



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

Snohomish County 4-H
2020-2023 Strategic Plan
Progress Report
December 31, 2021

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Snohomish County 4-H 2020-2023 Strategic Plan Progress Report

Goal 1: Improve electronic, in-person, and print communication with volunteers and community.

Snohomish County 4-H has made a concerted effort to be more intentional regarding social media posting. Important events or opportunities are now pinned to the top of our social media page, as can be seen in the image at right. In

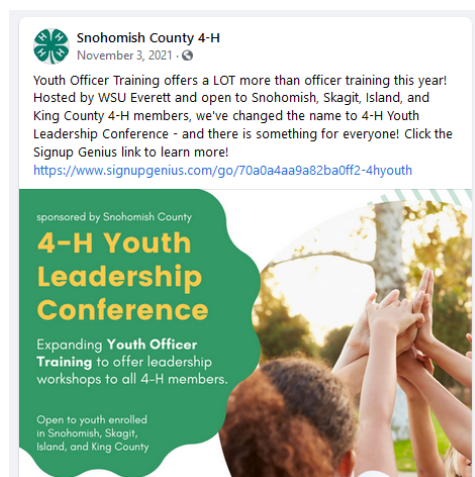
addition, any 4-H event or activity that is hosted by the

Snohomish County office is advertised via email, newsletter, our website, and on social media for easy sharing across club pages.

While the COVID-19

pandemic made physical office hours impossible, virtual office hours via Zoom were created to facilitate easier communication between 4-H staff and the public. At least one staff member has manned one of three weekly virtual office hours sessions since March of 2020, allowing 4-H volunteers, youth, parents, or members of the public to visit and ask questions about

enrollment, in-person meeting procedures, or to discuss policy or 4-H events. In addition, both of the 4-H coordinators and the 4-H faculty member have mobile phone numbers that enable the 4-H community to call or text while the staff are not in a physical office, which has greatly improved communication for many members.



Considerable progress has been made toward improving electronic and print communication with volunteers. Two of the most complex processes, end of year reporting for clubs and the volunteer onboarding process, have been converted to infographics with integrated links for ease of navigation. In addition, all available club information has been presented in an interactive dashboard for the public to facilitate a faster connection between future 4-H members and clubs. Most forms, including the volunteer application and end-of-year reporting forms have been converted to fillable PDF documents as well as online forms that can be submitted via a web browser.

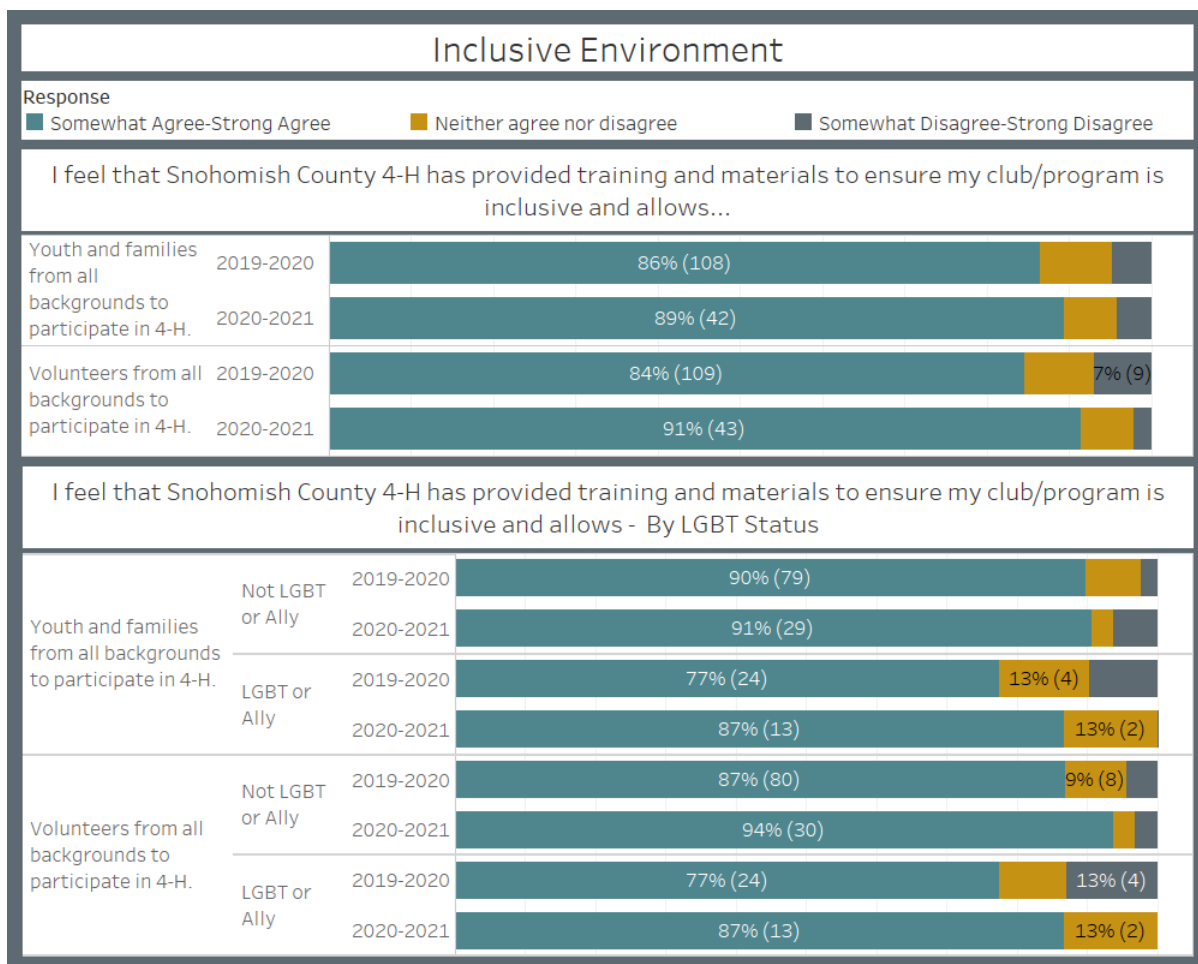
Additional feedback from the annual survey, much of it related to club-level communication, is being collected and analyzed to create a club-level communication toolkit.

Goal 2: Increase engagement and recruitment of diverse volunteers, youth, and community partners.

Recruitment of volunteers has been challenging during this strategic planning period, mostly due to the continued COVID-19 pandemic. Preliminary data from 4-H Online shows that diversity in the volunteer pool has remained largely the same as pre-pandemic levels. Youth enrollment, however, is moving toward a more diverse audience in some categories. From the 2020-2021 4-H year ending in September 2021 to the 2021-2022 4-H year beginning in October of 2021, there was a 41% increase in the percentage of respondents who reported being Hispanic and a 65% increase in the number of respondents who selected “Black or African American” as their race. It is important to note, however, that the 2021-2022 4-H statistics in this report include only those members who enrolled between October 1, 2021, and December 31, 2021.

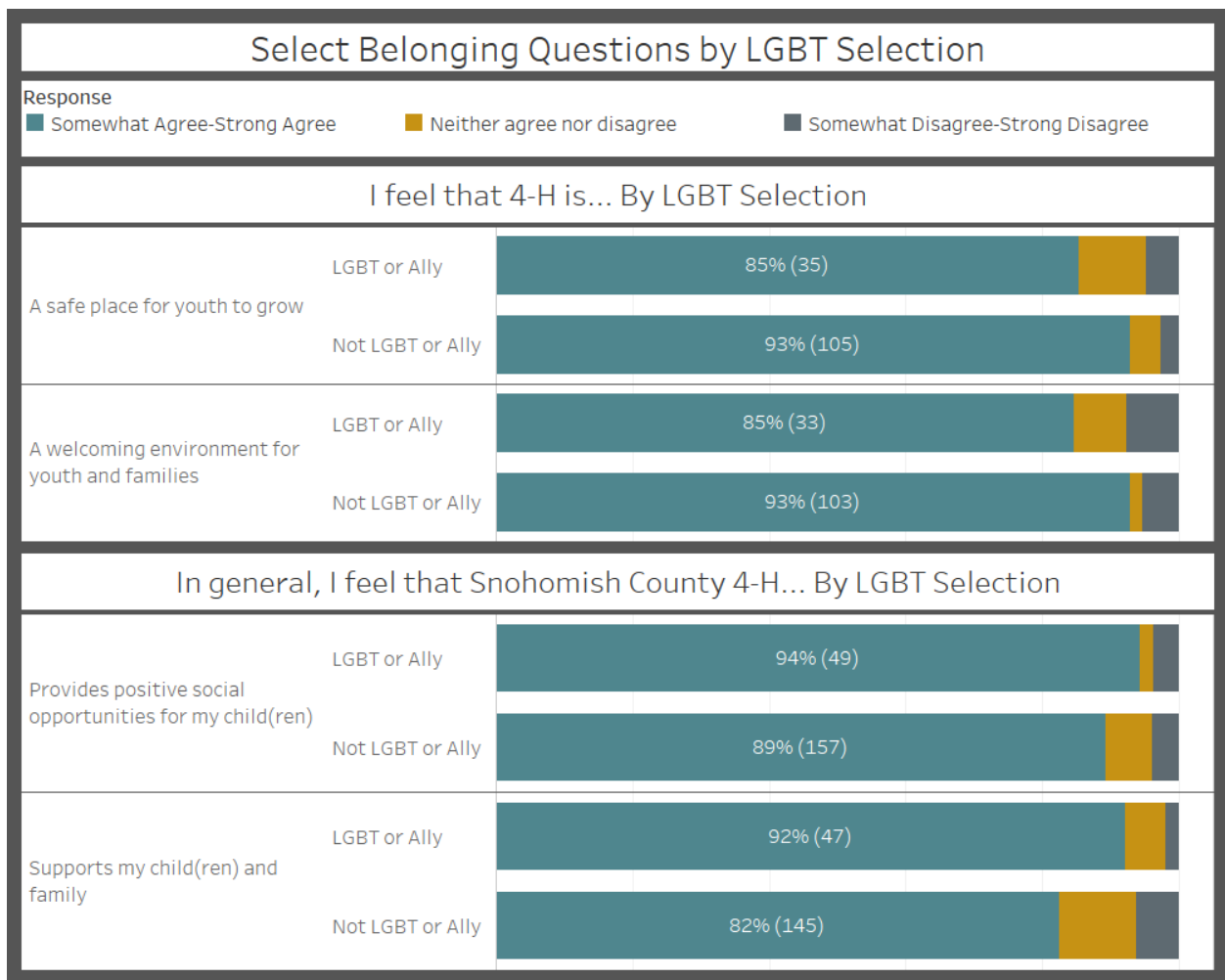
Targeted messaging regarding diversity and inclusion in 4-H has been incorporated into many aspects of 4-H training and communication. Examples of this include the promotion of diversity and inclusion training from outside of 4-H, such as the Facts Over Fear, Vocabulary for Racism and Equity, and Facing Racism workshops, and within Snohomish County 4-H via volunteer training such as our annual updates. To measure the perceptions of inclusion in 4-H, one survey question with two sub-questions was included in the adult annual survey: “I feel that Snohomish County 4-H has provided training and materials to ensure my club/program is

inclusive and allows: youth and families from all backgrounds to participate in 4-H; volunteers from all backgrounds to participate in 4-H.” There was a slight increase in the percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with these statements from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021 (3% and 6% increases respectively). Further analysis based on respondents’ selection of being a member of the LGBT community or an ally showed an even larger increase. Among the LGBT/Ally respondents, there was a 10% increase in the number of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed with each of the statements from 2019-2020 to 2020-2021. The visual below shows a breakdown of the responses from year to year, and by that selected demographic variable.



While this data points to an improvement in the perception of an inclusive 4-H environment in Snohomish County, we do see a slightly different result when looking at the same demographic variable and respondents’ view of 4-H in general. For both survey years combined, respondents who identified as LGBT/Ally were less likely to agree or strongly agree

that 4-H is a safe space for youth to grow than non-LGBT/Ally respondents (85% vs. 93%) and were less likely to agree that 4-H is a welcoming environment for youth and families (85% vs. 93% respectively). Similar questions related to Snohomish County 4-H specifically showed that LGTB/Ally respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements more so than non-LGBT/Ally respondents: “In general, I feel that Snohomish County 4-H: provides positive social opportunities for my child(ren); supports my child(ren) and family.” The graphic below shows the breakdown for both survey questions by this demographic.



It is important to note that while these results are encouraging and do suggest that the Snohomish County 4-H program is moving toward a more inclusive and welcoming environment for youth and families, the number of respondents in the LGBT/Ally group are much smaller than the larger population. In addition, analysis based on other demographic variables, such as gender identity, race, or ethnicity, were not possible due to the low number

of respondents who identified as Hispanic, non-white, or male. Additional data collection will be needed to determine the success of diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in Snohomish County 4-H.

Community partnerships are key to connecting with diverse youth and families throughout Snohomish County, and significant effort has been spent connecting with partners whose youth members may benefit from 4-H programming. To date, partnerships have been cultivated with the following organizations that offer programming to underserved populations: Modest Family Solutions, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, the Snohomish County YMCA, the Latino Educational Training Institute, and the Glacier Peak Institute. Each of these organizations works with youth who are from various communities and backgrounds, including rural communities, minority populations, immigrant families, and low-income populations.

Goal 3: Grow the 4-H volunteer pool and strategically evaluate and improve the volunteer training program currently in existence.

Volunteer recruitment became quite challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially as 4-H was forced to move in-person, hands-on learning to a virtual format. Many clubs and programs paused programming, some for an extended period of time. The Washington vaccination mandate for all volunteers put additional strain on volunteer recruitment. However, despite these challenges, recruitment of new 4-H volunteers continues to be strong. For the first three months of the 2021-2022 4-H year, 30 new volunteer applications have been submitted, which is comparable to previous non-COVID years.

Volunteer training improvements have come in the form of ad hoc training topics based on pressing need, such as an Introduction to Trauma Informed Positive Youth Development, and Youth Mental Health First Aid. These need-based training opportunities were strategically selected based on environmental situations (the COVID-19 pandemic created an increased interest in trauma-informed programming, for example) or community needs (WA youth suicide rates are higher than the national average). Additional changes to the Snohomish County 4-H volunteer training program were put on hold as the WSU 4-H program worked to revamp the volunteer training program for the state of Washington. As we wait for additional

updates and a new training process, Snohomish County 4-H is planning the first annual Volunteer Training Conference to be held in the Spring of 2022.

Goal 4: Grow and strengthen Snohomish County 4-H/community partners and outreach activities.

Community partnerships and outreach activities significantly decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic as most partnerships also pivoted to virtual programming. In addition, even when in-person programming began to resume, many partners did not allow third-party visitors on site to reduce potential exposure to COVID-19 to participants. Partnerships that were established prior to the pandemic, including the 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Modest Family Solutions, and the Glacier Peak Institute, continued in a virtual format, with Zoom programming offered to program participants. Additional partnerships with the YMCA were established, though we were limited to staff training, curriculum, and materials support. As the pandemic restrictions lift, we plan to expand the 4-H opportunities to these established partners, and to continue our work recruiting new partners that can help grow Snohomish County 4-H programs and reach.

Goal 5: Improve youth development educational, leadership, and college/future preparedness offerings.



Youth leadership also took a significant hit during the pandemic, but efforts to recruit teens for county-wide leadership opportunities continue. The Youth Advisory Council was formed during the pandemic and youth from various programs were recruited and began discussing how best the 4-H office can support Snohomish County 4-H youth.

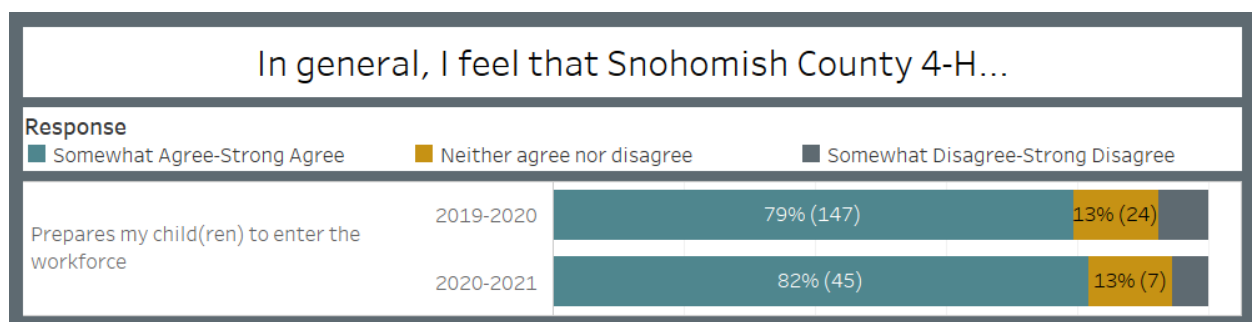
While the founding members were unable to continue their participation in the Youth Advisory Council, causing the program to be put on hold while recruitment continues, they did lay the groundwork for future members to pick up and continue advocating for their peers.

Additional leadership opportunities have been created during this first half of our strategic cycle, including the creation of a statewide teen task force focused on suicide prevention advocacy and education. This task force is in the beginning phases, but it includes two Snohomish County 4-H teens, and the teens will be enabled to guide the use of grant funds toward suicide prevention efforts. One such goal is the creation of a social media campaign designed to spread suicide prevention messaging. Another is for the teens to plan at least one community awareness event per year. In addition, teens on the task force will receive special training in suicide prevention called Question, Persuade, Refer – Teen (QPR-T).



Educational and college preparedness opportunities for youth in Snohomish County took the form of a youth educational conference, which was held at the Washington State University Everett campus. Youth were able to attend a variety of workshops, including youth officer training, friendship and communication skills, and club management skills. In addition, Snohomish County 4-H teens were given two internship opportunities, one with the statewide Youth Advocates

for Health! (YA4-H!) project which recruited teens to provide healthy eating and living curriculum to elementary aged youth, and the Military Teen Adventure Camp project which recruited teens interested in culinary careers to help plan and deliver quality meals to campers attending a 4-day adventure camp. A total of six teens participated in these internship opportunities, learning valuable skills, and receiving educational stipends.



Evaluation of the different programs offered to youth and teens is ongoing, but there has been a slight increase in the percentage of adult survey respondents who reported agreement with the statement: “In general, I feel that Snohomish County 4-H prepares my child(ren) to enter the workforce.” There was no change in the percentage of respondents who agreed with the statement “In general, I feel that Snohomish County 4-H prepares my child(ren) for college” but we hope that through continued educational opportunities, especially those held at the WSU Everett campus, will result in an improvement in this area.

Goal 6: Develop and implement a spending plan, revenue generation plan, and reporting process.

All spending and budgeting were put on hold when the COVID-19 pandemic occurred, and reduced 4-H enrollment across the state has necessitated a continued spending pause. However, revenue generation via grant writing has continued, and increased, since the strategic plan was published.

The Snohomish County 4-H faculty has applied for and been awarded numerous grants that have benefited the Snohomish County 4-H and broader WSU 4-H programs. The first grant that funded healthy eating curriculum and teen interns, was the Walmart Foundation Healthy Habits Grant. Roughly \$39,000 was awarded for programming throughout WA, and Snohomish County 4-H utilized these funds to provide healthy living programming to the 21st Century Community Learning Center’s elementary school students via teen teachers.


The next was the \$160,000 WSU/GPI Military Teen Adventure camp grant, which enabled Snohomish County 4-H, the Glacier Peak Institute, and other statewide partners to host three 4-day camps for up to 150 teens of military parents from around the country. The majority of the teens who attended camp were from Washington and Surrounding states, though campers did travel from as far away as Florida and Alaska. This grant provided money for Snohomish County 4-H staff salaries and wages as well as 4-H teen internships. The Snohomish County 4-H faculty member reapplied for, and was awarded, this grant for the summer of 2022.

Funding for suicide prevention and youth mental health education was applied for in the form of two grants: first, via a statewide Department of Health contract focused on rural suicide

prevention, and second through a \$65,000 WA Healthcare Authority grant focused on suicide prevention in the form of training and public awareness events. In total, more than \$132,000 in grant funding has been awarded to the Snohomish County 4-H faculty and colleagues to provide suicide prevention training, materials, and public awareness to Snohomish and surrounding counties.


Goal 7: Build a data collection, analysis, and reporting plan that will tell the Snohomish County 4-H story.

Improving data collection and management for Snohomish County 4-H required analyzing sources of data and identifying what information was needed to strategically manage the 4-H program. The needs assessment and strategic plan published in 2020 was the first step toward creating a data-driven program. Four primary sources of data that could inform programming were identified or created during that process: census data, the WA State Healthy Youth Survey, the Snohomish County 4-H Adult Annual Survey, and 4-H Online enrollment data. While census data is updated every 10 years, the other three sources provide annual data that enables 4-H staff to analyze progress toward strategic goals and objectives. Additional data that is collected that can inform decisions include volunteer training evaluations, program surveys (such as those required for grant-funded programs like the



Snohomish County 4-H Club Directory

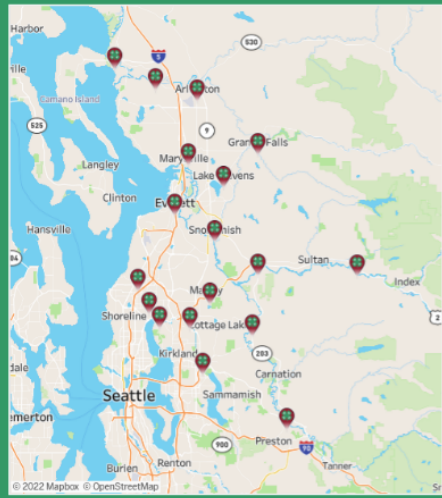
Filter dashboard with dropdowns to the right
Click pin on the map to filter the club list at right
To reset dashboard, click any area on map or select "All" from dropdowns



Interest Area

Uncheck "All" and check one or multiple selections of interest

(All)



Click on club name below for additional information

Club	Accepting Members	Meeting City	Projects Offered
4 EVER GREEN	Yes	Monroe	Expressive & Visual Arts
			Foods
			Gardening
			Performance Arts
			Photography
4 HAPPY HOOVES	Yes	Arlington	Sewing/Needlework
			Gardening
			Goats - Dairy
			Goats - Market
			Goats - Novelty
			Goats - Pygmy
			Poultry
			Sheep
			Swine
			Veterinary Science
BARN BUMS	Yes	Snohomish	Goats - Dairy

Military Teen Adventure Camp), feedback from 4-H members that is provided via email, live conversations, or letters, and club and program end-of-year reports. The latter provides the data that powers the [Snohomish County 4-H Club Directory Dashboard](#), a tool that provides an interactive directory of club information to potential 4-H families (see image below).

This data is being used to continually evaluate the Snohomish County 4-H program and will be used to measure progress toward each of the eight strategic goals outlined in the 2020-2023 Snohomish County 4-H Strategic Plan.

Goal 8: Strategically plan and improve the office environment for volunteers, youth, and public.

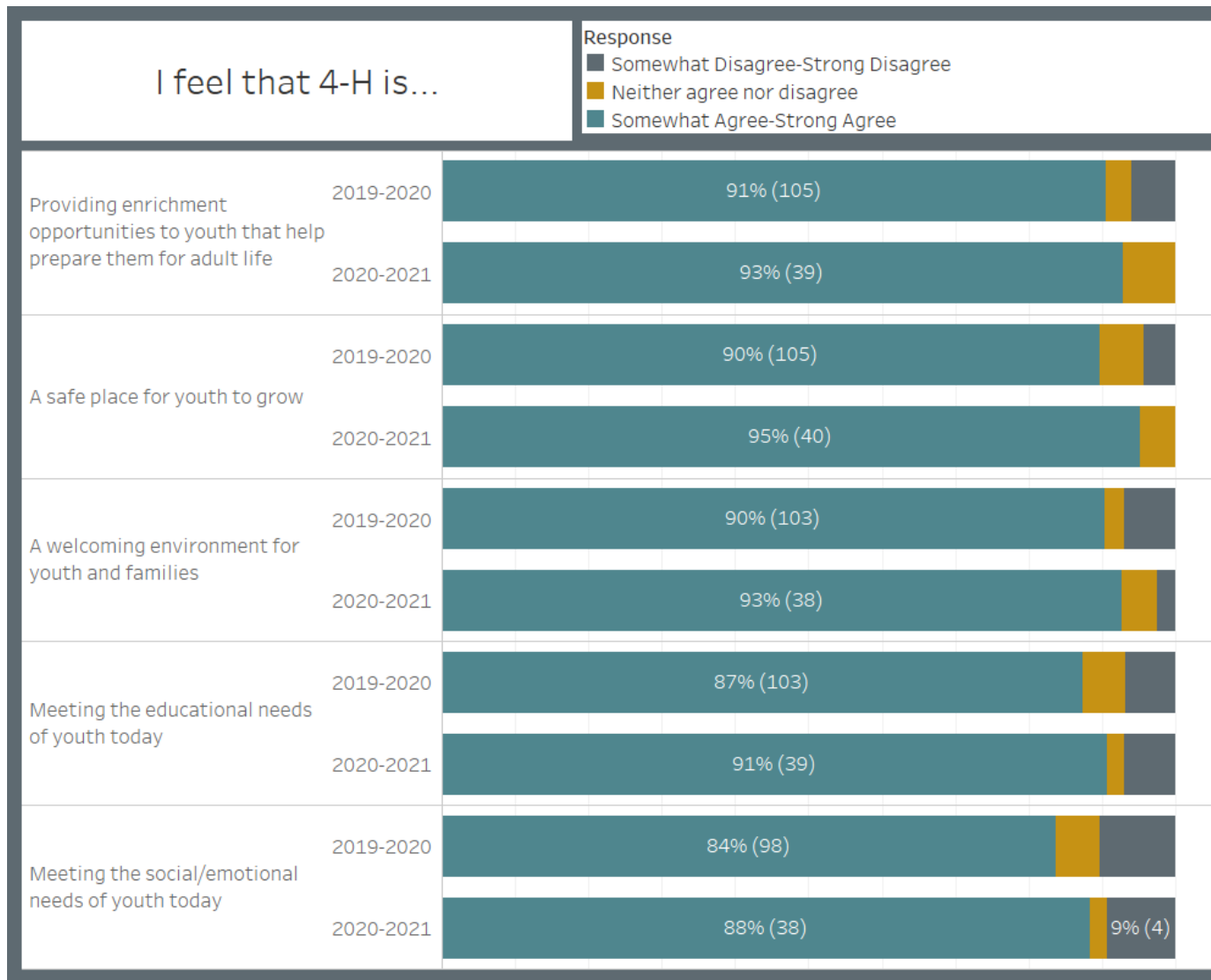
This final goal in the strategic plan will likely be the most difficult to evaluate at the end of the strategic planning cycle, in large part due to the lack of a public, physical office environment. While the COVID-19 pandemic presented significant challenges for volunteers and families in regard to connecting with 4-H staff in-person, an additional change was implemented before in-person programming resumed: the WSU Extension office was closed, and our public point-of-access was eventually moved from its home at McCollum Park to a new location at Willis D. Tucker Park. This new space, while functional, has severely reduced storage, classroom, and workspace options. Snohomish County officials are working hard to provide WSU Snohomish County Extension additional storage and classroom space at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds, but how that space will be utilized by the various WSU Extension programs remains to be seen. However, while change can sometimes bring challenges, we hope that this is an opportunity for 4-H faculty and staff to work more closely with 4-H volunteers, as many 4-H activities occur at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds. We also hope to provide additional workshops and events at WSU Everett and with community partners.

Conclusions

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant challenges for many programs throughout the country, and Snohomish County 4-H is no exception. In spite of the challenges of the last two years, we have made measurable progress toward the goals we outlined for ourselves in 2020. While some of the paths toward reaching our goals have shifted and changed, the overall mission of providing quality educational opportunities for youth, support and structure for 4-H

volunteers, and continued connection to community organizations endures. As the Snohomish County 4-H continues to acclimate to an extended pandemic, continued analysis of community need, effective delivery of programming, and efficient tools will be a priority. We look forward to presenting a full report on the Snohomish County 4-H 2020-2023 Strategic Plan in December of 2023.

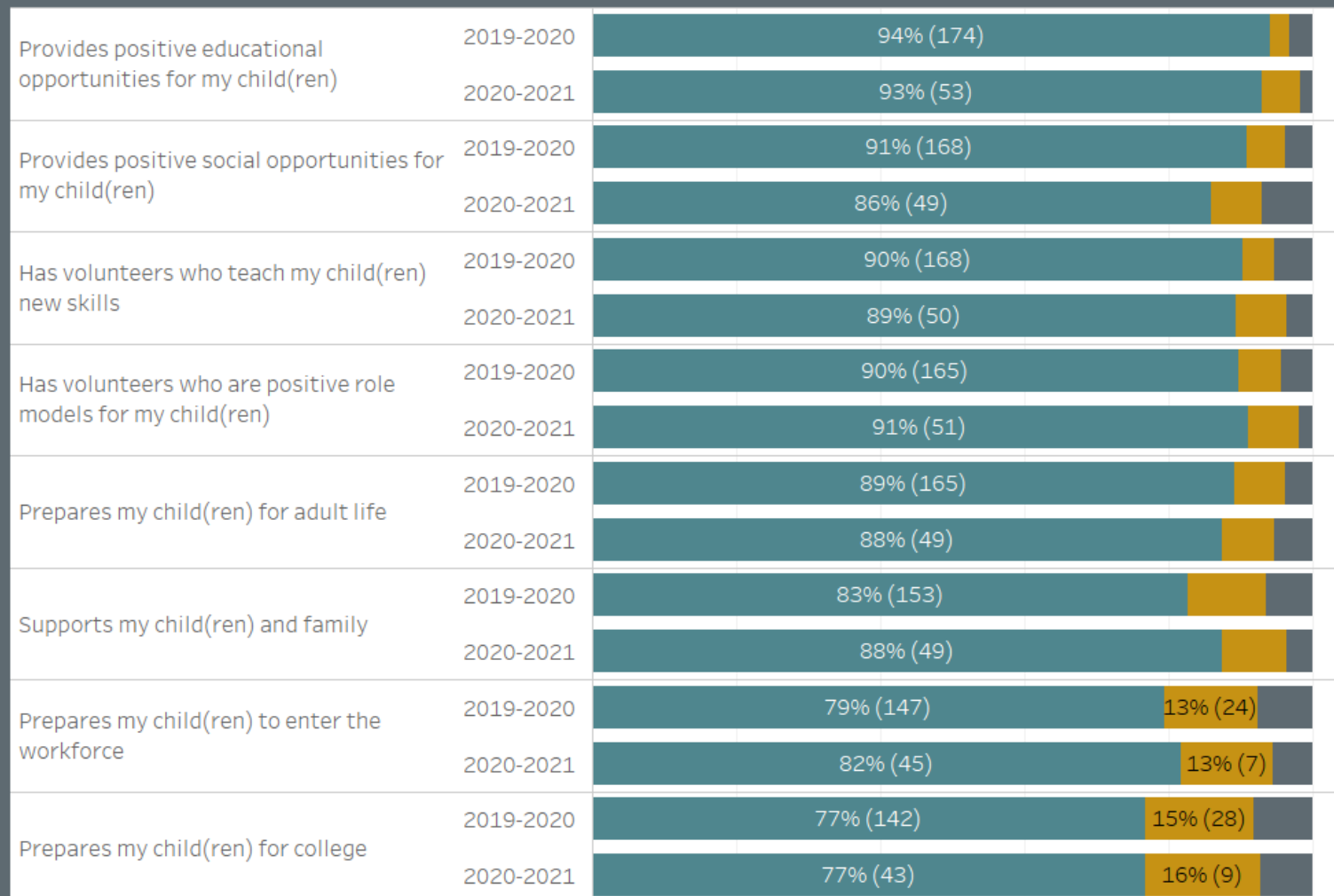
Appendix A
Snohomish County 4-H Annual Adult Survey – Preliminary Results – 2019-2020 & 2020-2021



In general, I feel that Snohomish County 4-H...

Response

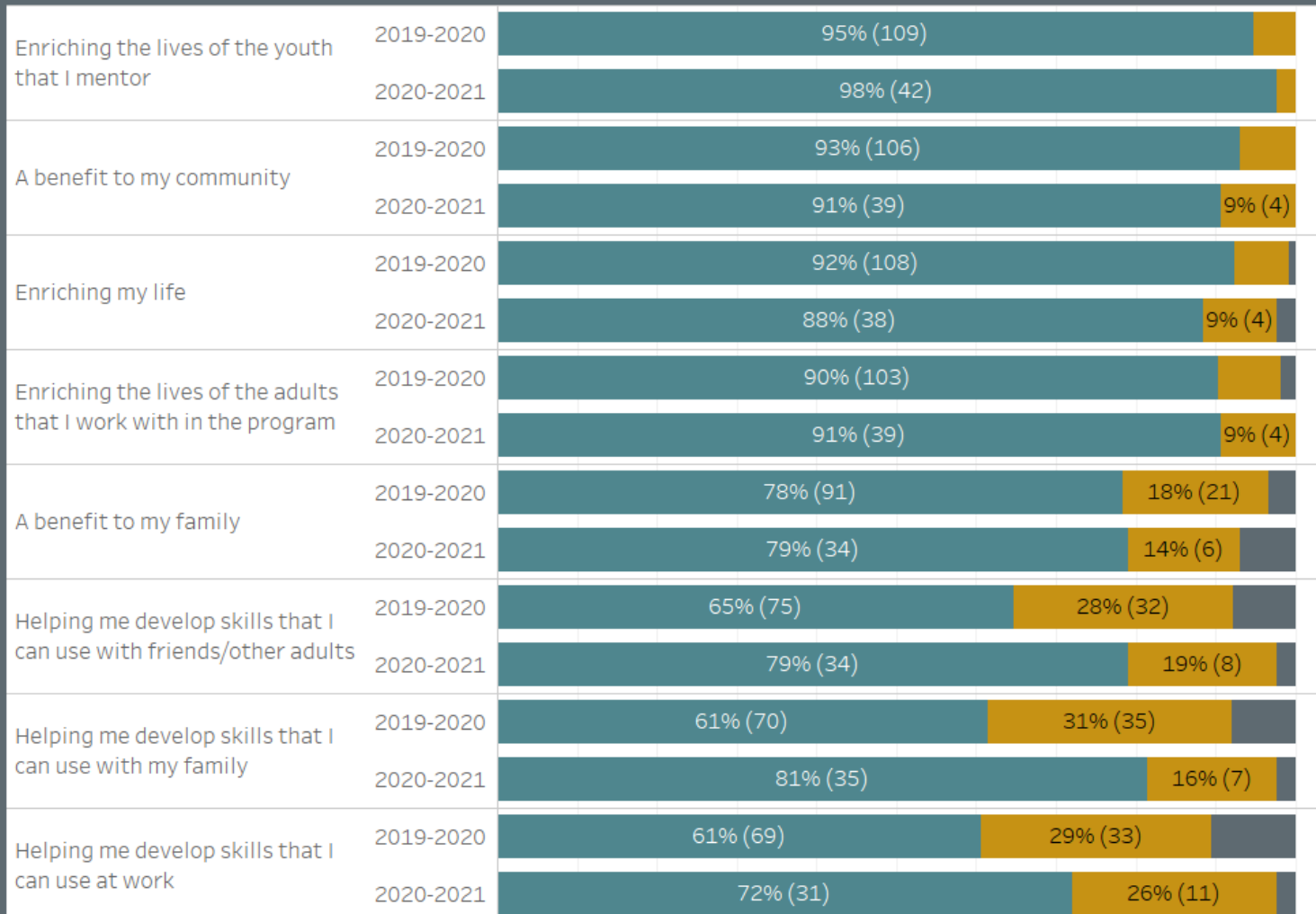
■ Somewhat Agree-Strong Agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Somewhat Disagree-Strong Disagree



I feel that my volunteer work with 4-H is...

Response

- Somewhat Disagree-Strong Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat Agree-Strong Agree



Inclusive Environment

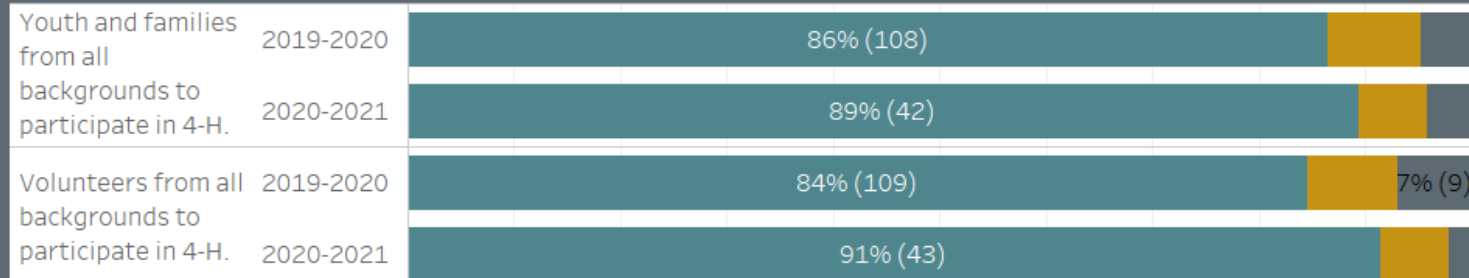
Response

■ Somewhat Agree-Strong Agree

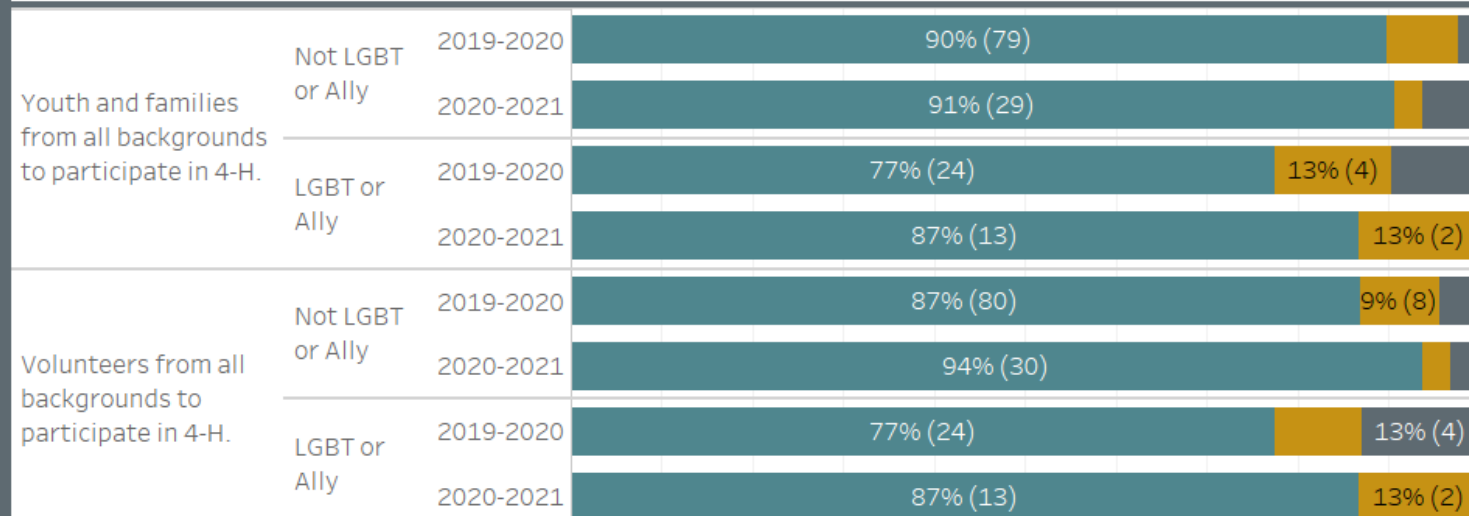
■ Neither agree nor disagree

■ Somewhat Disagree-Strong Disagree

I feel that Snohomish County 4-H has provided training and materials to ensure my club/program is inclusive and allows...



I feel that Snohomish County 4-H has provided training and materials to ensure my club/program is inclusive and allows - By LGBT Status



Select Belonging Questions by LGBT Selection

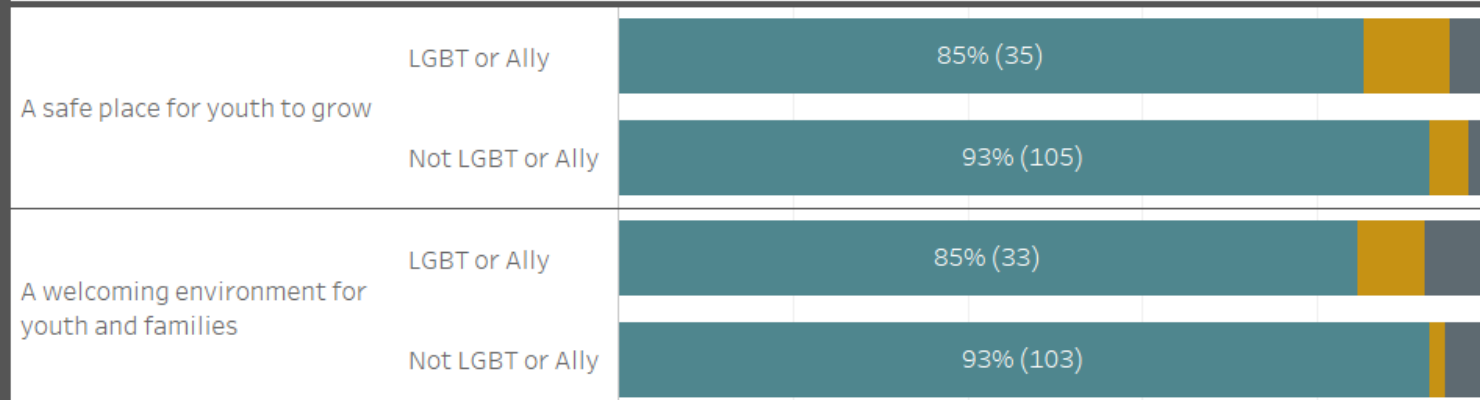
Response

■ Somewhat Agree-Strong Agree

■ Neither agree nor disagree

■ Somewhat Disagree-Strong Disagree

I feel that 4-H is... By LGBT Selection



In general, I feel that Snohomish County 4-H... By LGBT Selection

