The overall well-being of a child is largely determined by their perceived satisfaction in relationships with others. A sense of belonging motivates young people to show respect and concern, as well as make them more receptive to guidance from caring adults.

Recently, 2,600-plus Kansas youth ages 8 to 18 years old — from both rural areas and cities — participated in a study to determine 4-H’s effectiveness in fostering positive connections, encouraging responsible decisions, and developing communication and citizenship skills. The following is a summary of the study’s results.

**MAKING RESPONSIBLE DECISIONS**

- 95% reported being comfortable with making their own decisions
- 91% have a plan for reaching their goals
- 89% don’t succumb to peer pressure

Strong decision-making skills enable a young person to effectively navigate life. One of 4-H’s principles is viewing youth as active participants in learning and addressing their own needs and interests. Youth create goals, show progress and work with mentors.

**DEVELOPED CONNECTIONS**

The overall well-being of a child is largely determined by their perceived satisfaction in relationships with others. A sense of belonging motivates young people to show respect and concern, as well as make them more receptive to guidance from caring adults.

- 96% reported working successfully with adults and having caring friends
- 93% are connected to adults who are not their parents

**GROWTH IN CITIZENSHIP SKILLS**

4-H citizenship programs empower youth to become informed and engaged in their communities. Youth use their decision-making, communication and leadership skills to make a difference.

- 94% reported they gained important skills by serving their communities
- 96% reported they can make a difference through community service
- 97% reported a strong desire to help others
LEADERSHIP
Strong leadership skills allow youth to analyze their own strengths and weaknesses while maintaining the confidence, motivation and skills to achieve their goals. In 4-H, youth grow as leaders through identifying and carrying out projects that benefit themselves, their families and communities. Youth lead various committees, projects and events to share their knowledge.

95% of youth reported an increased effort to allow everyone to have a voice

95% treat everyone fairly and equally when they are in charge of a group

COMMUNICATION
4-H communication opportunities help young people grow their public speaking, personal expression, interactive and professional correspondence skills. Youth give presentations and demonstrations, learn extemporaneous speaking, and practice artistic expression.

60% increase
4-H participants in their third year or more reported a 60% increase in their confidence in public speaking compared to newer participants

HELP GROW 4-H
Youth-driven 4-H experiences provide access to safe learning environments; challenges that build skills, competencies, and resiliency; and active contributions to society. 4-H helps youth form connections with caring adults that help meet their basic developmental needs of belonging, mastery, independence and generosity.

Community
Share your time, talents and passion by becoming a 4-H Volunteer – Email Volunteer4-h@ksu.edu.

4-H Alumni
Support the Kansas 4-H program by becoming a donor. Contact the Kansas 4-H Foundation at kansas4hfoundation.org.

Parents
Enroll your children in 4-H programs available in communities across Kansas at kansas4-h.org.

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