

## **National 4-H Week**

For the 75th consecutive year, millions of youth, parents, volunteers and alumni across the country will be celebrating National 4-H Week, October 1-7, 2017, with the theme of “Grow True Leaders.”

4-H alumni in Otoe County and around the country are always the first to acknowledge the significant positive impact 4-H had on them as young people. The opportunities and experiences that 4-H provides youth empowers them to become true leaders.

In fact, research has shown that young people in 4-H are almost four times as likely to contribute to their communities, and are twice as likely to engage in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs in their free time.

A recent study by Tufts University in Massachusetts found that youth who participate in 4-H stand a higher chance of success in school and in life. Structured learning is important in 4-H, but earnest encouragement and positive mentoring from adults help 4-H members through the pressures and setbacks.

Later in their lives, according to the same Tufts study, 4-H youth are more interested in learning and want to be active in their communities.

This tells us that 4-H leaders are helping youth, while they are laying the foundation for a stronger community by growing true leaders.

4-H offers youth the opportunity to learn in an informal setting and to explore their own unique interests. Consider joining our Otoe County 4-H program as an exciting and fulfilling opportunity for you and your family.

Each individual uses his or her own talents to create unique experiences through the 4-H program. Whether it is joining a local 4-H club, attending a 4-H camp, participating in a school enrichment activity, or partaking in an afterschool group, there are numerous opportunities for youth to experience 4-H.

Here in Otoe County, we have over 2,310 youth and 149 volunteers from the community involved in 4-H, with 319 of those youth enrolled in the traditional 4-H club experience.

Youth who are eight to 18 can participate in 4-H as a traditional club member with all 4-H privileges. Youth ages five, six, and seven are eligible to join 4-H as a Clover Kid and participate in non-competitive, age appropriate activities.

For more information about joining 4-H or serving as a volunteer leader, contact the Nebraska Extension Office in Otoe County at 402-269-2301 or [otoe-county@unl.edu](mailto:otoe-county@unl.edu).

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