MSU Extension and Montana 4-H believe in the power of young people and recognize that children have valuable strengths and real influence to improve their communities. Montana 4-H projects support members' personal growth and development through hands-on learning. Members practice skills of communicating effectively, responsibility, decision making, record keeping, and financial management.

Montana 4-H reaches more than 17,000 youth from every county and reservation. 3,100 trained and certified volunteers support and mentor youth.

While American Indians in Montana make up 6.5% of the general population, more than 10% of Montana’s 4-H enrollment is American Indian youth.

Montana 4-H represents youth, families and volunteers from nearly every neighborhood. Members reside in rural, urban, and suburban communities across the Treasure State.

4-H MEMBERSHIP ACROSS MONTANA

The Montana 4-H program encourages youth to develop communication skills.

70% Improved knowledge on how to prepare a presentation

66% Are more willing to speak in front of groups

64% Feel more comfortable when speaking with adults
4-H CONNECTION TO COMMUNITY

Montana 4-H youth have opportunities to make a difference in their communities through clubs, projects, and collaboration with local organizations. Youth who identify community needs, then plan and participate in a project to address those needs feel more connected to their community with a sense of hope and purpose.

Of third- to sixth-grade 4-H members:

- Nearly half felt more strongly about the desire to help people in their community because of their 4-H experience.
- More than half indicated more opportunities to help plan a community service project since joining 4-H, while 24% reported having led a community service project as a 4-H member.

Of seventh- to twelfth-grade 4-H members:

- 45% feel a bigger part of their community due to 4-H involvement, and 44% look for ways to help when learning about a problem in the community.
- 50% feel more strongly about their ability to make a difference in their community due to their 4-H experience.
- 44% credit their 4-H experience for providing a greater opportunity to learn about people who are different from them.

4-H LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The 4-H Leadership Academy is a series of skill-building winter workshops delivered virtually to all interested 4-H teens. Thanks to the virtual platform, youth can participate regardless of location or family income. Teen participants in 4-H Leadership Academy reported:

- 25% increase in comfort working with people they did not know
- 20% increase in motivation to take on leadership roles
- 18% increase in feeling capable in cooperative group work

4-H CONGRESS

Montana 4-H Congress provides more than 300 youth, ages 13-19, an opportunity to visit MSU each July, stay a week in dorm rooms, eat meals in dining halls, explore courses of study and career possibilities, and hone developing life skills through workshops, intellectual growth, and leadership opportunities.

Youth reported leadership, communication, and teamwork were the top three improved skills as a result of attending the Montana 4-H Congress.

Skills learned through Montana 4-H Congress support youth in other areas of their lives:

94% Learned skills that will help them do better in school.

87% Recognized that “activities taught me to develop a plan to reach my goals.”

76% Found that “4-H Congress helped me identify which careers match my interests and abilities.”

94% Discovered that attending increased “an expanded view of things beyond my community.”

99% Found “there were opportunities for them to learn new ideas.”

50% of youth used the word “inspired” to describe their experiences.