



4-H and Youth Programs

Empowering youth to reach their full potential



The mission of UVM 4-H is to provide positive youth development opportunities that allow for school age youth to develop both life and job skills necessary to contribute to society as responsible, capable and caring citizens. We do this by:

- Providing non-formal, experientially based educational programming for school age youth that fosters a sense of belonging, opportunity for mastery, allows for practicing generosity and independence.
- Providing professional development opportunities to educators, volunteers and parents, empowering those that work with youth the skills and tools they need to aid in the development of life and job skills.
- Replicating either evidence-based or research-based programs where appropriate to maximize impact, and
- Collaborating with organizations and individuals to enhance capacity and increase sustainability for the benefit of VT youth.

Overview of 4-H Programs

In order to meet our mission, 4-H focuses on three primary content areas; **civic engagement, healthy living, and science**. These content areas or mandates, reiterate the founding purposes of Extension (community leadership, quality of life, and technology transfer) in the context of 21st century challenges and opportunities. We program these content areas through 4 main delivery modes as well as by expanding our capacity through grant programs. We

are working not only to build life skills, but also to build 21st century career skills such as communication, decision making, and leadership.

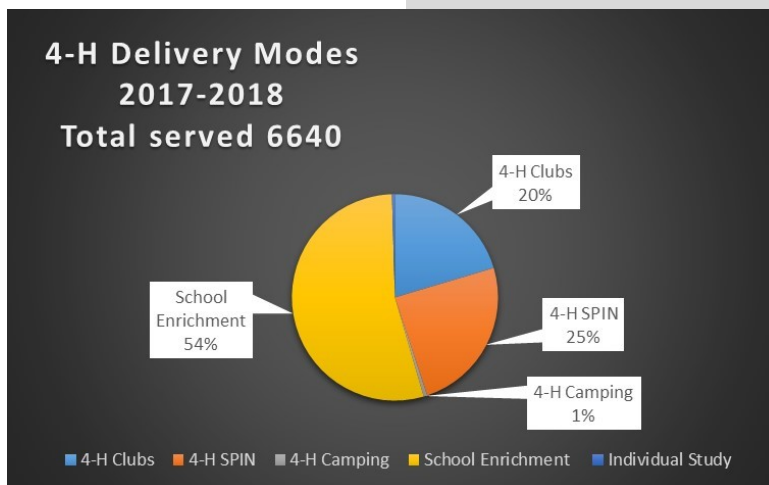
4-H Clubs—where youth belong to a group and build relationships with caring adults, elect officers, plan and attend meetings, conduct community service, participate in competitions or other events and make friends. Typically the club picks a project, with a learn-by-doing approach, that serves as a vehicle for learning both subject matter skills and life skills.

4-H Special Interest—short term opportunities where youth come together to learn a specific skill or knowledge area, often delivered as part of an after-school program or at a library..

4-H School Enrichment—hands on programming offered as part of the traditional school day experience. Embryology is our most well-known program.

PROSPER— PROSPER is an evidence-based delivery system that features a menu of tested and proven **prevention** programs for sixth and seventh graders. Programs on the menu have a successful track record for preventing risky behaviors in youth, promoting positive youth development, and strengthening families. Working with community teams and with schools, we bring family and youth programming that builds positive assets to prevent or delay the onset of substance abuse and fosters better family function.

Youth Ag Project—builds community, leadership, and local food security. Youth Agriculture Project offers food-based learning opportunities for youth through mentoring, summer work and learn program , educator workshops



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and school enrichment programming. We also offer a **Tri-State Ag Tour** that brings 4-H'ers into contact with lesser-known careers in and around the food system, raising awareness about career opportunities and education needed. **Career Days** offer participants an opportunity to hear from industry experts about what it takes to launch careers in a variety of fields. Partner with Farm to School initiatives.

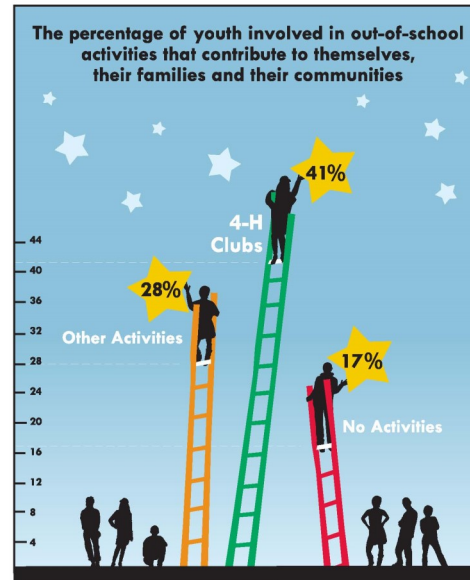
Youth Farm Safety—Raising awareness and building agricultural safety skills through camps, tractor training certification, dedicated website for youth and educators to learn diversified farm safety.

TRY for the Environment—Teens Reaching Youth and is an environmental leadership opportunity for youth in grades 7-12. It is a teen-led environmental education program with an embedded service learning component designed to teach environmental literacy and responsibility to younger youth. TRY for the Environment includes four program areas—renewable energy, waste solutions, food systems and forest and trees—to connect young people to real-world environmental problems in which they can be key change agents helping to create real-world solutions.

VTeen 4-H Science Pathways Café—These Cafés are informal, interactive programs that promote exploration, curiosity and life-long learning about current and cutting-edge ideas in science and technology. Teens engage in lively discussion and hands on learning with experts.

Outdoor Family Weekend—For 22 years, UVM Extension in collaboration with VT Fish and Wildlife and VT Parks and Recreation, offer a weekend-long camping experience for families. Workshops include foraging for edible plants, wildlife tracking, firearm safety and related disciplines, outdoor cooking and more. The goal of the weekend is for families to gain comfort exploring and using our natural resources for both recreation and conservation.

National 4-H Livestock Trips—4-H members have the opportunity to qualify for national opportunities such as National 4-H Dairy Judging in Madison, WI, National 4-H Dairy



Quiz Bowl in Louisville, KY and National 4-H Dairy Conference in Madison, WI as well as Eastern National 4-H Horse Round-Up. These contests and conferences include opportunities for practicing knowledge, career exploration and networking with youth with similar passions.

Natural Resources Management Academy: In collaboration with Vermont Fish and Wildlife, this is a program for teens in grades 9-12 who are passionate about the environment and ready to explore Vermont's natural resources in-depth. Experts from around Vermont lead workshops and skill-building activities.

4-H State Day—4-H State Day is a capstone experience for 4-H club members, where those competing at the county or regional level get chosen to move forward for competition as well as display at the state level. This event highlights much of the club effort throughout the year in the areas of communications, stage presentations, photo and posters, as well as table tops and action exhibits. State Day attracts over 200 4-H'ers, parents and community members. This event also serves as the selection for The Big E participation that is held in Springfield, MA in September.



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