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What Is 4-H?

Virginia 4-H Has Something for Youth of Military Families!

An Overview of 4-H Youth Development

4-H is the largest out-of-school time positive youth development organization in the United States with over 7 million youth members. With a direct connection to United States Land Grant University System, 4-H is the first experience many young people have with higher education.



The 4-H Youth Development Program:

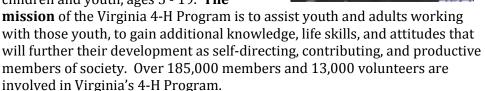
- Exists through Cooperative Extension in all 50 states, most cities, and 3,068 counties nationwide. Whether you move to a city, suburb or rural area, 4-H has something for you!
- Has presence in over 50 countries, including U.S. military installations worldwide.
- Provides predictability and a safe and nurturing environment for military youth.

For nearly a decade, Dr. Richard Lerner has been working with researchers at Tuffs University to conduct the 4-H Study on Positive Youth Development. The *2011 Summary of Findings for Wave 7* revealed that when compared to other youth, young people participating in 4-H:

- Are more likely to make more healthy choices.
- Excel in school and the sciences.
- Are three times more likely to actively contribute to their communities.

4-H in Virginia

Virginia 4-H, the youth program of Virginia Cooperative Extension, is connected to the research of Virginia Tech and Virginia State University. Promoting hands-on experiential and inquiry-based learning, Virginia 4-H offers exciting projects for children and youth, ages 5 - 19. **The**



4-H can be found in all counties and most cities across the state of Virginia. Clubs have also been organized on 11 military installations. More recently, an increased effort is being made to support youth of geographically dispersed Virginia National Guard and Reserve families through 4-H.

<u>Virginia 4-H</u>

Age of Youth Participants: Ages 5 - 19

4-H Enrollment: Over 185,000

4-H Locations:

All counties, most cities, and 11 military installations

4-H Offers Youth:

- Coached and mentored independence
- A sense of **belonging** with a positive group
- A spirit of generosity toward others
- A wide variety of opportunities to <u>master</u> <u>skills and address</u> life's challenges



4-H Colors

Green – nature's most common color, represents life, growth & youth

White – symbolizes purity and high ideals

<u>4-H Motto</u> "To Make the Best Better"

> 4-H Slogan "Learn By Doing"

Fun and Learning Starts in 4-H Programs

Virginia 4-H today focuses on three main program areas: Citizenship, Healthy Living, and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). Youth choose among projects such as:

Animal Science Community Service Careers Filmmaking
Horticulture & Gardening
Global Positioning Systems (GPS)

Leadership Nutrition & Fitness Performing Arts Public Speaking Robotics Rocketry

See a wide variety of high quality projects organized around 4-H program areas found at this website: http://www.4-h.ext.vt.edu/programs/index.html.

Opportunities to Participate

4-H members have the opportunity to participate in the program through community clubs, in-school clubs, afterschool programs, special interest groups, Cloverbud groups, military partnership programs, camps, events, and conferences.

4-H Emblem

The official 4-H emblem is a green four-leaf clover with a white "H" on each leaf.

The Four H's

The four H's stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health. They represent the four values members work on through fun and interactive programs.

- o Head Managing, Thinking
- Heart Relating, Caring
- o Hands Giving, Working
- Health Being, Living



The 4-H pledge offers intentional commitment to positive growth. The 4-H Pledge states:



"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."

For additional 4-H information: Contact your local Virginia Cooperative Extension Office and ask about the 4-H program. To find the office nearest you, visit us on the web at http://www.ext.vt.edu/offices/index.html.

To learn about Virginia 4-H Military Clubs: Contact Louetta Jones, Virginia 4-H Military Club Director Phone: 804-712-8467 Email: lojones@vt.edu

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Visit: http://www.virginia4-hmilitaryclubs.org

(Photos represent military and/or non-military youth engaged in Virginia 4-H programming.)

