



Frequently Asked Questions About 4-H

What is 4-H?

4-H is a community of more than 6.5 million young people across America learning leadership, citizenship and life skills.

The 4-H community also includes 3,500 staff, 538,000 volunteers and 60 million alumni. 4-Hers participate in fun, hands-on learning activities supported by the latest research of land-grant universities that are focused on three areas: healthy living, citizenship, and science, engineering and technology. Youth can experience 4-H by becoming a member of a 4-H club, attending a 4-H camp, or joining school-based or after-school 4-H programs. 4-Hers can compete with their projects in contests at the local, state, regional or national levels and also attend conferences and events.

What do the four H's in 4-H stand for?

Head, Heart, Hands, and Health are the four H's in 4-H, and they are the four values members work on through fun and engaging programs.

Head - Managing, Thinking

Heart - Relating, Caring

Hands - Giving, Working

Health - Being, Living

What is the 4-H pledge?

"I pledge my **head** to clearer thinking,
My **heart** to greater loyalty,
My **hands** to larger service,
and my **health** to better living,
for my club, my community, my country, and my world."

When was 4-H founded?

4-H didn't start in one time or place. It began around the start of the 20th century in the work of several people in different parts of the United States who were concerned about young people.

The foundation for 4-H began in the late 1800's with various agricultural projects geared at ensuring the future of rural youth. The recognized beginning of 4-H was 1902 when an Ohio educator, A. B. Graham, formed a club of boys and girls with the assistance of the Ohio State University and the Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station.

For more historical information: http://www.national4-headquarters.gov/about/4h_history.htm



How many states have 4-H?

4-H can be found in every county in every state, as well as the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands and U.S. Army and Air Force installations worldwide. 4-H and 4-H related programs also exist in more than 80 other countries around the world. For more information about international 4-H clubs: http://www.national4-headquarters.gov/about/4h_atlas.htm

Has the 4-H Emblem changed over the last 100 years?

Yes. The first emblem design was a three-leaf clover, introduced by O.H. Benson, sometime between 1907-08. From the beginning, the three "H's" signified Head, Heart and Hands. A four-leaf clover design with H's was introduced around 1908.

In 1911, 4-H club leaders approved the present 4-H design. O.B. Martin is credited with suggesting that the H's signify Head, Heart, Hands and Health -- universally used since then. The 4-H emblem was patented in 1924 and Congress passed a law protecting the use of the 4-H name and emblem in 1939, slightly revised in 1948.

What do 4-H clubs do?

It's entirely up to 4-H members what their 4-H club does! 4-H clubs usually focus on one or more topics of the members' choice. They conduct project-related activities, for example, a gardening club may have a year round garden or a technology club may work on Web design at meetings. 4-H clubs also do lots of community service both in their project area and where they are needed.

Who started 4-H?

Just like there is no one place in the United States that can rightfully claim to be the birthplace of 4-H, there is no one person who started it. It was a collaborative effort involving many visionaries that happened over time.

How old do you have to be to join? How long does it last?

Depending on your state's program offerings, you can be a full 4-H member from 9 through 19 years of age. Most states also have a program (usually called "Cloverbuds") for youth ages 5 through 9. There is also a program called collegiate 4-H for youth in their college years.

What famous people have a 4-H background?

Faith Hill, Reba McEntyre, Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Jim Davis (the creator of Garfield), Al Gore, Dolly Parton, Johnny Cash, Lamar Alexander, Ben Nighthorse Campbell, Herschel Walker and Reggie White are just a few distinguished alumni who are now in entertainment, government, sports, education and business careers. For a full list, visit <http://www.nae4ha.org/4hda.htm>