

2024

# Delaware 4-H, Growing Tomorrow's Leaders Today



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
**COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION**

## RELEVANCE

4-H, America's largest youth organization, has a history of providing youth with hands-on learning experiences and cultivating leadership qualities in young people.



Leadership development in youth is essential to impact the world



Enabling them to navigate challenges

Delaware's 4-H program offers activities that help youth build the following skills:

- Thinking clearly
- Understanding emotions
- Getting along with others
- Staying organized.
- Making smart choices
- Leading projects
- Connecting with others
- Improving social skills
- Building responsibility.



## RESPONSE

Delaware 4-H gives teens many chances to **learn, build, and improve** their leadership skills.

### State Teen Conference

Teens facilitated workshops for **54** participants to build leadership skills in areas of **self-confidence, communication, public speaking,** and **resume writing.**



### Junior Leader Weekends and Counselor Training



**120** participants participated in **team building,** and **role-playing** activities, visualized **life goals,** and learned **time management.** They practiced leading by **giving instructions** to build a Lego structure, explored what leadership means, identified the **leadership traits** and discovered their own leadership style.



## RESULTS

At the end of each teen leadership event, youth were **surveyed** on what they **learned,** their level of **confidence,** and if they plan to **use** those lessons in the future.

**55** Youth Responded



**90%** Learned skills to help them become a better leader.

**93%** Gained skills to lead groups, meetings, or projects

**89%** Learned communication skills.

**81%** Became more confident in their ability to speak in front of a group.

**90%** Plan to lead a group, meeting, or project in the future.



One teen counselor who took the survey said:

*"I'm involved in 4-H because it gives me the opportunity to serve my community. Additionally I genuinely care about the environment since we don't have second chances when it comes to our Earth."*

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## RELEVANCE

4-H, America's largest youth organization, has a history of providing youth with hands-on learning experiences and cultivating leadership qualities in young people. Leadership development is essential in nurturing the next generation of leaders to impact their communities, country, and world. Helping youth develop leadership skills is crucial for their personal and societal development, enabling them to navigate challenges and contribute to positive social change. Delaware's 4-H program offers activities that help youth build skills like thinking clearly, understanding emotions, getting along with others, and staying organized. These skills help youth become confident, responsible, and active in their communities. In 4-H, youth learn how to feel comfortable talking with others, make smart choices, and lead projects. They participate in hands-on activities that allow them to connect with others, improve social skills, and build responsibility.

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## RESPONSE

Delaware 4-H gives teens many chances to learn, build, and improve their leadership skills. In 2024, the 4-H team hosted leadership training events like the State Teen Conference, Jr. Leader Weekends, and Camp Counselor Trainings. The State Teen Conference is planned and led by the seven State Teen Council officers, giving them a chance to practice their leadership skills during planning and leading activities. Teens facilitated workshops for 54 participants to build leadership skills in areas of self-confidence, communication, public speaking, and resume writing. During Junior Leader Weekends and Counselor Training meetings, 120 participants participated in team building, and role-playing activities, visualized life goals, and learned time management. They practiced leading by giving instructions to build a Lego structure, explored what leadership means, identified the leadership traits, discovered their own leadership style, and practiced through role-playing. During training meetings, counselors learned lesson planning and camper behavior management. These trainings and workshops gave Delaware 4-H teens a wide range of leadership experiences to help them grow their skills and build the confidence to become strong leaders.

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## RESULTS

At the end of each teen leadership event, youth were surveyed on what they learned, their level of confidence, and if they plan to use those lessons in the future. Fifty-five youth responded to the survey.

- 90% learned skills to help them become a better leader.
- 93% gained skills to lead groups, meetings, or projects.
- 89% learned communication skills.
- 81% became more confident in their ability to speak in front of a group.
- 90% plan to lead a group, meeting, or project in the future.

Based on these responses, Delaware 4-H is providing the skills and opportunities for their youth to become the leaders of the future. One teen counselor who took the survey said, "I'm involved in 4-H because it gives me the opportunity to serve my community. Additionally I genuinely care about the environment since we don't have second chances when it comes to our Earth."

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## RECOGNITION

Funding is provided through Smith-Lever (Federal and Delaware State funds), University of Delaware, and New Castle County, Division of Community Resources

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## PUBLIC VALUE STATEMENT

Delaware 4-H helps young people develop the leadership skills they will use to be positive, responsible, and successful agents of change in their communities, country, and the world.

Reference

(\*Merits\* 2023, \*3\*(1), 206-229; [<https://doi.org/10.3390/merits3010013>](<https://doi.org/10.3390/merits3010013>))