



*Welcome to University of Maine Cooperative Extension  
4-H Youth Development Program*

**4-H is the youth development program of University of Maine Cooperative Extension, with activities and opportunities for youth ages 5-18.** Each year, more than 16,000 Maine youth participate in 4-H. It is the largest, non-formal youth-serving organization in Maine and the country.

For over 100 years, 4-H has worked with youth, opening the door to opportunities and providing the foundation for youth to become leaders in their communities. As the youth development program for UMaine Extension, the programs are research-based, using hands-on learning, and a positive youth development approach.

Positive youth development is an approach to working with youth that focuses on youth becoming healthy and productive citizens as adults. It builds on their strengths and empowers them to lead.

4-H is closely connected to the resources and expertise located on the land-grant university campus at The University of Maine, with strong programming at the county level. Youth can participate in 4-H in many ways at the county, regional, and national level including camp and learning centers, school-based activities, participation in fairs, opportunities to visit UMaine's campus, and attend national conferences.

In this welcome packet, you'll find more information about ways to become involved in 4-H clubs and groups, how to access 4-H camp and learning centers and 4-H campus events, as well as learn more about the school-based and afterschool programs. County-specific information is provided throughout the packet.

Findings from The Tufts University "4-H Study of Positive Youth Development" indicate that, compared to non 4-H youth, 4-H'ers:

- Have higher educational achievement and motivation for future education
- Are more civically active and make more civic contributions to their communities
- Are 3x more likely to contribute to their communities
- 2.3 times more likely to exercise and be physically active

The staff at UMaine Extension are happy to help and answer any questions you may have.

Welcome to 4-H!

*Hannah Carter*

Hannah Carter, Dean of Cooperative Extension

*Lisa Phelps*

Lisa Phelps, Program Administrator

I pledge my HEAD to clearer thinking, my HEART to greater loyalty, my HANDS to larger service, and my HEALTH to better living, for my club, my community, my country, and my world.