

What is 4-H?



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Contributed by: [Marsha Slepicka](#) on 9/25/2007

Have you ever wondered what 4-H is all about? It's not just horses and cows.

The Boulder County 4-H program will be hosting a 4-H Family Open House on Wednesday, October 10, 2007 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at the Boulder County Fairgrounds Exhibit Building (corner of Nelson & Hover Roads in Longmont).

This is your chance to come and explore all 4-H has to offer. If you would like more information before the Open House please call 303-678-6238.

You've read some of my articles about 4-H and know that I think it's a wonderful program for families. The Niwot Nifties 4-H Club will have a table at the event and is currently seeking new members. I look forward to seeing you there!

Below is an article reprinted from <http://www.4h.colostate.edu/about4h.shtml> that will give you a bit more information:

4-H began a century ago as an educational program for the nation's rural youth. Today, 4-H meets the needs of and engages young people in positive youth development experiences. These experiences are based on the idea that young people should be regarded as resources to be developed. 2002 marked the centennial of 4-H and a renewed commitment to helping shape youth and communities. In looking to the next century, 4-H further develops its programs and continues its motto of "Making the Best Better."

4-H is America's largest out-of-school education program for boys and girls. It is a worldwide youth development program available in every state and many countries. Youth who participate in 4-H, get what all young people need to succeed in life--the confidence, compassion and connections with caring adults to make contributions to their communities.

4-H is youth development. It is people sharing, learning, growing and becoming the best they can be.

4-H is life skills. Through real-life situations, 4-H helps youth develop life skills such as: communication, citizenship, decision-making, leadership, interpersonal relations and community and global awareness. Youth learn these practical skills through hundreds of projects like cooking, wildlife, livestock, nutrition, sewing, archery and shooting sports, ceramics, electricity, computers, science, and many more.

4-H is one of a kind! It provides learning experiences in which youth, with help from parents, interested adults and older youth leaders, grow personally as they develop skills for living. 4-H'ers have fun while they work and learn together. 4-H takes place in meetings, project groups, individual project work, schools, special activities or events. Skills learned through 4-H help youth become better members of their families, communities and world. 4-H participants explore careers and positive leisure-time activities. The 4-H Youth Development program creates an educational environment for positive development of culturally-diverse

youth that enables them to reach their fullest potential. 4-H accomplishes its mission through non-formal education.

4-H is family and community-oriented. Parents play a critical role in volunteering with the program to support their children. A corps of more than 630,000 volunteer 4-H leaders share their time and talents to help 4-H'ers "learn by doing." Work on projects takes place at home, in the yard or around the kitchen table, with guidance from a parent, an older brother or sister, or a neighbor. The 4-H member needs the support and encouragement of a family and growing together through 4-H strengthens the family. 4-H members devote time to community service in a wide variety of projects, ranging from helping the elderly and disabled, to restoring historic sites, to landscaping public buildings to helping preserve their environment.

4-H is open to all. 4-H happens everywhere. It is in the city, suburbs and small towns, on farms and ranches. The 4-H program is open to all who wish to participate without regard to race, creed, gender, marital status, handicaps or disadvantages, economic or ethnic backgrounds.

4-H is a publicly-supported informal education program. County, state and federal funds are combined in a unique partnership to support this educational youth development program. The curriculum is provided through your land-grant university, which in Colorado is Colorado State University. Private funds from individuals, businesses and organizations enhance the 4-H program by providing support for special events, awards, and recognition and support supplemental educational materials.

4-H is flexible. Hundreds of projects and activities provide opportunities for all youth regardless of location, race or economic situation. Project and program requirements can be modified to meet the needs and interests of special groups.

Today, 4-H involves more than 6.5 million young people--from the city, from the suburbs, from rural areas, from the farm, and everything in between. More importantly, the 45 million 4-H alumni point with pride to their experience in developing life skills--telling how much they gained from making oral presentations, record keeping, developing leadership, management and communication skills, practicing the responsibility of citizenship and meeting lifelong friends. 4-H youth are more likely than others to report that they:

- succeed in school, getting more A's than other youth,
- are involved as leaders in their school and the community,
- are looked up to as role models by other youth, and
- help others in their community.

4-H is conducted by the Cooperative Extension System of the nation's Land-Grant Universities through a partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and county governments across the country. 4-H today is having a strong impact on youth and on America.

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