



WASHINGTON STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION
Kitsap County



4-H POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT 2023

BY THE NUMBERS

2022-2023 4-H Year (Oct 1 - Sept 31)

- Served: 283 youth
- Adult Volunteers: 104
- Adult Volunteers provided over 15,000 hours of volunteer time.
- 4-H Camp youth participants: 57

QUOTES



I got my first job because of skills I learned through 4-H."

- 4-H alumni, college freshman



It is amazing watching my daughter teach younger 4-H members in her club. She was always a bit shy and now she is stepping into leadership roles all over her club."

- 4-H mom



I had a lot of fun this year hanging out with my animals and friends at the fair."

- 7 year old 4-H member



I've never been nervous to give a presentation at school because I learned how to give public presentations with 4-H."

-17 year old 4-H member

ISSUE

The issue is simple yet complex. Young people are lacking safe and supportive adults in their lives to teach them useful and necessary skills and provide lifelong tools. According to the 2021 Healthy Youth Survey, youth in Kitsap County are struggling and evidence shows that in the aftermath of COVID-19 we expect these unfortunate statistics to increase.

In 2021, responses from 12th graders taking the Healthy Youth Survey indicated:

- 23% have seriously considered suicide in the last 12 months.
- 27% have felt stressed, nervous, and anxious for over 2 weeks.
- 34% have no adult in their community that they could talk to about something important.
- 24% reported being physically assaulted by an adult.

As you can see the issues run deep and slowing these trends and improving health, safety and resilience in the youth of Kitsap County is vital for the success of our youth and our community.





RESPONSE

When 4-H was founded in 1902, hands-on learning was primarily agricultural based. In the last 120+ years our society has advanced and while agriculture is still a large part of the 4-H program, it has also embraced science, technology, arts, and leadership. In the aftermath of COVID-19, youth are trying to catch up in their academic, social, and emotional skills after being in a paused state of growth and development. According to the official 4-H website, "The 4-H idea is simple: help young people and their families gain the skills needed to be proactive forces in their communities and develop ideas for a more innovative economy."

One supportive adult in a child's life can have a drastic impact on the outcome of their life. 4-H provides youth access to those supportive adults. Our certified 4-H adult volunteers provide interesting and engaging programming based on the interest of youth. Youth are given ownership over the outcome of their program and projects to show their full potential in leadership, community service, public speaking, and team building. The skills that 4-H teaches youth are skills that they will use daily throughout their life. One of the most appealing things about 4-H is that youth get to choose their "project" which may be sheep, drawing, coding, sewing, to name a few, and then they get to learn those lifelong skills through that project. They learn how to set goals, keep records, create and balance a budget, talk to adults, and gain leadership skills.

IMPACTS

Youth in 4-H gain skills, leadership, confidence and support from other youth and adults in their 4-H community. Youth in 4-H learn the importance of community service and educational outreach and provide it throughout the year. 4-H youth educate the public on a large scale at the Kitsap Fair by sharing the work they have done and what they have learned about their project throughout the year. Over 120 4-H youth from around Kitsap County participated in the Kitsap Fair & Stampede sharing over 1200 exhibits. This includes foods, plant science, sewing, photography, cats, dogs, equine, cattle, swine, sheep, poultry and numerous other types of animals. Many clubs are involved in animal science, arts & crafts, and civic engagement. Youth in 4-H embrace the opportunity to teach younger members and the community while increasing confidence and leadership skills. 12 teen leaders went to Pullman for 4-H Teen Conference which gave them the opportunity to tour the university and experience a college campus. 6 teen leaders went to Olympia to participate in Know Your Government which provides an experiential experience with government and civic engagement. 4-H adult volunteers learn best practices to provide positive youth development to children and youth in their community. 4-H would not be possible without the support and dedication of our adult volunteers. In 2023, 4-H had 104 adult volunteers who provided 4-H youth with over 15,000 hours of volunteer service.

