



YOUTH PROGRAM QUALITY

(Youth or Adult submission)

What program (i.e. program/event/project/club) did you participate in that you believe was high quality AND made a positive difference in your life? How has participation impacted other's lives?

What happens in 4-H programs, how they are planned and led, makes a huge difference in the impact of the program on youth. As you respond to the question above consider that in order to have the biggest impact, programs need to adhere to 8 critical principles of program quality:

1. **Physical and psychological safety**—youth need to feel safe in 4-H programs and be able to interact positively with others.
2. **Appropriate structure**—whether it is a club meeting or leadership camp, 4-H programs must have clear and consistent rules and expectations, with clear boundaries and age-appropriate monitoring.
3. **Supportive relationships**—all youth need to feel warmth from and closeness to others in 4-H. Youth need to feel others care about and support them. They also need to receive clear guidance and communication from 4-H volunteers and staff.
4. **Opportunities to belong**—all youth need to feel included in a meaningful way in 4-H, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, sexual orientations, or ability. Youth should have opportunities to share their culture and heritage with others and to forge a positive identity.
5. **Positive social norms**—Youth should experience clear rules and expectations for participating in 4-H, including the values, morals, and ethical expectations of being a 4-H member.
6. **Support for efficacy and mattering**—Youth in 4-H should be taken seriously and respected for their ideas and contributions. Youth should be given opportunities to develop responsibility and be challenged to set and achieve goals.
7. **Opportunities for skill building**—Youth need to develop physical, psychological, intellectual, emotional and social skills as they grow and develop. 4-H provides opportunities for youth to develop these skills, skills that support a young person into adulthood and the workplace.
8. **Integration of family, school and community**—Youth in 4-H do best when there is a connection to their 4-H experience with their family, school, and community. This is why 4-H programs begin at the local level, in the community where youth can practice their emerging leadership skills as they grow and develop

For more information about Youth Program Quality Principles:

<https://oregonstate.app.box.com/s/oqxjm13tn9tucttc08oja0gvnnq4vhb8>

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