during out of school hours.

What Was Done

Placer 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.

Hiking, swimming, kayaking, high ropes course, archery, arts and crafts, digital photography, boat building, and astronomy were just a few of the many fun and educational activities for youth. The planned activities provide campers with many opportunities to discover and explore their talents, interests, and values in a non-competitive way. Camp provides a safe environment for hands-on experiential learning as well as developing citizenship, leadership, and life skills.

For many of the campers this is their first introduction to the 4-H Youth Development Program.

Over one-half of the campers enrolled in 4-H go to camp. This has proven to be a great way to introduce and recruit youth to participate in other delivery modes, such as the 4-H Club Program. This affordable camp gives the campers outdoor experiences to develop life long fond memories.

Impact

In Placer County, 160 youth including 18 whose family member(s) were recently deployed as part of our Operation Military Kids (OMK) program and 15 youth camp counselors, as well as 18 adult volunteers plus three OMK staff attended camp. In a post-camp program evaluation of youth:

- 99% reported that they were able to find things they were good at.
- 98% learned how to do new things.
- 74% learned how to do things they did not think they could do.
- 90% reported that staff challenged them to do their best.
- 86% reported that they learned to value the natural world.
- 72% learned something new about nature.
- 76% reported that they felt like they belonged most or all the time.
- 95% made new friends.
- Camp counselors showed significant gains in leadership development and decision-making.



Team effort in hand cranking ice cream for dessert.



Nevada County 4-H Summer Camp



4-H members and adults who participated in the Nevada County 4-H Summer Camp Program.

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. The planned activities provide campers with many opportunities to discover and explore their talents, interests, and values in a non-competitive way. Camp provides a safe environment for hands-on experiential learning as well as developing citizenship, leadership, and life skills.

For many of the campers this is their first introduction to the 4-H Youth Development Program. Almost one-half of the campers enrolled in 4-H go to camp. This has proven to be a great way to introduce and recruit youth to participate in other delivery modes, such as the 4-H Club Program. This affordable camp gives the campers outdoor experiences to develop life long fond memories.

Impact

In Nevada County, 113 youth including 9 whose family member(s) were recently deployed as part of our Operation Military Kids (OMK) program and 23 youth camp counselors, as well 24 adult volunteers plus three OMK staff attended camp. In a post-camp program evaluation of youth:

- 97% reported that they were able to find things they were good at.
- 95% learned how to do new things.
- 77% learned how to do things they did not think they could do.
- 89% reported that staff challenged them to do their best.
- 78% reported that they learned to value the natural world.
- 68% learned something new about nature.
- 83% reported that they felt like they belonged most or all the time.
- 100% made new friends.
- Camp counselors showed significant gains in leadership development and decision-making.

Issue

Every year millions of youth spend at least part of their vacation in some camp setting. High-quality camp and outdoor adventure programs are beneficial in providing positive youth development experiences 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



Placer County 4-H Rocketry Day Camps

Issue

The U.S. faces a significant challenge as young people are not prepared with the necessary science, technology, engineering, and mathematical knowledge, skills, and abilities to compete in the global market. For over a decade, national and international assessments of science education and literacy have shown that U.S. youth perform at levels below those achieved by their peers in many developed countries. To address these needs locally and nationally, 4-H programs across the nation launched a five-year 4-H SET (Science, Engineering, and Technology) initiative to reach new youth with 4-H SET experiences.



4-H member explores the rocket he built before launching.

What Was Done

Two week-long 4-H Rocketry Day Camps were held during the summer months to teach youth about the exciting world of model rocketry and rocket science. Some of the key concepts introduced during the basics rocketry camp were the importance of aerodynamics, how to choose the right rocket to meet their needs, how to design, build, and paint their rocket, and the basics of launch site safety. Each camp ended with the youth launching the rockets they built. Eleven youth attended the first week-long day camp and 20 youth attended the second. The camp was led by the middle school teacher from the EV Cain 4-H Afterschool Rocketry Club assisted by a 4-H adult volunteer from the Dry Creek 4-H Afterschool Rocketry Club and four junior/teen leaders from the Placer County 4-H Team America Rocketry Challenge teams.

Impact

All 31 youth successfully launched rockets.

Results obtained from the 31 youth participants indicate that:

- 92% learned more about rockets and rocketry science.
- 100% learned new skills.
- 83% increased their interest in science, technology, engineering, or math.
- 75% plan to take more science, technology, engineering, or math classes.
- 83% are more interested and plan to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, or math.
- Providing high-quality enriching SET activities in a nonformal educational setting can help declining SET proficiency and workforce shortages locally.
- **When asked what they liked most, one youth said, “Learning something I don’t learn at school.” Another youth said, “Launching all the rockets. It was cool to see them ignite and fly.”**



Placer County 4-H Embryology Program

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, and the use of traditional teaching methods is a contributing factor. Additionally, youth benefit from learning a wide range of life skills such as critical thinking, managing, caring, and teamwork. Research shows that youth who report higher levels of these life skills lead happier, healthier, satisfying lives.

What Was Done

The 125 incubators, equipped with automatic turners supply hundreds of classrooms, afterschool and preschool programs, as well as home schooled families participating in the 4-H embryology project.



Witnessing the baby chick's debut as it completes the hatching process.

The curriculum provides numerous opportunities to learn through observation and hands-on activities the value of life and information about chickens, ducks, eggs, and embryonic development. The integrated curriculum builds skills in math, science, and language arts. Throughout the process children measure, compute, and record their findings. They read and write about what they are observing, and apply what they learn through art and drama projects.

A new webpage (<http://ucanr.org/educatorresources/>) was developed that includes an online reservation system and educational materials.

Impact

- Six new educational video clips were created and posted on the webpage.
- **5,330 youth participated in the embryology program.**
- 96% of teachers said they would do the project again and 100% indicated that they would recommend the project to other teachers.

Teachers reported on the following changes in their students:

- 100% increased knowledge of the embryonic process.
- 100% increased appreciation of the value of life.
- 100% increased in interest or willingness to care for a living creature.
- 100% increased in science observation skills.
- **One teacher shared, “We do math problems using our chicks as subjects (e.g., 7 black chicks + 7 yellow chicks = 14). My students love to write stories about the chicks”.**
- Results indicate that the program increases science literacy and helps children develop life skills.



Nevada County 4-H Embryology Program

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. Contributing factors include a lack of emphasis on science in schools and the use of traditional teaching methods. Additionally, youth benefit from learning a wide range of life skills such as critical thinking, managing, relating, caring, giving, and teamwork. Research shows that youth who report higher levels of these life skills are found to lead happier, healthier, satisfying lives.

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.

In this program, youth care for and hatch eggs in the classroom. Students have the opportunity to develop an understanding of biology concepts through direct experience with living things, their life cycles, and their habitats. Science skills developed include observing, comparing, measuring, relating, and applying. Students have many opportunities to experiment and apply their knowledge to real-world situations. Within this curriculum students have the opportunity to develop life skills related to science processes, teamwork, keeping records, planning, and organizing.

Impact

- **21 teachers offered the program in their classroom, reaching 405 youth.**
- 75% of teachers said they would do the project again and 100% indicated that they would recommend the project to other teachers.

Teachers reported on the following changes in their students:

- 100% increased knowledge of the embryonic process.
- 80% increased appreciation of the value of life.
- 100% increased interest or willingness to care for another living creature.
- 80% 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.



4-H member cares for newly hatched chick.



Placer County Youth Commission

Issue

Research shows that engaging youth in civic activities is the most effective way to promote civic identity formation and subsequent civic engagement in adulthood. In addition, young people want to create positive change in their communities and feel that to truly impact issues affecting youth, youth need to be part of the solution.



Community Member from Full Circle Treatment Center presents to the Youth Commission.

holding eighteen meetings, partnering with other youth-oriented groups, and working on various other projects. Because this was the first year of operation, the Commission worked arduously to lay the groundwork for future Commissioners, adopting and amending bylaws, creating administrative materials, solidifying the roles that officers play within the Commission, and developing a youth ambassador role to provide greater connection to other youth groups in the County.

Impact

As a result of participating in the program youth increased on several indicators of civic engagement:

- Ability to write an opinion letter to a local newspaper.
- Ability to call someone to get help with a local problem.
- Ability to contact someone in government who represents the community.
- Frequency of watching local and national news for information on politics and current events.
- Feeling that they can make a difference in the community.
- **One youth wrote, “What I liked most was the satisfaction I derived from knowing that I had an active role in creating community change.”**

Youth Commissions provide a real world setting for youth leadership and civic development. Giving youth an authentic voice in local policy and decision-making benefits both youth and the greater community.

What Was Done

Fifteen youth served on the Youth Commission working to influence youth issues and create positive change in the community. The Commission hosted four community events — the Prescription Drug Convening, World Café Event and Town Hall Meetings — aimed at preventing youth substance use,



World Café Event

Issue

According to the California Healthy Kids survey (2006-2008) of Placer County youth, 36% of 11th graders reported drinking in the last 30 days. These estimates were 22% and 9% for 9th and 7th graders, respectively. In addition, 24% of 11th, 12% of 9th, and 3% of 7th grade youth reported binge drinking in the last 30 days (5+ drinks in a row). Alcohol use among youth is associated with a host of negative outcomes such as truancy and school drop out, as well as driving under the influence and sexual risk-taking.

What Was Done

The World Café was hosted by the Placer County Youth Commission on Wednesday, February 3rd in Auburn. Over 60 youth and 40 adults from Placer County came together to discuss the topic of underage drinking and identify solutions for this issue.

The youth represented a wide range of cities, high schools, and organizations. The adults also represented different localities and agencies, such as the Placer County Board of Supervisors, school principals, board of trustees, representatives from youth groups, law enforcement, drug rehabilitation center representatives, and county departments.

Youth and adults participated in various rotations during the evening, providing the opportunity for youth to discuss with community leaders their knowledge and insight concerning factors that contribute to underage drinking and allowing for an exchange of information, ideas, and possible solutions.

Impact

The following were identified as contributing factors and possible solutions:

- Enforcement, such as holding merchants, youth, and parents accountable for selling/giving alcohol to minors, and policy changes.
- Peer influences/pressure.
- Access to alcohol (parents, older friends, stores).
- Education and awareness (parents, youth, schools).
- Involvement in healthier alternatives & life skills development.

Many youth felt that parents didn't have a true picture of teen drinking or understand how to prevent it. In response, the Youth Commission held two Community Town Halls Events. A panel of adults and local high school students discussed the current situation of teen drinking and how parents can help them make better choices. Over 140 youth and parents attended. The Commission is organizing merchant stings with law enforcement to reduce sales to minors.



Youth and adults discuss the topic of underage alcohol use.