

Kalamazoo County



4-H



Welcome Packet For New Families

Sept. 1, 2026 - Aug. 31, 2027

Dear 4-H Family,

Welcome to 4-H, the youth development program of Michigan State University (MSU) Extension! 4-H provides youth with positive learning experiences that help build character, while developing knowledge and skills that prepare them for the future.

We hope that your experience with MSU Extension - Kalamazoo County 4-H provides your family with a positive experience that you will look back on and remember for years to come. Participation in 4-H should be educational as well as fun for the whole family. We know that 4-H is a large program and can be difficult to navigate, especially for new families; and we hope that this guide will give you the information you need to find your way around. The monthly newsletter is an excellent source of information, please take time to read it. You can find the newsletter and other important documents at canr.msu.edu/Kalamazoo4H

KALAMAZOO COUNTY
Michigan State University
Extension

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Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, or veteran status.

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal opportunity employer.

As you become increasingly involved with 4-H, you will continue to have new opportunities – even beyond Kalamazoo County – because 4-H events occur at the county, state, national, and even international levels! All the fun starts at the club level. We encourage you to become very active with your 4-H club. Throughout the year, we ask that you keep in mind that most 4-H experiences are made possible by volunteers. Volunteers and 4-H staff will do their best to make the experience positive for your family. Throughout the year, you and your family may also be asked to lend a hand; please remember that many hands make light work, so if everyone pitches in a little the job will be done quickly. We understand that families are very busy, but any amount of help your family provides is appreciated to make sure everyone has an opportunity to enjoy the experiences.

If you have any questions throughout your 4-H journey, you can always reach out to the MSU Extension office by calling 269-383-8830 or reach us via email. Please remember that MSU Extension staff may be out in the community doing programs or attending partner meetings and may not always be in the office.

We look forward to working with you and helping the best to become better!

Sincerely,

Veronica Bolhuis
4-H Program Coordinator

Will Barnwell
4-H Program Instructor

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4-H and Kalamazoo County MSU Extension

4-H is a youth education program for youth ages 5 through 19. It is the youth development program of our nation's Cooperative Extension System. Approved MSU Extension volunteers work with youth to provide fun educational experiences. Michigan State University Extension staff are responsible for the management of 4-H as well as providing support and resources for its members and volunteers. Youth who participate in 4-H develop the skills needed to be capable, productive citizens and leaders as they learn about new project areas or increase their knowledge in a variety of educational experiences.

The Smith-Lever Act formalized Cooperative Extension Service (CES) in 1914 to expand the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) partnership with land-grant universities to apply research and provide education to communities. Cooperative States Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is the USDA agency responsible for 4-H and Extension. 4-H programming is delivered locally and operated at the state and national levels through a partnership between county governments, the Cooperative Extension Service at the state's land grant university (in Michigan, through Michigan State University Extension), and the USDA. 4-H is one of the programs offered by the county Extension office. Other programs include Master Gardeners, Food and Nutrition, and Agricultural Programs.

For more information on CES, please visit <https://nifa.usda.gov/extension>

For more information on CSREES, please visit <https://www.usda.gov/topics/rural/cooperative-research-and-extension-services>

For a helpful chart on the larger 4-H system, please see *Appendix A* at the end of this packet.

Location and Contact Information

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Website: <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/county/info/kalamazoo>

4-H Website: canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo4H

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Kalamazoo-County-4-H-Youth-Program-122047197873078> (some clubs and projects have their own closed Facebook pages, talk to your club or project leader for more information.)

County General Email: msue.kalamazoo@county.msu.edu

Office Hours

Monday – Friday 8:00 am – 4:30pm, closed 12pm-1pm for lunch

Summer hours – Fridays the office is closed/by appointment only

Please call ahead if you plan to visit, as MSU Extension staff are not always present.

Our office is closed during National, Kalamazoo County, and MSU holidays.

MSU Extension, Kalamazoo County Staff

Bill Hendrian, Interim District 13 Director

Veronica Bolhuis, 4-H Program Coordinator

Will Barnwell, 4-H Program Instructor

Nancy Hostetler, Administrative Assistant

Julie Ford, District, Administrative Assistant

Amanda Hulet, Community Nutrition Instructor

Mariel Borgman, Community Food Systems Educator

Kellie Jordan, Food Safety Educator

Jeremy Jubenville, Commercial Horticulture

Wrifton Graham, Extension Master Gardener Coordinator

Cheyenne Sloan, Small Fruit

Stay in the loop!

Make sure you are connected to Kalamazoo County 4-H through the following means:

- Make sure your 4-H Online email address is current! Most communication is done via email through 4-H Online, including sending out our monthly newsletter.
- Visit our website regularly at: canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo4H
- Follow Kalamazoo County 4-H on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Kalamazoo-County-4-H-Youth-Program-122047197873078/timeline/>
- Please make sure your projects are updated in 4-H Online. We do send project-specific emails only to those participants enrolled in certain project areas as relevant.
- Many community clubs and projects have their own Facebook information page, be sure to look.

Kalamazoo County 4-H Policies

Non-Discrimination: 4-H clubs cannot discriminate by means of race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.

4-H Age: The 4-H year begins on September 1, but 4-H age is determined by the age that the child will be on January 1 of the programming year. Youth that have a 4-H age of 5 – 19 years of age may join the 4-H program. 4-H members are ages 8 – 19 and participate in both non-competitive and competitive settings. Youth that are 4-H age 5 – 7 years old are considered Cloverbuds, who only participate in non-competitive settings. As part of a Community Club, Cloverbuds often have their own hands-on activities separate from the older members. There are Cloverbud-specific projects available, and several regular 4-H projects are available to Cloverbuds as well.

Enrollment/Reenrollment: The enrollment/reenrollment process begins each year in mid-September. Returning members and volunteers must reenroll by November 15th and new members must enroll by April 1st to be eligible to show at the fair. New members can join 4-H anytime during the year, but they may not be able to meet all county, club, or project requirements to participate in fair shows. All enrollments and reenrollments occur via 4-H Online, our online database. More information about 4-H Online and registration can be found at <https://mi.4honline.com>. Please note that you are not considered a 4-H member until you have enrolled or reenrolled in 4-H Online (including correct authorizations, club, and project participation) AND your enrollment has been verified by the MSU Extension office

Volunteers: Volunteers play a vital role in the ongoing growth and development of those in the 4-H Youth Development program. Adults have a lifetime of experience to share, including education, work experience, hobbies, and talents! Any adult that wishes to enroll as a volunteer with 4-H must successfully complete the MSU Extension Volunteer Selection Process (VSP) prior to enrolling in 4-H Online. The online application is located at http://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/msu_extension_volunteer_selection_process. All volunteers have 60 days from the date their application is turned in to complete the process; volunteers who do not complete the process within 60 days will be moved to incomplete. Volunteers who are inactive (have not completed reenrollment by the county deadline) will be required to go through VSP again prior to being considered an active volunteer. Note there are 2 levels of volunteers, *silver and gold*. Please research the differences prior to starting your application to be sure you are completing the correct application.

4-H Clubs: Clubs must complete paperwork and be registered with the Extension office to be considered a 4-H club and allowed to use the 4-H name and emblem. Clubs must consist of at least five youth members from two or more families, have at least two gold level approved adult volunteers, and meet a minimum of six times per year. Club benefits include assistance and support from Community Project Superintendents, access to the 4-H bus for educational program trips, 4-H Clubs, recognition for members and Leader's, scholarships, leader training

reimbursements, and much more. More information regarding starting a club can be found by calling the Extension office.

Club Leaders: Club leaders are required to:

- Attend at least 50% of Leader's Council meetings
- Offer a minimum of three projects to members
- Complete at least one community service project per year
- Participate in county fundraisers
- Turn in bank statements, treasurer reports and meeting minutes monthly to the MSU Extension office
- Turn in their Annual Financial Summary in September for financial review
- Meet deadlines set by MSU Extension and the 4-H office

Financial Guidelines: All clubs, volunteers, members, and parents are required to follow the financial guidelines for Michigan 4-H clubs. The financial guidelines were updated in 2024. The volunteer book can be found at

https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/financial_manual_for_4_h_treasurers and the youth/adult treasurer book can be found at

https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/financial_manual_for_4_h_volunteers. Please contact the MSU Extension office with any questions.

Fundraisers: All 4-H fundraisers must have a completed [fundraising authorization form](#) submitted to the Extension office **at least two weeks prior** to the promotion and start of the fundraiser. Fundraising may not start until the club receives approval from the 4-H staff. A [fundraising report form](#) must be completed and submitted **no more than 10 days** following the event. Only authorized 4-H groups may use the 4-H name and emblem in fundraising, and all funds raised using the 4-H name and emblem are considered 4-H funds. This means that fundraisers for personal use may not use the 4-H name or club name. The fundraiser should have an educational component for the youth who are participating. Deciding on the best activity to raise the funds, making a good impression, money handling, and record keeping are good skills to acquire during a fundraiser. Above all be sure youth are safe when implementing a fundraiser. Per the MSU Extension financial manual for 4-H, raffles, bingo and other games of chance are prohibited.

Kalamazoo County 4-H Newsletter

Our newsletter goes out once a month and is an integral part of 4-H communication. The newsletter is e-mailed to all members with a valid and current e-mail address on file with our local 4-H office. It can also be viewed at canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo4H under General Information. The newsletter includes 4-H information on the county and state level, our local 4-H calendar of events, articles, and photos. Articles from 4-H members, superintendents, and Leaders are welcome and encouraged. If you have information you would like included in the newsletter, please e-mail it to the 4-H office (msue.kalamazoo@county.msu.edu) by noon on the 15th of each month for inclusion in the following months newsletter.

Kalamazoo County 4-H Website

The Kalamazoo County 4-H website can be found at canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo4H.

The website has a wealth of information for 4-H'ers including many forms and helpful links. Please note there are separate sections for project guidelines and 4-H forms in the list on the right side of the page. Each club has a link to their own page here as well.

Kalamazoo County 4-H also hosts a Facebook page containing useful information. It can be found at Kalamazoo County 4-H Youth Program.

4-H Pledge

I pledge....

My head to clearer thinking

My heart to greater loyalty

My hands to larger service

My health to better living

For my club, my community, my country, and my world.

The 4-H pledge, which should be said at the beginning of every club, project, and association meeting, addresses all four areas of youth development (cognitive, emotional, social, and physical). All youth should be encouraged to memorize the 4-H pledge.

4-H Emblem



The 4-H emblem is a four-leaf clover with an “H” in each leaf. The four H’s stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health. The 4-H emblem (commonly called the 4-H clover) is protected by federal law from commercial and unauthorized use. Due to this protection, only chartered 4-H clubs and organizations are authorized to use the 4-H clover in publications and advertising. The clover must also always be seen with the 18 USC 707 trademark (with few exceptions). There are also very strict policies regarding how you may use the clover in documents, apparel, etc. (for example, text or images cannot be placed over the clover). For a quick reference guide to further explanation of these policies, visit <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/4-h/national-headquarters/program-quality-accountability/name-emblem-pledge>

National 4-H

4-H is the nation’s largest youth development organization, empowering six million youth in the U.S. and is part of the Cooperative Extension system of land-grant universities.

National 4-H provides a wealth of resources, including curriculum and activities as well as fund development, for local 4-H programs. They coordinate National 4-H Week, which occurs in October each year. They partner with Tractor Supply Company to host the Paper Clover Campaign twice a year.

National 4-H also runs Shop 4-H, which is your go-to source for 4-H gear, including curriculum, apparel, club supplies, and more. Visit <http://www.4-h.org/home.aspx> to find all that they offer!

For more information on National 4-H, please visit <http://www.4-h.org/>.

Did you know?

*The 4-H Motto is
“TO MAKE THE BEST BETTER”*

*This expresses a continual goal of
excellence—to always strive to
build on our goals and skills.*

Michigan 4-H Youth Development

Michigan 4-H Youth Development operates under Michigan State University Extension. The program creates non-formal, hands-on educational opportunities to help youth thrive in a complex and changing world. There are eight essential elements (provided by National 4-H) that provide the foundation for educational methods, activities and events that positively affect the lives of Michigan's youth. These are:

1. Youth develop positive relationships with adults and peers.
2. Youth are physically and emotionally safe.
3. Youth feel welcomed into an environment regardless of their background, beliefs, ideas and culture.
4. Youth are actively engaged in different learning environments and are challenged to pursue their own learning.
5. Youth are given the opportunity for mastery of subject matters and able to share it with others.
6. Youth are given the opportunity to see oneself as an active participant in the future.
7. Youth are given the opportunity to see their own goals, determine how they will get there and who they want to become as an individual.
8. Youth are given the opportunity to value and practice service for others.

Michigan 4-H provides a wealth of resources and activities around a variety of project and topic areas, including animal science, arts, careers and entrepreneurship, citizenship, leadership, community service, environmental and outdoor education, global and cultural education, healthy youth, life skills, science and technology, volunteering, and mentoring.

Michigan 4-H coordinates different awards and scholarships at the state level. Scholarships include

- Michigan Rabbit/Cavy 4-H Scholarship for those involved with the rabbit/cavy project area
- Michigan State University 4-H Scholarship for high school seniors who have applied to MSU
- Michigan State University Pre-College Program Scholarship for students in 8th, 9th, or 10th grade who attend an MSU pre-college program (such as 4-H Exploration Days, 4-H Great Lakes & Natural Resources Camp, 4-H Renewable Energy Camp, 4-H Animal & Veterinary Science Camp, or 4-H Capitol Experience)
- Michigan 4-H Foundation Scholarships

For more information on Michigan 4-H Scholarships , please visit

https://www.canr.msu.edu/4_h_scholarships_and_recognition_program/4_h_scholarships

Michigan 4-H Foundation

The Michigan 4-H Foundation is a non-profit fundraising organization that solicits and manages grants. They also steward support from private individuals, organizations, foundations, and corporations to support Michigan 4-H Youth Development programs. Gifts made to the Foundation support:

- 4-H volunteer training at a reduced cost
- County 4-H volunteer recognition
- State 4-H youth awards and recognition
- College scholarships for 4-H youth
- County and state 4-H grant opportunities
- Creation of new curriculum and learning materials
- Development of new and current 4-H programs
- Development and maintenance of the Michigan 4-H Children's Gardens at MSU

For more information on Michigan 4-H Foundation, please visit <http://mi4hfdtn.org/>

Statewide and National 4-H Workshops and Events

There are many statewide and national 4-H workshops and events that 4-H members can attend throughout the year. Visit the website <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/events> to find more information about each event. Keep an eye on the monthly newsletter for more information closer to each event. Information will be posted by the MSU Educator in charge of those events as registration is closer throughout the year.

Some events have age requirements for youth to attend. Please see specific workshops for more information.

4-H Animal & Veterinary Science Camp – Youth ages 13-17 explore the fields of animal and veterinary science and engage in interactive, hands-on learning. Attend for your chance to practice veterinary medicine, research zoonotic conditions and discover careers!

Dairy Days – The event included dairy activities, to showcase the Michigan dairy industry and to provide continuing education to the dairy industry in Michigan and nearby states. Dairy Days events are designed for young people who are interested in dairy cattle and the dairy industry.

Equine Connection – 4-H youth can connect with equine specialist, practice their equine judging skills and more.

4-H Livestock Judging Camp – This overnight camp experience is for youth who are interested in taking a deep dive into livestock judging and sharpening their judging skills!

4-H livestock Judging Competition - participants can demonstrate their livestock evaluation and selection skills, as well as improve their communication and decision-making skills. This contest will include both individual and team competitions.

4-H Spring Livestock Workshop (beef, goats, sheep, swine)- Youth will learn about different aspects of their livestock projects throughout a variety of breakout sessions. Session topics include intro to your species project, animal evaluation, marketing your livestock project, reproduction, nutrition, and more!

4-H Horse Judging- Youth can take a deep dive into horse judging and sharpening their judging skills!

Hippology - Youth aged 5-19 are eligible to participate in the Michigan 4-H State Hippology Contest. Cloverbuds, Junior and Senior divisions as well as Junior Novice and Senior Novice allow for youth to demonstrate their comprehensive equine knowledge and skills in an engaging setting.

4-H State Horse Show – This is an annual, four-day event that brings together 4-Hers from counties across Michigan. Members are selected by their county 4-H programs to participate in this event.

4-H Capitol Experience – Occurs at the State Capitol and surrounding area and is a four-day conference to prepare youth for active citizenship, focusing on civic engagement and public policy.

4-H Exploration Days – The most popular 4-H event! It occurs in June on MSU's campus in East Lansing and is for youth ages 12-19. Spend three days at MSU, experiencing life like a college student and attending fun hands-on workshops and events with approximately 800 youth from across the state. Registration begins in March; you will want to register ASAP when registration opens as sessions fill up very quickly. Registration fees are partially covered by Kalamazoo County 4-H Leader's Council. Chaperones who attend will need to complete the MSU Extension Gold Level Volunteer Selection Process prior to registering and complete the chaperone training module.

4-H Great Lakes & Natural Resources Camp –Experience all that our great lakes have to offer as you go charter fishing, snorkeling, sailing, hiking through forests, exploring dunes, and more. There is an application process that is due in May.

4-H Winterfest – This event for youth 8-12 years old occurs in February. Youth get to participate in a variety of workshops and explore winter activities.

Michigan 4-H Dairy Conference – This is an overnight event for 4-H members ages 12-19 (as of January 1st) who are interested in dairy science and animal science. This program will have dissections, guest speakers, and more.

National 4-H Congress - This five-day conference in Atlanta, Georgia, offers workshops on topics such as diversity, cultural experiences, leadership and team development.

4-H Ignite – For four days, teens from all over the country come to D.C. to collaborate, connect, and cultivate a passion for expanding their minds and their world – becoming resilient and ready for everything life has to offer. Teens will immerse themselves in hands-on workshops, experiences, activities in their key programming track of Agriscience, Animal Science, Community Accelerators, CWF @ Ignite, Healthy Living (featuring soccer), or STEM to continue to find their spark. With the addition of public speaking, career and life readiness, and presentation workshops, teens will be able to apply what they learn to their own lives and take a step forward to become Beyond Ready for the future.

Travel Opportunities

4-H International Exchange – There are several international 4-H programs available. Families may host inbound students from Japan, or students may choose to go overseas, being hosted by families in Argentina, Costa Rica, Japan, Norway, South Korea, Taiwan. Call the 4-H office or visit the following link for more information on the different exchange programs and other countries that may participate. https://www.canr.msu.edu/international_exchange_programs/

Kalamazoo County 4-H Year

The 4-H year runs from September 1 – August 31. Our county calendar of events can be found on the Kalamazoo County 4-H website. Below is an outline of a typical program year in Kalamazoo County 4-H:

September:

- Enrollment for the new program year begins mid-September of each year.
- Clubs usually hold their reenrollment meetings in September or October. Reenrollment information is in the fall newsletters and is due November 15.
- Nominations and elections for club and association/committee officers are also held in September or October.
- Council, club, and project annual financial summaries are turned in and reviews are completed.
- Annual Civil Rights forms are completed by club and project leaders
- Debit card agreements are completed

October:

- National 4-H Week is the first full week of October. A tool kit for volunteers can be found at <https://4-h.org/resources/professionals/marketing-resources/4-h-week-toolkit/4-H>
- Councils vote for new officers.
- Kalamazoo County awards applications and member record books are due



November:

- Reenrollment information for youth and volunteers is due in the 4-H online database by November 15.

December:

- State 4-H award forms for members ages 14-19 are available (usually due in February).
- 4-H Scholarship information available.

January:

- Beef/steer tag-in occurs this month.
- All livestock species meeting



February:

- Usually 1-2 countywide winter workshops (craft, science) are held this month.

March:

- Horse Council tack sale.
- 4-H Exploration Days registration information is available (sign up early!).
- Sign up for helping set up, tear down and 4-H information booth during the fair opens

April:

- New member enrollment deadline is April 1 to be able to show at the fair.
- Swine tag-in is due by the end of the month.
- Lamb weigh-in occurs this month.
- Livestock Buyer's Workshop for youth who are selling in the Livestock Auction.
- 4-H Exploration Days registration deadline is this month.
- Member Record Book/record keeping workshop.



May:

- Exploration Days mandatory orientation for youth and chaperones who are attending.
- FairEntry Registration Opens

June:

- Kalamazoo County 4-H Youth Horse Show.
- 4- Exploration Days occurs at MSU.
- FairEntry Registration Closes

July:

- State horse show applications are due
- Fair camping registrations are due to the Kalamazoo County Parks office.
- Fairgrounds cleanup day



August:

- Kalamazoo County Fair
 - Mandatory livestock meeting is held Thursday before fair week.
 - Non-livestock judging takes place on the Saturday before fair begins.
 - The Livestock Auction is on the Friday of fair week.

Kalamazoo County 4-H Associations and Committees

Kalamazoo County 4-H has a variety of associations and committees to guide certain project areas and events. **Youth participation is highly encouraged** and many offer great leadership opportunities!

4-H Leader's Council

4-H Leader's Council is the association that helps to oversee activities for the county Kalamazoo County 4-H program. Meetings are on the fourth Monday of the month at 6:30pm. 4-H Leader's Council is run by an adult and youth board. All clubs are encouraged to send representatives to this meeting to have a voice in shaping our county program.

4-H Leader's Council oversees the following activities:

Scholarships – 4-H Council will reimburse youth for up to 50% of registration fees for educational workshops for youth who attend state events. For specific requirements, see the 4-H Council section of the website.

Did you know?

Many of our associations and committees offer Leadership opportunities for youth and teens! 4-H Leader's Council, LSA, Horse Council, and Dog Council have youth boards. Voting for youth boards occurs at each association's first meeting in the fall of each year. Youth are also encouraged to be involved in and take a Leadership role with committees!

County Awards – Member record book learning, completing a project, and receiving recognition are important parts of the 4-H program. Recognition enhances the member's self-esteem, increases their motivation to learn, to become more involved in 4-H, to accept new responsibilities and set new goals. Youth must complete their member record book to qualify for county awards. There are county medals awarded in different project areas, as well as Special Awards. Contact the 4-H office for more information.

A note on awards/recognition: A 4-Her's greatest reward should come from personal achievement, service to others, helping other 4-Hers, and sharing their experiences with other, while striving to be better today than they were yesterday.

Livestock Superintendents Association

The Livestock Superintendent Association (LSA) is a council that consists of the Superintendents of all market livestock. The auction, policies, and procedures for Kalamazoo Livestock Projects are set by this council. LSA meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00pm.

Livestock Auction:

The Livestock Auction occurs during the fair week. There is a buyer's workshop held in the spring, that is very beneficial for first year sellers and covers information from sale forms to approaching buyers. Here are a few things to note about the sale:

1. LSA takes commission off each transaction (animal sale). The commission varies by species. This commission is used to pay for any trucking of animals, check-off fees, and auction expenses.
2. Sale checks for youth who sell in the sale take approximately 30-45 days to mail following the sale. Please be patient after fair; we will always send an email when checks are ready. We cannot cut the youth checks until we receive payments from buyers to cover the checks. Appropriate thank you notes, to buyers, must be turned in (addressed and with postage) by the Saturday of fair.
3. It is highly encouraged that you talk to potential buyers prior to fair week, and that you continue a positive relationship with your current buyers throughout the year.

Horse Council

Horse Council consists of horse project leaders and teen leaders. It provides educational opportunities for youth involved in the horse project, as well as setting policies and procedures, fundraising, and countywide events. The council also coordinates the annual tack sale and 4-H youth horse show. Horse Council meetings are on the third Thursday of most months at 7:00pm.

Dog Council

The dog council provides educational opportunities for young people involved in the dog project. Council meetings are held prior to or following the dog project meetings. See the annual calendar for specific dates.

Kalamazoo County 4-H Clubs

There are several different types of clubs within the 4-H structure. Kalamazoo County consists mainly of community clubs, which involves members of a variety of ages and interests. These clubs have general club meetings which may be held monthly that all club members attend and include club business and educational activities.

These clubs may also hold project-specific meetings throughout the year under the guidance of their project leader. The clubs meet on a weekly or monthly basis and focus mostly on project work. 4-H members may be involved with more than one club as fits their needs (members join a community club and join a project club, or may be in two community clubs that focus on a different range of projects).

A 4-H SPIN club is a special interest club where five or more young people get together to learn about a topic of interest. The SPIN club model provides increased flexibility in when and how long groups meet. Each club meets a minimum of six times but not more than eight times.

The current list of Kalamazoo County 4-H clubs, along with a contact person, contact information, location, and project areas is located at

https://www.canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo/kalamazoo_county_4_h_1/general-info

Kalamazoo County 4-H County Programs

There are a variety of countywide programs offered each year to 4-H and non-4-H members. These can vary from one day workshops to a short program or camp. These programs may have a small fee to help cover the costs of the program and you will need to register for the programs.

Examples of county programs held in the past:

- Cloverbud Craft Workshop
- Spring Break Workshops (crafts and science activities)
- Robotics Camp
- Start a Business Series (4-H entrepreneur project)
- Summer Workshop Series (crafts, science, cooking)

Kalamazoo County 4-H Projects and Life Skills

The 4-H slogan is ***“Learn by Doing”*** - Based on the experiential learning model (doing an activity, then reflecting on the activity and applying the knowledge learned), youth in 4-H participate in specific program areas through the learn-by-doing approach. These specific program areas are known as projects. Youth will select the projects they want to work on with the support of an adult volunteer leader. You can find the list of available projects for Kalamazoo County 4-H, and the guidelines at:

https://www.canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo/kalamazoo_county_4_h_1/Project-Guidelines/ . Many of these projects and guidelines will correspond to Kalamazoo County fair classes. Note that not all projects are available in all clubs, depending on the volunteers in the club. Some projects may not have a project leader, and youth will either work with family members, friends or do independent learning.

In addition to gaining valuable content knowledge of the project the youth works with, the 4-H model also teaches members important life skills, including practical skills such as goal setting, critical thinking, and record-keeping, as well as personal and interpersonal skills such as leadership, teamwork, character, communication, self-esteem and responsibility. Iowa State University Extension has a Life Skills Model that connects the various life skills to the four H's within 4-H. This model can be found at

https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/life_skills_resources

Kalamazoo County Fair

The Kalamazoo County fair is the largest event each year where 4-H members can showcase the projects they have been working on all year.

Here are a few things to note about fair:

1. The answers to most questions can be found by looking in the fair book, which is available online at https://www.canr.msu.edu/kalamazoo/kalamazoo_county_4_h_1/fair-information
2. The fair book will include the schedule for fair, general rules, camping rules, livestock regulations, and class entry information. Fair book changes must be submitted to the fair office by November 1. This process can be lengthy. It may take until February until the current year's fair book is released.
3. Superintendents are those volunteers that oversee a particular project area(s) at the fair. Please remember that they are volunteers! They also hold a wealth of information about their project area and are most likely to be able to answer questions regarding their project area. Each animal species has its own rules and policies (located in the fair book). Please contact your superintendent for further information. Contact information for each superintendent can be found in the fair book and in the header for the project guidelines.
4. Community clubs help with a variety of volunteer shifts before, during and after the fair. Sign-ups will be done online through SignUpGenius. A link will be posted in the spring newsletters. Please help your club fulfill the shift duties!
 - a. Still Project Room set-up and tear-down. Each club is asked to participate in either set up or tear down and rotates each year.
 - b. 4-H Information Booth & Project Monitoring: Each club is asked to complete a shift to interact with the public, answer questions, and to ensure the safety and security of the projects in the building.
 - c. Crafts and activities – There is a fair planning committee that will help to plan fun activities during the fair. Volunteers are needed to help run these activities throughout the fair week.
 - d. All adults must have completed and been approved as a silver level volunteer at minimum. This must be completed no later than July 1 of each year. Silver level volunteers may only volunteer under the oversight of a gold level volunteer or MSU Extension staff member.
1. All projects that you would like to exhibit at fair must be submitted via the [FairEntry](#) website by the designated deadline. Youth must have met club and project requirements prior registering. Those who have not met club and project requirements may not be able to fully participate in the fair.

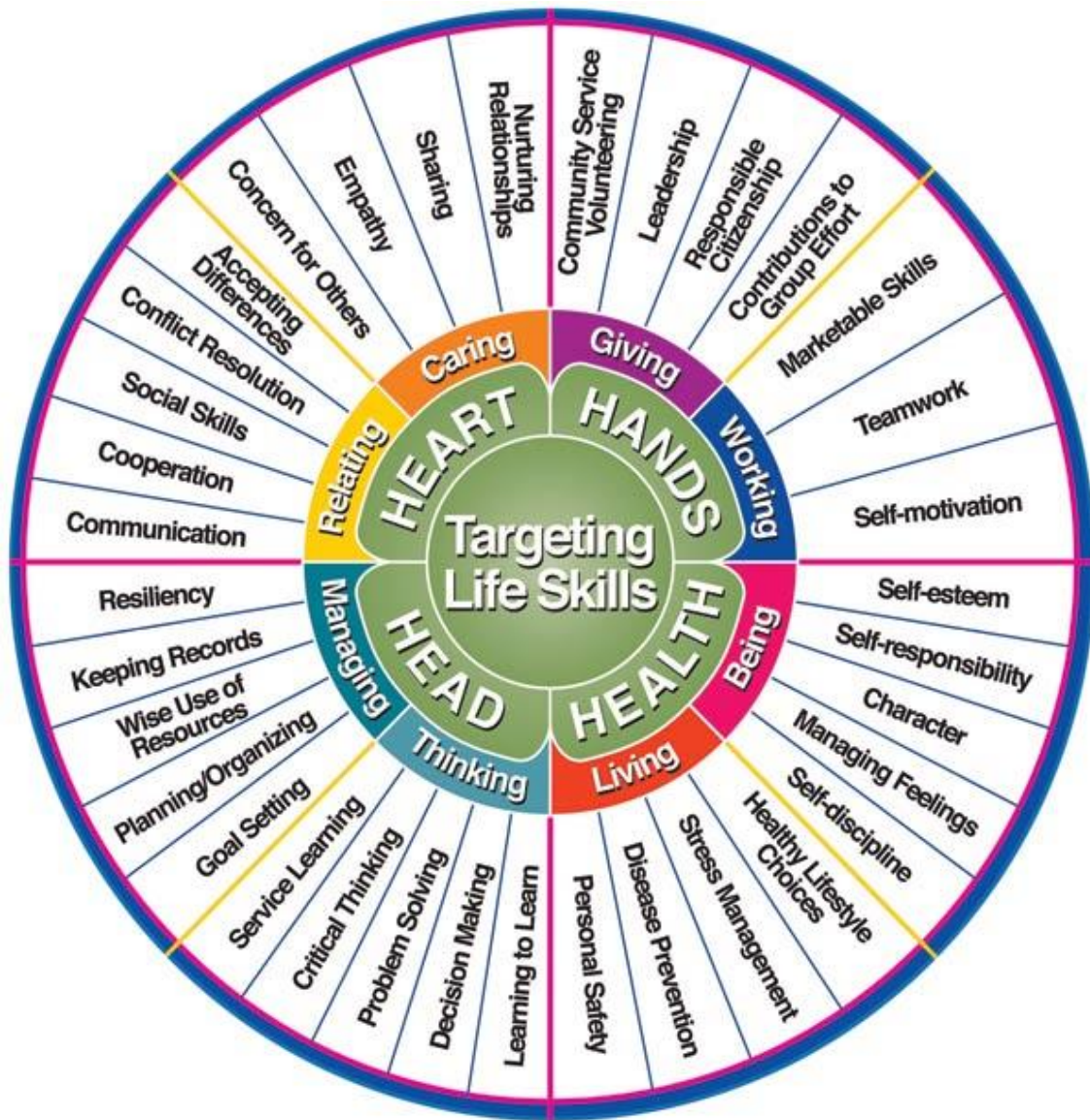
2. Youth and families may camp at fair. Camping registration is done through the Kalamazoo County Parks office on an individual basis. For more information, visit <http://www.kalcounty.com/parks/fair/> .

4-H Life Skills

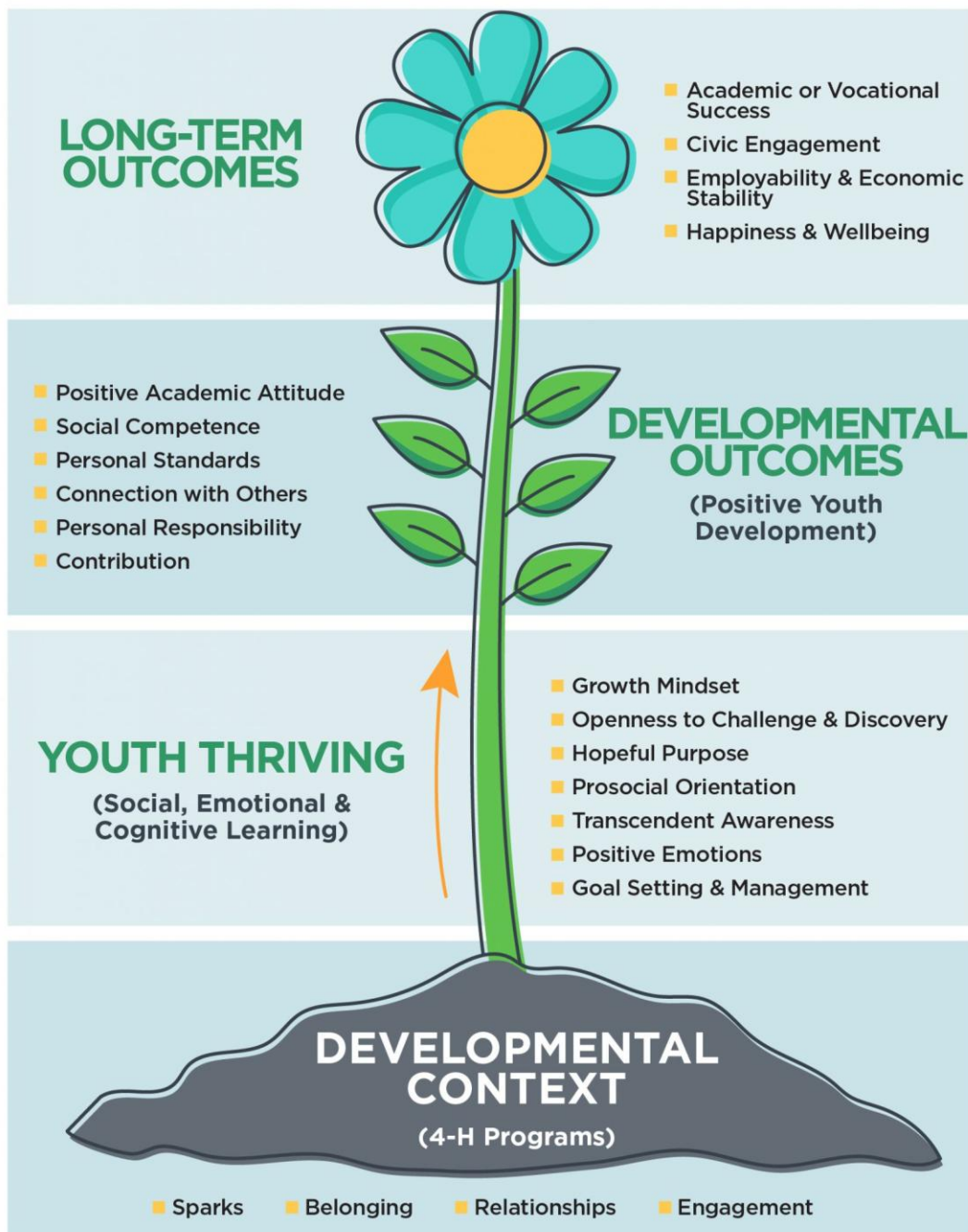
Life skills are a basic foundation that prepares youth for success in life. The goal is that every youth possesses the necessary life skills to succeed and lead a productive life.

More information on how 4-H prepares youth can be found at

https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/life_skills_resources

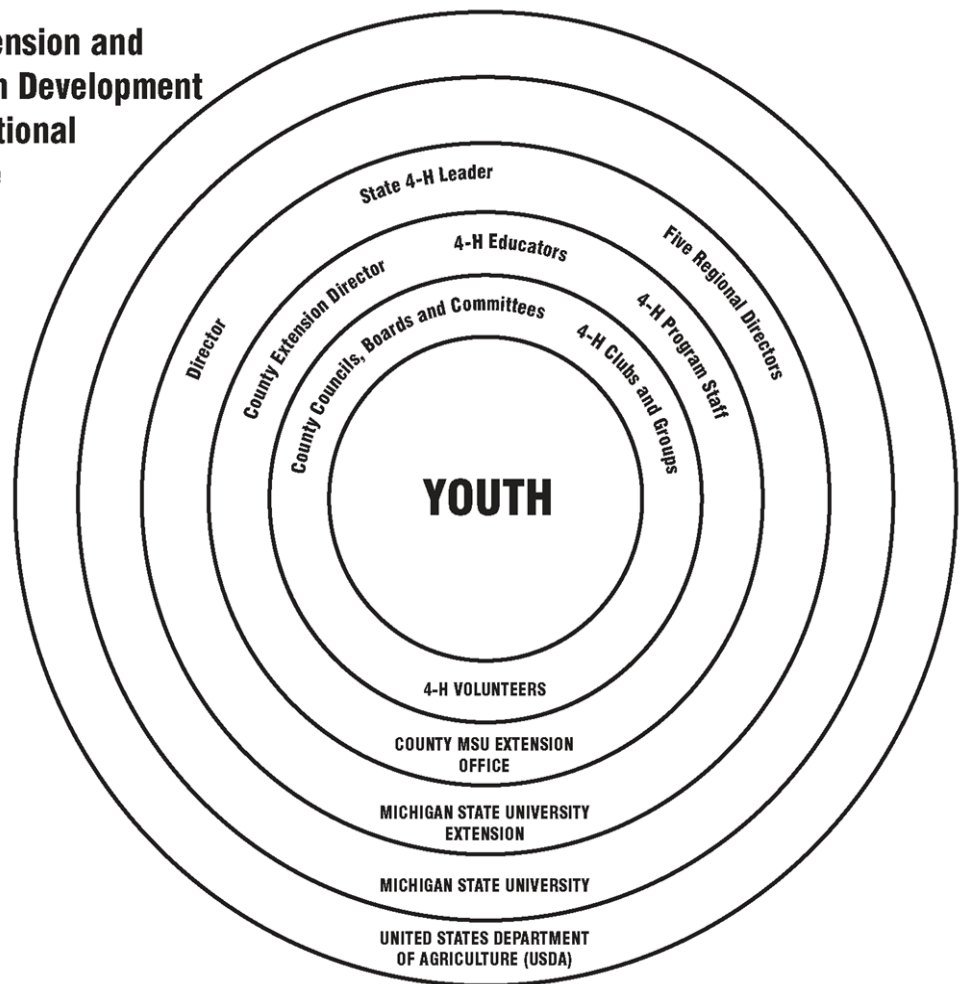


4-H Thriving Model – you can find more information at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/4-h-thriving-model>



Appendix A

MSU Extension and 4-H Youth Development Organizational Structure



4-20-06 MMR