

It's Significant:

4-H'ers BECOME BETTER CITIZENS, LEADERS, AND COMMUNICATORS

Iowa 4-H'ers are gaining something significant from participating in 4-H clubs—something statistically significant. New Iowa State University Extension research shows that Iowa youth credit their 4-H clubs with making them better citizens, leaders, and communicators.

THE STUDY

Extension randomly selected 508 Iowa 4-H'ers from across the state to participate in the 2008 Iowa 4-H Youth Citizenship, Leadership, and Communication Self-Assessment Research Study. The study examined self-reported changes in 4-H club members' citizenship, leadership, and communication knowledge/skills and behavior/practices. Using a five-point scale, the youth compared their knowledge/skills and behavior/practices in each area *after* participating in 4-H with their knowledge/skills and behavior/practices *before* participating in 4-H.

THE RESULTS

It's one thing to learn a skill; it's quite another to put that skill into practice and change behavior. But this higher degree of learning and impact happens through 4-H. The 4-H'ers' *after* 4-H scores were higher than their *before* scores, and the differences were statistically significant for every citizenship, leadership, and communication indicator.

- 80.1% increased their citizenship skills
- 73.5% improved their citizenship practices
- 67.4% increased their leadership skills
- 71.5% improved their leadership practices
- 73.1% increased their communication skills
- 71.5% improved their communication practices

Iowa 4-H'ers' survey responses offer solid evidence that participation in Iowa 4-H clubs give youth opportunities to

- Practice the citizenship, leadership, and communication skills they need to become successful adults
- Positively influence and work with others through multiple leadership roles and responsibilities
- Take ownership of, make a difference in, and be an active citizen within their community
- Learn critical workplace and teamwork skills
- Get things done through entrepreneurial outreach
- Meet their four basic developmental needs of belonging, mastery, generosity, and independence
- Develop the characteristics of competent, caring, contributing, confident, connected, and capable individuals

"4-H has unique opportunities that allow you to become a leader, to become a role model, to become an effective communicator, and to become active in your community. I have developed confidence in myself and my ability to be a leader. I discovered the pathway to my future through 4-H."

—Logan, a Hamilton County 4-H'er

... and justice for all

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Many materials can be made available in alternative formats for ADA clients. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 202-720-5964. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jack M. Payne, director, Cooperative Extension Service, Iowa State University of Science and Technology, Ames, Iowa.

4-H 3046 3/09

