

## *It's Significant:*

# **4-H'ers BECOME BETTER CITIZENS, LEADERS, AND COMMUNICATORS**

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Iowa 4-H'ers are gaining something significant from participating in 4-H clubs—something statistically significant. New Iowa State University Extension research shows that Iowa youth credit their 4-H clubs with making them better citizens, leaders, and communicators.

### **THE STUDY**

Extension randomly selected 508 Iowa 4-H'ers from across the state to participate in the 2008 Iowa 4-H Youth Citizenship, Leadership, and Communication Self-Assessment Research Study. The study examined self-reported changes in 4-H club members' citizenship, leadership, and communication knowledge/skills and behavior/practices. Using a five-point scale, the youth compared their knowledge/skills and behavior/practices in each area *after* participating in 4-H with their knowledge/skills and behavior/practices *before* participating in 4-H.

### **THE RESULTS**

It's one thing to learn a skill; it's quite another to put that skill into practice and change behavior. But this higher degree of learning and impact happens through 4-H. The 4-H'ers' *after* 4-H scores were higher than their *before* scores, and the differences were statistically significant for every citizenship, leadership, and communication indicator.

- 80.1% increased their citizenship skills
- 73.5% improved their citizenship practices
- 67.4% increased their leadership skills
- 71.5% improved their leadership practices
- 73.1% increased their communication skills
- 71.5% improved their communication practices

Iowa 4-H'ers' survey responses offer solid evidence that participation in Iowa 4-H clubs give youth opportunities to

- Practice the citizenship, leadership, and communication skills they need to become successful adults
- Positively influence and work with others through multiple leadership roles and responsibilities
- Take ownership of, make a difference in, and be an active citizen within their community
- Learn critical workplace and teamwork skills
- Get things done through entrepreneurial outreach
- Meet their four basic developmental needs of belonging, mastery, generosity, and independence
- Develop the characteristics of competent, caring, contributing, confident, connected, and capable individuals

*"4-H has unique opportunities that allow you to become a leader, to become a role model, to become an effective communicator, and to become active in your community. I have developed confidence in myself and my ability to be a leader. I discovered the pathway to my future through 4-H."*

*—Logan, a Hamilton County 4-H'er*

...and justice for all.

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