What We Teach

The Alabama 4-H program helps young people develop life skills that include making decisions, thinking critically, building relationships, exercising leadership, and developing a concern for the community and the environment. Four-H provides learning opportunities in the following areas:

- Science and Technology
- Leadership, Citizenship, and Volunteerism
- Communications and Expressive Arts
- Family and Consumer Sciences
- Environmental Education and Natural Resources
- Food and Fiber Systems

Approaches to Learning

- Youth should be offered a variety of learning experiences in their communities and in the larger world.
- Every aspect of 4-H programs and activities must be interesting and beneficial if 4-H is to successfully attract and retain youth participation.
- Young people must be given hands-on/minds-on opportunities to learn in environments that are experiential, meaningful, inspiring, and fun.

R. Warren McCord, Extension State Program Leader

For more information, call your county Extension office. Look in your telephone directory under your county’s name to find the number.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work in agriculture and home economics, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, and other related acts, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University) offers educational programs, materials, and equal opportunity employment to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, veteran status, or disability.

UPS, 10M08, New June 2000, YEX-60A
The 4-H Vision

Four-H will be recognized as an innovative, responsive leader in developing Alabama’s young people to become productive citizens and leaders in a complex and dynamic society. We will attain this vision through the collaborative, committed efforts of Extension professionals, youth, and volunteers.

Our Mission

Four-H is the youth development component of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. Four-H helps young people from rural and urban areas explore their interests and expand their awareness of our world. It provides opportunities to develop a greater sense of who they are and who they can become as contributing citizens of our communities, our state, our nation, and our world. This mission is achieved through research-based educational programs of Alabama A&M and Auburn Universities and an ongoing tradition of applied, hands-on/minds-on experiences that develop the heads, hearts, hands, and health of Alabama youth.

Our Guiding Principles

Responsiveness & Ownership

- Youth are involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating what 4-H offers, how we offer it, and when we offer it.
- Programs and delivery systems are continually evaluated to assure that they reflect the changing needs and interests of Alabama’s young people.
- Partnerships and collaborations are essential for successful youth development.
- Effective communications are vital within Extension and with groups who can and should support 4-H.

The Nature of Our Work

- Young people are assisted in acquiring the character, leadership, and social skills needed for life.
- Youth are helped to prepare for positive and productive roles in a diverse society.
- Volunteers must play an increasingly significant role. If we are to reach growing numbers of young people with quality programs, 4-H must draw upon the talents and expertise of many Alabama citizens who are concerned with our youth.
- It is imperative that 4-H provide real opportunities for all young people, regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, geographic location, age, disability, or economic status. Four-H embraces diversity because it is good for our kids, our organization, and our society.
- We are committed to the traditional principles that have made 4-H great. Fully cited in the Four-Fold Youth Development Model, these principles include scientific methodology, creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, goals and accomplishments, volunteerism, good citizenship, teamwork and cooperation, communication, caring, personal responsibility, character and leadership development, and healthy lifestyles.
- Four-H can reach “any kid, any time, anywhere” with materials or activities that reflect the fundamental mission and principles of 4-H learning.