



Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development 2015 Program Results

Impact Reports on:
Youth Voice
Capacity Building
Youth-Adult Volunteer Development
Long-Term Life Skill Development

Data source: 2015 Recording Results

Prepared by the 4-H Program-Area Foundational Topics Leadership Team

Analysis and Report Preparation: Matthew Calvert, Monica Lobenstein and Karen Nelson

Team Members: Lisa Devine-Barribeau, Paula Huff, Debra Ivey, Annie Lisowski, Kandi O'Neil,
Jennifer Swensen and Dawn VandeVoort

Layout and design: Holly Henschen

Introduction

Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development delivers programming informed by interdisciplinary research based on positive youth development. Youth are vital resources with assets and potential to be developed. For this reason, we provide youth with safe learning environments, challenging experiences that build skills, competencies and resiliency to address life's challenges and to actively contribute to society. We work in partnership with caring adults to help meet youths' basic needs.

Research has identified the knowledge base and competencies needed by our professionals to be effective in 4-H programming: youth and adult development; equity, access and opportunity; volunteerism; educational design and learning strategies; partnerships and coalitions; and organizational systems.

We address the basic needs of youth by integrating the essential elements of belonging, independence, generosity and mastery into educational experiences. Those experiences are delivered in community-based clubs, school enrichment

programs, after-school and SPIN (special interest) programs.

As an effect of participation in 4-H Youth Development programs, research has shown that young people develop 35 life skills, including leadership, communications, record keeping, character and responsibility, while engaged in dozens of projects and activities of interest to youth ages 5-19.

Over time, a Tufts University research group found, 4-H youth develop what have been identified as the five C's of positive youth development:

- **Competence**
 - social competence (interpersonal relationships)
 - cognitive competence (decision-making)
 - academic competence (school performance)
 - health competence (nutrition, exercise & risk behaviors)
 - vocational competence (work habits, career choices and entrepreneurial skills)
- **Confidence:** an internal sense of positive self-worth
- **Connection:** positive bonds with people and institutions

- **Character:** respect for cultural norms and standards of behavior
- **Caring:** a sense of sympathy and empathy for others

These characteristics collectively result in a sixth C: **Contribution** — to self, family community and institutions of a civil society. Young people whose lives incorporate these five C's are on a developmental path that has great public value.

Fostering leadership development and civic engagement through the modern 4-H program has blossomed through many skillsets — art, drama, science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), to name a few. From its rural and agricultural roots, 4-H has always emphasized preparing youth, wherever they live, for their futures as upstanding community leaders.



Dale Leidheiser
Wisconsin 4-H Youth
Development Program Director

Overview of Niche Areas

During the 4-H Youth Development State Teams Meeting in March 2016, members of state teams participated in a facilitated discussion designed to define our niche and develop a process by which to move forward. Through the process of defining our niche in youth development programming, we collectively determined that our programming includes four niche areas:

1. **Youth Voice:** the engagement of youth in planning/advising/advocating, especially in those areas typically reserved for adults
2. **Capacity-building:** capacity-building on organizational development, both internally (within 4-H and UW-Extension) and externally (the broader community)
3. **Youth/Adult Volunteer Development:** volunteer development where individuals apply what they've learned to teach others and contribute to the community
4. **Long-Term Life Skill Development:** skill mastery and application of learning





Wisconsin Youth Leadership Council member Alexis Luedtke speaks at the Upham Woods 75th Anniversary celebration.

Youth who take part in the government of their organizations and communities develop higher confidence levels and better communication skills, which help them contribute to their communities.



Youth Voice

This report describes the impact of 4-H Youth Development in Wisconsin through opportunities for youth voice and youth participation in areas typically reserved for adults only. Examples cited include county-based educators and state specialists

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development

Communities commit to and provide a positive youth development environment that promotes opportunities for youth voice and increases young people's sense that their voice has value in the community.

As a result, youth develop stronger positive connections with adults and contribute their voice, leadership, and energy to their communities.

Youth in Governance

- 4-H Organizational Governance - *Eau Claire County* 4-H youth leaders participate in the Record Books Committee. In response to growing participation in their record books and the related interview process, youth helped develop a plan and led the presentation to the 4-H Executive Board. An important part of the plan was to involve youth in planning and

leading workshops for other youth to help prepare them for the interview process. This youth-adult partnership continues to be strengthened, making youth feel more comfortable presenting to adults and that their voices were heard and respected.

- Local Government - *Green County* identified a need to have more youth voice in government. UW-Extension educators responded by developing a system of workshops to help prepare youth to participate in county government, as well as a schedule of monthly, one-on-one meetings to provide ongoing support to the youth as they took on their roles in board and committee meetings. These programs have diversified the voices at the decision-making tables in both Brodhead and Monroe.
- Local Government - A similar need in *Racine County* to increase civic engagement among young people led to youth playing active roles in county government. Through a nomination and interview process, ten youth county board seats were filled and six supervisors served as mentors to the youth. Through the experience, knowledge of county government increased, they developed a stronger



Pepin County 4-H Teen Leaders communicate the value of 4-H and how 4-H has impacted their lives to a staffer in Rep. Warren Petryk's office during UW-Extension Capitol Day in Madison.

connection to the county and their belief that their voice matters increased.

- State Government - Youth from *Kewaunee and Door Counties* took part in the Legislative Day. Many of the youth delegates were from the 4-H Teen Association, a group dedicated to giving young people a place where they can use their voice and skills to make a difference in their community. As a result, youth participants said they feel more confident speaking with a state or local legislator and that their voices matter.

Community Development

- In *Iron County*, youth opportunities for voice in community leadership have created greater connections between youth leaders and adults in the community, which increase significantly with the length of time youth are involved. Opportunities range from local summer camps to consulting well beyond the boundaries of the county. For example, youth had the chance to participate in a Wisconsin Design Team, where youth voice is incorporated into the future planning of commu-
- The objectives of a Madison-based food security program were 1) Youth will increase their knowledge of the factors and systems that affect food security and strengthen their research skills. 2) Youth will develop their leadership skills. 3) Youth will plan and implement action projects to address food security in their community. During the pilot, ten teens learned new skills and had their voices heard. As a result, they increased their engagement and understanding, as well as improved their

nities. The Iron County youth helped with a Design Team project in Door County, and the youth had a role in identifying what areas needed improvement and what they didn't want to change.

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development Participants in 4-H Youth Development programs related to youth voice learn skills to better speak and present their views.

As a result, youth increase their confidence, communication skills and ability to contribute to their communities.

confidence in articulating their thoughts and ideas.

- All 121 post-Citizen Washington Focus program evaluation respondents (youth from around Wisconsin who traveled to the national 4-H program in DC) reported they learned what it meant to be a citizen; strengthened communication, leadership, and other citizenship skills on a national level; and exchanged ideas, practiced respect, and formed friendships with youth from diverse backgrounds during the experience. Of the 121 youth respondents, 30 reported an interest in pursuing a different career or a career in government because of their CWF experience.
- *Dodge County* youth were part of the "Speak Out for Ag" pilot that later was shared with youth from around the state at a variety of educational events. The program teaches young people to tell the story of the farm and where people's food comes from. A post-program evaluation showed that youth gained a better understanding of agriculture advocacy and they came away better equipped to confidently tell their story in public.
- A group of students from Milwaukee's Westside Academy SySTEMatics group attended UW-Extension Day at the Capitol as representatives of both Milwaukee and their program. The students got added enrichment from the trip as none of them had been to the Capitol or Madison before. They learned that they have a voice and that

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it is the duty of legislators to listen to them.

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Youth participants in 4-H Youth Development programs apply the communication and leadership skills they learn in real-life situations.

Their increased ability to add their voices to typically adult conversations enhances their communities in a variety of ways.

- In *Kewaunee County*, teen 4-H members continue to learn the importance of their voice and the how their ideas can lead to change. They advocated for healthier options in the 4-H food stand menu during the county fair. The healthy menu items included yogurt and fruit parfaits, frozen yogurt and fruit sandwich bars, fresh veggies and dip, whole fruit, locally sourced fresh cheese curds, string cheese, baked potatoes, oatmeal, a breakfast plate, and more. The 4-H food stand proudly declared themselves “the un-fried food stand.” In the first year, the healthy food items sold well and some items completely sold out and healthy options were appreciated by fair visitors.
- *Buffalo/Pepin County* Teen Court has senior panelists conduct the interview of all new panelist candidates and evaluate candidates’ strengths. This opportunity provides the seniors a leadership experience, and also starts the mentoring process. Veteran panelists coach new panelists and develop

relationships to help them become more comfortable with Teen Court hearings. In addition, experienced panel members address fears of incoming panelists. This is a great opportunity for Buffalo/Pepin County Teen Court to strengthen youth-adult partnerships and allows for current panel members to have a voice in the program to build a truly collaborative program between panelists and coordinators.

- After selling a property for \$30,000, Good Luck 4-H Club in *Washington County* actively involved both youth and adults in a process to develop a 5-year plan for how to manage those excess funds, including building a teaching shelter at Upham Woods, pictured below. Throughout the process, the educator worked with the club’s general leader to ensure that youth voice was strongly represented in how funds would be used.

- Youth leaders in a service learning experience originating in *Buffalo County* educated the public and the community about the importance of learning through service and their own privileged assumptions. They also learned how to respond to comments about their experience, emphasizing that it was about service learning and leadership development. The result of their applied communication skills was \$40,000 raised in donations for the experience. The results of the trip were hundreds of hours of volunteer service performed (both in Buffalo County and Hawaii) and a vast increase in awareness about history, culture, food security, and poverty in both locations.





A UW-Eau Claire college mentor works with elementary school students on the National 4-H Youth Science Day project “Motion Com-motion” during an afterschool program.

Youth and adult 4-H volunteers become assets to their communities, which strengthens local ties and meets residents’ needs.



Capacity-building

The purpose of this report is to describe the impact of 4-H Youth Development in Wisconsin through long-term life skill development. The focus of this report is on capacity-building for organizational development. While this building of capacity happens both in 4-H Youth Development programming and with partner organizations, this report emphasizes those occurrences that take place in the broader community at the local, county, or state level. Internal capacity-building (within UW-Extension or 4-H) was more closely addressed in the Youth/Adult Volunteer Development Impact Report.

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development

Youth and adults have specific roles in helping to address issues engage in partnerships.

Those youth and adults become assets to their communities as well as recipients of the services provided, which strengthens the community as a whole and improves the health and well-being of its citizens.

Nutrition and Food Security

- *Columbia County* partners, including the library, churches, police, health and human

services, schools, and parks and recreation, collaborated under the leadership of 4-H Youth Development and other UW-Extension staff to secure two summer food sites which served a total of 1,826 meals, double that of the previous year, and provided nutrition education to more than 300 youth throughout the summer.

- *Green Lake County's* 4-H Youth Development VISTA volunteer coordinated the “Stuff the Bus” Food Drive. The VISTA member organized partners, including health and human services, UW-Extension, and six schools, in addition to volunteers for the effort, which resulted in nearly 5,000 pounds of food in one week, the largest food drive in Green Lake County history.
- State level 4-H Youth Development staff secured the Eat 4-Health Grant, partnering with three counties — *La Crosse, Crawford and Trempealeau Counties* — to deliver nutrition lessons using a teen teaching model. In La Crosse County, the 4-H Youth Development educator built partnerships with special-events coordinators, schools, and others to implement the teen teaching model locally, reaching 134 youth and 12 adults with nutrition lessons.

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- *Portage County* 4-H Youth Development staff expanded the garden project from one site at a local Boys & Girls Club to three Boys & Girls Club sites around the county, encouraging nearly 100 youth to volunteer in the gardens. Through the experience and partnerships built, youth participants learned about a wide range of gardening topics, how to prepare foods with the produce they grew, and felt they played a role in the success of the garden.

health and human services, the Ho-Chunk Nation, and a local coalition established the Taking Care of You (TCY): Body Mind Spirit program for adults, recognizing that youth who spend time with adults practicing healthy coping skills develop strong positive coping skills too. The partners formed a TCY Facilitation Team of nine individuals from four different institutions and the community and offered three 8-week sessions in the first year.

ing, and adjusting spending to make ends meet. The *Calumet County* 4-H Youth Development staff partnered with schools — teachers and counselors — to offer an adaptation of the Rent Smart curriculum to high school juniors and seniors, who were in need of financial literacy information and resources. Even the teacher learned new information. There may be an opportunity for the curriculum to be offered by school staff in future years, building community capacity.

Health

- *Waukesha County* 4-H Youth Development staff helped establish an Alcohol Compliance Committee made up of law enforcement, business owners, elected officials and health professionals. They collectively established the Responsible Alcohol Beverage Server Training (RAST) which resulted in a decrease in the number of establishments who were noncompliant and sold alcohol to minors (23% in 2014 down to 10% in 2015).
- Working with the Teen Court Advisory Board who were receiving bullying referrals, the *Vernon County* 4-H Youth Development educator established a Be SAFE program in local schools. Post-program evaluations indicated the training prompted new thinking among youth participants, and action plans for how to handle bullying situations were put into place.
- Community partnerships between *Jackson County* 4-H Youth Development staff and

Financial Literacy

- Nearly 250 youth in *Richland County* participated in a Get Real! Youth Financial Reality Event coordinated by a planning committee of financial professionals, teachers, and district administrators. The planning committee involved about 100 volunteers in the reality day. Youth increased skills in “planning for unexpected expenses” and a majority plan to use the positive skills they learned, such as budgeting, tracking spend-

Safety

- *Ashland and Bayfield Counties* built community capacity through their Tractor Safety program, which reached its intended goal of educating students on how to safely operate farm machinery. In addition, relationships between local businesses (implement dealers, hospitals, electrical providers) were strengthened through their sponsorship of the course. They likewise demonstrated

Participants in the Milwaukee County 4-H SySTEMatics program take part in a College Experience on the at UW-Richland Campus.



their commitment to the safety of the counties' residents. 4-H Youth Development staff in *Pepin County* coordinated the planning and implementation of a Child Care Clinic training for children in 5th grade or higher, in partnership with the health department, police, EMTs, and the schools. All partners had identified a need to increase the child care skills among children because of a noted lack of adult child care in the community and all youth participants (12) completed the course by demonstrating proficiency in all areas of training.

Workforce Readiness

- An *Oneida County* organization, called PIE (Partners in Education), identified a need to teach workforce readiness skills to young people in the community, better preparing them for what is needed in the workplace. The 4-H Youth Development educator worked closely with PIE to develop educational programs for teens to learn the “soft skills” of getting a job: resume writing, mock interviews, customer service, and more. Volunteers who assisted with the workshop sessions also reported improving their “soft skills” too.

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development Partnerships centered around providing safe places for young people after school create opportunities for increased outreach to underrepresented and underserved populations and educational enrichment for youth.

As a result, these partnerships build on the community's capacity to meet the needs of young people and their families.

- *Lincoln County* 4-H Youth Development staff surveyed middle school students at four sites about their needs and interests in response to an identified concern about the number of youth without supervision after school hours. The program, 100% supported by local donations, is supervised by the 4-H Youth Development educator as a result of a planning partnership with the library, schools, parks and recreation, various community organizations and coalitions, churches, social services and the police. The “After the Bell” program for middle school students — many of them coming from limited-income homes — has served nearly 600 youth over 11 years.
- In *Eau Claire County*, the 4-H Youth Development educator developed a partnership with the UW-Eau Claire Blugold Beginnings program, which reaches marginalized and vulnerable populations of youth to encourage them to consider attending college. Through the partnership, the 4-H Youth Development



A 4-H alumna and volunteer directs a Wisconsin State Fair visitor at the Youth Exhibition Hall.

educator trains college-age mentors who then volunteer with the younger students from throughout the city of Eau Claire on 4-H robotics projects. Outcomes include an increase in STEM knowledge, communication skills, problem-solving skills, and teamwork skills.

- The *La Crosse County* 4-H Youth Development educator partnered with the director of the UW-La Crosse Multicultural Student Services. Through their pre-college program, college student mentors - trained by the educator - led STEM activities with youth and helped them learn and grow in their understanding of STEM and personal life skills.
- Through county 4-H funding and a Healthy Living Grant obtained by the *Sawyer County* 4-H Youth Development educator, she and partners —including the Tribal AmeriCorps program and multiple Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) agencies (school, social services, Extension, and coalitions) — established an after school program at the LCO school, the only com-

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munity in the county that did not have after school opportunities for its youth. Through the program, youth have increased their knowledge and understanding of nutrition concepts, as well as utilizing culturally-based curriculum.

- In partnership with Holy Family Catholic Church and UW-Fond du Lac, the 4-H Youth Development educator developed the Young Dreamers program, primarily serving the growing Latino population. In the after school program, youth participants, many of them bilingual learners, created and gave 20-minute presentations on the topic of their choice, working with college-age mentors and learning communication skills in the process.

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development

Community capacity increases due to multi-faceted work and approaches to address key community issues.

As a result of multi-faceted approaches, a broader scope of community members benefit from and are reached by educational programs, improving health and well-being across generations.

- In *Jackson County*, suicide deaths among young people and adults were identified as significant issue countywide. The 4-H Youth Development educator partnered with health and human services, the Ho-Chunk Nation, schools, law enforcement, coalitions, health care, and many oth-



ers to employ a wide range of approaches with suicide intervention skills training (QPR - Question, Persuade, Refer) to increase the community's capacity to address the issue. Strategies included 1) teaching QPR school staff and parents, 2) teaching an adapted version of QPR to high school-aged teens, 3) partnering with the Tavern League to teach QPR to bartenders, 4) teaching QPR to managers and employees in factories in the industrial park and beyond, 5) teaching QPR to church leaders, 6) constantly getting more QPR facilitators trained as others leave, and 7) sharing the QPR adaptation for teens with other communities around the state and country. As a result of these efforts over the last five years, the partners have taught suicide intervention skills to more than 1,100 teens and adults locally.

- The 4-H CANSKI (Chequamegon Area Nordic Ski) Club in *Ashland and Bayfield Counties* has developed a wrap-around program that involves hundreds of community members in a variety of ways. Local community grants help pay for low-cost equipment that allows any child to participate. Public transportation is available to the sites for those who need it. The program itself involves 1) training for adult volunteers, 2) youth being taught and coached by those adults, 3) older, more experienced youth teaching/leading/mentoring younger youth, and 4) younger youth learning skills that allow them to help themselves. All participate in service projects back to the community. Through all of these experiences, participants, and volunteers alike gain independence, belonging, mastery, and generosity.



Adult-youth volunteer relationships build on the life skills and strengths of the adult volunteers and boost the development of youth, who contribute to communities in adulthood.



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Youth/Adult Volunteer Development

The purpose of this report is to describe the impact of 4-H Youth Development in Wisconsin through youth and adult volunteer development. As a comprehensive positive youth development program, the roles played by volunteers are complex. Among the many positive results in the 2015 4-H year, growth in the roles of youth and adult volunteers in providing leadership and contributions of 4-H teens in teaching others were particularly noteworthy. In 2015, Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development had 17,000 volunteers: 4,000 youth and 13,000 adults. Adult volunteers averaged 80 hours a year.

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development

Youth and adult volunteers have grown in leadership roles, especially in planning and implementing experiences for others.

They have learned and applied skills and best practices to enhance the structure and functioning of 4-H committees and events, which develops life skills in themselves and all 4-H youth.

The youth carry these skills into their futures and the adults apply new skills to benefit their families, other organizations and the broader community.

Youth Leadership Development Examples

- *Walworth County* developed a 4-H Youth Leadership Team to revamp the club officer training to improve club meetings and increase retention of members. The “4-H Officer School” included a keynote presentation and round table sessions on topics of interest to youth officers. Youth officers who attended were able to name and use specific strategies that helped make their club meetings more engaging for all.
- In *Marinette County*, six county-wide committees committed to a framework of youth-adult partnership. As a result of training, the committees developed strategies to make meetings welcoming and engaging to youth leaders, which, in turn, led to more youth leaders wanting to be involved.
- The *Green Lake County* 4-H Youth Ambassadors offer educational programs and promote 4-H in the community. Youth participants reported increasing their abilities in six competencies: planning, promoting, teaching, mentoring, advocating, and advising. Promotion (including

confidence levels in speaking publicly about programs) and mentoring (including confidence in supporting others) showed the greatest gains.

Summer Camp Leadership Development

- In *Ozaukee County*, volunteer leadership redesigned the camp program, including funding, programming, staff training, and recruitment. Through their efforts, involvement grew. Youth and adult staff training increased and improved the youth-adult partnership components of staff teamwork. On evaluations, staff reported having learned leadership, public speaking, patience, responsibility, communication, teamwork, problem-solving, cooperation, flexibility, and understanding.
- *Dodge County* 4-H summer camp expanded to include more youth leadership in partnership with the adult volunteers. Youth leaders served as camp cabin counselors, taught some activities and participated in the evaluation meeting following camp. Through these experiences, youth leaders gained perspective on the camp and their role in it.

Development of Project and other 4-H Committees

- *Ozaukee County* restructured their Livestock Association to address key issues and engage youth and families more in educational opportunities. They changed their meeting space, supported

hands-on learning events for youth, and offered opportunities for new families to learn with their children.

- *Fond du Lac County* involved families in deciding which projects to further develop, and together, they reorganized the four project/event committees. They developed more leaders, encouraged them to commit to specific projects in shared leadership roles, and strengthened organization among those leaders. The leaders involve youth and families in decision-making and adapt successful programs to their own needs.
- *Pierce County* addressed leadership changes in key volunteer roles by reinforcing concepts around life skill development, experiential learning, risk management, and financial accountability with new adult leaders. These volunteer development opportunities for leaders have resulted in improved communication, greater accountability, and strong engagement in learning events.
- *Langlade County* developed a Cloverbud Committee and enhanced their Horse and Pony Project Committee. Both groups set goals for themselves and developed leadership structures to work toward those goals. Youth voice was particularly encouraged in the Horse and Pony Project group with the creation of a youth leadership committee.

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development

Adult volunteers plan, implement, and evaluate learning opportunities that intentionally and effectively promote life skill development in youth.

This builds on the life skills and strengths of the adult volunteers and increases the development of youth who are contributing members of communities in adulthood.

- *Milwaukee County* developed a workshop to help staff, volunteers, teachers, and students document and improve their own thinking practice, enriching the students' learning experience in programs. They used a process called Visible Thinking with the impact being a win-win strategy to help teachers reach their content goals and help the nature center reach their goals of more environmentally-aware students.
- Staff at *Upham Woods* developed Digital Observation Technology Skills (DOTS) Kits and a program to train other educators to be able to use the components of the kits. Youth across the state and beyond now have access to the ability to make enhanced scientific observations about their environments through the DOTS kits. Educators have increased ability to teach with the kits in a positive youth-development environment.

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development

Through teaching, youth volunteers learn life skills and contribute to the community.

By teaching others, often, but not always, younger children, they apply and practice those skills in real-life situations and build life skills, as well as project-specific skills, in younger children.

Nutrition Programs

- Two *La Crosse County* youth ambassadors helped deliver health and nutrition lessons related to reading labels of popular beverages.
- Two *Crawford County* teens facilitated six sessions with younger children about what they drink, eating more fruits and vegetables, eating whole grains, healthier fast foods, reading nutrition labels, and eating a balanced breakfast.

STEM Programs

- After participating in the WHY NOT Youth Inquiry Leadership Conference, four *Iowa County* youth developed a lesson using inquiry and presented their lesson to a youth audience. Likewise, after the conference, four *Walworth County* youth planned the Wild about Science workshop series for younger children to engage them in inquiry-based learning.
- Twenty-two Ag Innovators, youth leaders organized and trained at the *State* level, were nominated and selected to lead a program to



A 4-H volunteer instructs a 4-H youth member on video camera angles during the 4-H Art Lab at Upham Woods Outdoor Learning Center.

teach young people to think creatively about solutions to the issue of providing food long-term for our world's growing population. The program increased communication, organizational, and leadership skills among the youth teachers. Awareness of food insecurity issues grew among participants.

- STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Agriculture, and Math) Discovery Days were held in *Buffalo County* with courses taught by teams of youth and adult volunteers who were trained by 4-H Youth Development staff. The program reached 171 youth and resulted in new STEM knowledge among participants, as well as increased retention of school-based learning during the summer months.

Outreach

- Targeted efforts in the above-mentioned STEAM Discovery Days in *Buffalo County* resulted in participation by three Hispanic youth and strengthened relationships with their families, and school staff.
- In *Ozaukee County*, youth participants in a program called Together We Can! plan, advertise, and offer monthly activities for people with special needs, ages 5-105. The 4-H youth involved in the program have learned how to interact with people who have special needs and to use "people-first language," increasing their levels of compassion and gaining better understanding of the challenges that people with special needs face.

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- Four youth volunteers helped deliver a 4-H Reading Program at *Washington County's* Casa Guadalupe in conjunction with parent education events. The youth volunteers developed skills in leadership, working with others, leading an activity, and working with younger youth, as well as cultural sensitivity. Youth participants improved their English literacy skills, money management, and nutrition.
- In *Oneida County*, Teens Active in Government (TAG) participants represent young people at county board meetings. To increase awareness of how youth can be involved in the county board, educators developed a presentation called "County Government and You," which TAG members present in social studies classrooms. Student engagement in the presentation has increased because the teens are leading the presentation and more students are motivated to participate in the program.
- In many county-based programs, youth volunteers lead activities in out-of-school formats, including Clover College (*Monroe County*), 21st Century Community Learning Centers (*Adams County*), Summer Youth Program (*Green Lake County*), Family Dinners (*Jefferson County*). Youth volunteers build life skills such as organizing, planning, evaluation, time management. They also learn about child development as they're delivering lessons, leading activities, and providing support for other programs in age- and skill level-appropriate leadership roles.

Mentorship

- In *Milwaukee County*, the Healthy Corner Store Initiative and MOVE Crew programs involved youth in growing fruits and vegetables, providing those foods to convenience stores, and leading food demonstrations for shoppers. These youth participants also became peer mentors, teaching younger youth about health risk prevention using the 4-H Health Rocks curriculum.
- In *Ashland and Bayfield Counties*, teen members of CANSKI teach cross country skiing to others and improve their leadership skills through their CANSKI experience. This demonstrates the development of the essential element of mastery of a skill, and generosity in giving back to the club.

Youth Leaders Teaching Life and Other Project-Specific Skills

- Around the *State*, teens taught agricultural literacy through the Commodity Carnival program. Through the experience, teens learned communication, teaching and decision-making skills they can use throughout their lives as they increased awareness and understanding about agriculture in the state among participants at fairs.





Long-term Life Skills

Youth and adults are empowered by 4-H involvement, learning valuable skills that translate to their broader lives, communities and careers.

The purpose of this report is to describe the impact of 4-H Youth Development in Wisconsin through long-term life skill development. The focus of this report is on youth opportunities to practice, master and apply life skills in a variety of venues. Life skills are defined in more detail in the Targeting Life Skills Model.

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development

Youth who have gained life skills through 4-H Youth Development programs have been shown to use those skills in other settings and venues throughout the community.

These life skills make them more employable, better able to contribute to their communities, and more likely to give generously of their time and talents.

Service/Civic Life

- *Outagamie County* Summer Camp Staff youth members have increased their involvement beyond their 4-H club events and activities and proven their leadership abilities on county committees and county activities by taking on more leadership responsibilities and positions.

- Youth leaders involved in *Columbia County's* Future Leaders Active in Government (FLAG) program participate in teams that design, plan and implement Capstone projects including teaching other students about government, writing a press release or letter to the editor for the local newspapers, and organizing a live panel of local officials.
- Several youth participants in *Buffalo County's* service-learning travel experience formed on-going relationships with a local organization with whom they worked before the trip. After their requirement was fulfilled, they chose to continue service to the organization and the community.

Workforce Training

- In *Milwaukee County*, the program called 4-H SySTEMatics partners with UW-Waukesha to teach STEM skills to nearly 150 students from seven Milwaukee schools. A teacher involved with the program reported students who hadn't thought about the possibility of going to college before the program now want to go to college and have asked to go on campus visits.



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- *Dane County's* Grow Academy works with young males in the corrections system to offer evidence-based, agricultural educational programming as an alternative to juvenile incarceration. The teen participants learn practical skills such as vegetable gardening, plant care, animal care, and natural resource management as well as life skills like teamwork and effective communication.

Camp Counselor Training

- In *Washburn County*, youth participants in Leadership Washburn County gained outdoor skills and confidence in their own abilities. Several of them had the opportunity to apply both the practical outdoor skills and the interpersonal skills they learned as counselors at 4-H summer camp.
- In *Dane County*, youth take part in a 6-week series of workshops with topics including community-/team-building, diversity, program planning, self-awareness, temperament styles, equity, job expectations, behavior management, child development, and financial management. Each youth who successfully completed the six sessions is placed as a paid summer camp counselor with one of the community's summer camp sites.
- At the *State* level, youth camp counselors received training and were assigned to teams that included youth who needed extra physical, emotional, or learning assistance, thus creating a supportive and inclusive environment.

Program Planning

- Youth participants in the *State* level Youth as Partnership in Civic Leadership Conference become committee members with a role in planning the next year's conference, giving them voice and experience in helping to plan a program that impacts them.
- A *Winnebago County* youth wanted there to be more programming in the county to encourage the arts, so she proposed a 4-H Drama Night. With support from the educator, she planned, promoted and held the drama night with 10 youth performances.

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development

Adults learn skills and gain experiences that empower them.

Through those experiences and skills, they are better able to provide opportunities for youth to learn and apply life skills themselves, which increases long-term commitments to service and engagement of both youth and adults.

Strengthening 4-H Community Clubs

- In *Outagamie County*, the Club Mentoring Committee has taken a lead role in planning and offering club officer training, tailoring it to meet the needs of younger and younger club officers. They have also developed special "officer clubs" that meet for follow-up training later in the 4-H year.

- The number of adult leaders in *Sauk County* has increased by 25% and the majority of these new leaders are project leaders who are actually leading project meetings for youth.
- *Brown County* 4-H Leaders received training on engagement and retention of 4-H youth members. They gained understanding about why kids leave 4-H and resources to help change that. Many of the participants planned to use the information they learned within 4-H to improve their clubs' offerings for youth. They also planned to use it outside 4-H in other organizations they supported.
- In *Clark County*, the club officer training participation grew from fewer than five to more than 30 just two years later. As a result of changes to the training, noticeable improvements were seen at club meetings, including adult leaders working in tandem with youth officers rather than running the meetings completely.
- The *Waupaca County* Education Committee annually plans the Club Officer Training. They have become engaged and remained consistent for the last several years, improving the quality of the officer training that's offered.

Project-/Interest-Specific

- The Chequamegon Area Nordic Ski Club (CANSKI) in *Ashland County* provides opportunities for adults to act as coaches and teachers. In those roles, they also build in

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opportunities for older youth members to lead and teach, increasing the broader capacity of the whole club.

- Through the Digital Outdoor Technology Skills (DOTS) kits developed at the State level at *Upham Woods*, adults learn how to lead programs with the kits and create opportunities for the students to learn and apply skills in environmental stewardship, critical thinking and a better understanding of technology and the environment.
- Ten youth and adult volunteers were trained to lead reflection discussion and how to infuse the education piece into the beginning and end of the experiences at the *State-level 4-H Art Beat*. This took typical, hands-on arts and crafts projects and turned the sessions into more educational opportunities for positive youth development.
- High school-age 4-H youth and adults had the opportunity to serve on a planning team and/or serve as counselors and volunteers at a *Zombie Survival Day Camp* for middle school-age youth in *Washington County*. Training for adult and teen volunteers prepared them to offer a high-quality day camp opportunity for middle school youth to learn about disaster preparedness, emergency management, and health and safety.
- A 4-H Leaders Committee was formed in *St. Croix County* to engage youth in grades 5-8 in STEM learning. They partnered with

other local groups to offer a STEAM (science, technology, engineering, agriculture, and math) Academy. This opportunity showed youth that there are many faces of STEM and that STEM is hands-on and fun. They also showed high rates of gained knowledge and wanting to attend another STEAM Academy in the future.

- Meeting topics for the *Meat Animal Project* in *Shawano County* are selected based on educator, 4-H leader and parent observations of member educational needs, current industry issues, and other factors. The 4-H Livestock Key Committee plans and teaches seven or more hands-on educational livestock project educational meetings annually. The results are improved animal husbandry skills, improved carcass quality, and increased responsibility among exhibitors.

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development

Participants who build life skills through 4-H Youth Development programs have been shown to use those skills to support the community beyond 4-H.

The community benefits from stronger community connections and an increase in the number of skilled, caring adults and youth willing to contribute their time and talents.

- Youth participants in *Bayfield County's* holiday service project — collecting donations and shopping for food a holiday supper for families in need — report feeling more connected to helping others. They recognize how a small amount of money or organizing can have a significant impact in the community. Finally, it increased youth awareness of food security and poverty in their community.



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- Members in the CANSKI Club in *Ashland County* have increased their sense of belonging, independence, mastery and generosity. On annual member surveys, 68% of members surveyed reported teaching cross country skiing to others and 91% indicated they improved their leadership skills through their 4-H CANSKI experience. Likewise, they work with community schools and organizations, both receiving support and giving back.



A member of the youth group *Urban Underground* performs with Rep. David Bowen at 4-H's Youth as Partners in Civic Leadership conference.

Because of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development

Recognizing the benefits to the community as a whole and youth individually, communities (4-H and beyond) develop systems for life skill mastery and application.

As a result, youth feel valued and are more likely to contribute within and beyond that system, and communities are better able to encourage benefits that meet the greatest needs.

- In *Marathon County*, the LEADS (Lead. Empower. Advance. Develop. Serve) group of youth leaders are becoming more conscious of how they plan programs. They have considerations built into their activities such as risk management and sharing leadership knowledge. As ambassadors, they

have developed their “elevator speech” of what 4-H is all about. They are seeking leadership positions and spreading their passion and knowledge into areas beyond their 4-H lives.

- Recognizing that participation was dwindling in the *Walworth County* Communication Arts Fest, the newly formed Communication Council formed a 3-part workshop series where youth learned about creative writing, speech/demonstration, and consumer education. The Communication Council members are committed to helping grow interest in the Arts Fest, in hopes teaching strong communication skills to young people.
- Based on data gathered from surveys and interviews, *State* 4-H Arts Camp has made changes to the tracks

and some of the structure of the camp. Those changes directly address needs and interests identified by youth participants and their families, including interest in learning about people different from themselves, expectations to bring learning back to their home communities, and focusing on “learning by doing.”

- The *State*-level DOTS program worked closely with teachers from *La Escuela Fratney* at *Upham Woods*. At the end of their time at *Upham Woods*, the students held an elementary-level research symposium to present their scientific findings while participating in the technology programming related to DOTS. The connections brought their learning full-circle back to the community.

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