

THE 4-H STUDY OF POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

2012 Summary of Findings from Wave 8

RESEARCH SHOWS:

4-H Helps Young People Excel Beyond Their Peers

For a decade, preeminent youth development scholar, Dr. Richard Lerner, and the team at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tufts University have been working with faculty at land-grant universities to conduct The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development.

This in-depth, longitudinal study has discovered that the structured learning, encouragement and adult mentoring that young people receive through their participation in 4-H plays a vital role in helping them achieve future life successes.

4-H YOUTH MAKE MORE HEALTHY CHOICES

Young people in 4-H are:

- 3.4 times more likely to delay sexual intercourse by Grade 12
- Shown to have had significantly lower drug, alcohol and cigarette use than their peers
- 2.3 times more likely to exercise and be physically active

4-H'ERS EXCEL IN SCHOOL AND THE SCIENCES

Young people in 4-H:

- Report better grades, higher levels of academic competence, and an elevated level of engagement at school
- Are nearly two times more likely to plan to go to college
- Are more likely to pursue future courses or a career in science, engineering, or computer technology

The study also finds that girls in 4-H are more than twice as likely to participate in science, engineering, or computer technology programs than their peers.

YOUNG PEOPLE IN 4-H ARE COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THEIR COMMUNITIES

A notable trend of the study indicates that 4-H youth are 3.4 times more likely to actively contribute to their communities when compared with youth who do not participate in 4-H.

METHODOLOGY:

The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development is a longitudinal study that began in 2002, surveying more than 7,000 adolescents from diverse backgrounds across 44 U.S. states. The study is made possible by the contributions of our nation's land-grant universities and National 4-H Council.



Tufts
UNIVERSITY

To learn more about The 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development, visit www.4-H.org/about/youth-development-research

4-H IS THE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM OF OUR NATION'S COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SYSTEM.



The “5 Cs” of Positive Youth Development

“C”	Definition
Competence:	Positive view of one’s actions in specific areas, including social, academic, cognitive, health, and vocational. Social competence refers to interpersonal skills (e.g., conflict resolution). Cognitive competence refers to cognitive abilities (e.g., decision making). Academic competence refers to school performance as shown, in part, by school grades, attendance, and test scores. Health competence involves using nutrition, exercise, and rest to keep oneself fit. Vocational competence involves work habits and explorations of career choices. Effective entrepreneurial skills may be one instance of vocational competence.
Confidence:	An internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy.
Connection:	Positive bonds with people and institutions that are reflected in exchanges between the individual and his or her peers, family, school, and community and in which both parties contribute to the relationship.
Character:	Respect for societal and cultural norms, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong (morality), and integrity.
Caring/Compassion:	A sense of sympathy and empathy for others.

Researchers theorized that young people whose lives incorporated these Five Cs would be on a developmental path that results in the development of a Sixth C: **Contributions** to self, family, community, and to the institutions of a civil society.

Resource: *Waves of the future – 2009, Report Of The Findings from the First Six Years of the 4-H Study of Positive Youth Development*. Richard M. Learner, Jacqueline V. Lerner, and Colleagues. Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development, Tufts University.

Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service

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