



Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service

Indiana 4-H History



**Celebrating 100 Years of
Helping Hoosiers Grow
Purdue University
Cooperative Extension Service
Winter 2002**

History of Indiana 4-H

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Early Beginnings



- **4-H Began with boys and girls clubs**
- **The first organized clubs were in Ohio**
- **The earliest Indiana record is in Hamilton County in 1904**

The 4-H program grew out of the need to help young people and their families for better agricultural education. Boys and girls clubs were first begun in the early 1900s, but their foundation was established much earlier with the signing of the Morrill Act in 1862.

During these early years, few records were kept, so it is difficult to say where the first actual club work was organized.

Most, however, credit the beginnings of 4-H to Ohio, where in 1902, a school Superintendent, A.B. Graham, in Clark County, Ohio organized a boys' and girls' agricultural club in Springfield Township. This club activities including growing corn, planting a garden, testing soil, and club meetings.

The earliest known records of club work in Indiana were recorded in 1904. John Haines, a superintendent of Hamilton County schools, called a meeting for all boys interested in growing corn on April, 9, 1904. 93 boys enrolled. It is reported that the corn show these boys held aroused more interest in seed corn than the Farmers' Institutes.



Creating the Clover Emblem



•In 1907- 08, O.H. Benson designed a 3-leaf clover (Head, Heart, and Hands)

•In 1911, the 4th leaf was added to stand for “hustle” (later changed to Health)



Boys and Girls club work grew from these early beginnings. The clubs gained a uniformity and some standard of identification was needed.

The first emblem was designed in 1907 or 1908 by O.H. Benson as a three-leaf clover. It stood for head, heart, and hands. In 1911, Besnon suggested a fourth leaf should be added, standing for “hustle.” This was later changed to health, and as such, the four “h” words became symbolic of club participation.



Green and White Club Colors



- **White symbolizes purity**
- **Green is nature's most common color**
 - **It is emblematic of**
 - **Youth**
 - **Life**
 - **Growth**

Shortly after the adoption of the emblem, the club colors of green and white became a standard.

The white background of the the 4-H flag was used to symbolize purity.

The green of the 4-H emblem was used to represent nature's most common color. Leaders also felt that the emblem symbolized youth, life, and growth.



Growth of the Program



- **The program originally grew through the schools**
- **In 1914, 4-H became part of the Cooperative Extension Service**
- **Volunteers have always been essential to the program's success**

Boys and Girls club work had its initial growth through the schools with the support of administrators and teachers. Following the Congressional passage of the Smith-Lever Act in 1914, 4-H Programs became a part of the Cooperative Extension Service.

Club work grew rapidly after that, and many counties across the state started hiring Assistant County Agents who worked primarily with the youth clubs.

For a number of years, vocational agriculture and home economics teachers continued to be active in the program. Volunteer adult leaders have always been critical to the programs' success. Some volunteers have directed clubs for several decades, while others have been involved in special projects, programs, and events.



The Origins of 4-H Round-Up



- **A flu epidemic prevented youth participation in Farmers Short Course**
- **1500 youth attended a separate program whose purpose was to:**
 - **Be better 4-Hers**
 - **Recognize achievements**
 - **Further citizenship and leadership**
 - **Learn about Purdue**

Learning experiences for youth involved in club work were included as part of the Purdue short course, a two-day event held each January for farmers and rural youth.

In 1919, an influenza epidemic prevented youth from participating in the Short Course, so leaders organized a “Roundup” of youth for April 21-24. Fifteen hundred youth attended, and it was determined that the separation of the program from the short course allowed for a better youth program.

After that, Roundup was held the first week of May for a number of years and then shifted to June, where it remains to this day.

4-H Roundup is an excellent tool to encourage youth to become better 4-Hers, to recognize them for their sustained achievements; to further their citizenship and leadership efforts; to share new information and knowledge, and to acquaint them with Purdue University as an institution of higher education.



4-H Pledge Composed



- **The 4-H Pledge was composed by Otis Hall, a native of Montgomery County**
- **The pledge was adopted in June, 1927 and “my world” was added in 1973**

Otis Hall, a native of Montgomery County composed the 4-H pledge. His pledge was adopted (nearly as written) by a national committee who sought entries.

Hall is considered one of the pioneers of 4-H club work.

He graduated from Darlington High School and Wabash College and served as the superintendent of Schools in Montgomery County where he worked with the Boys and Girls Clubs. He also served as state leader for 4-H in Kansas, and in Hampden County, Massachusetts.

The Pledge, as recited today, is:

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.

In 1973, the words “my world” were added to recognize the commitment of 4-Hers beyond the nation’s boundaries.



4-H Mottos and Slogans



- **“To Make the Best Better”** was the 4-H motto
 - **This was not only a club goal, but also an individual goal**
- **Club slogans found through the years were:**
 - **Be your own best exhibit**
 - **Learn by doing**
 - **Win without boasting; lose without frowning**
 - **Plan your work; work your plan**

Much emphasis has been placed on the 4-H club motto: To Make the Best better.

This has grown into an important organizational and club goal, but also challenges the individual to strive for project improvement, character building, and citizenship development.

Slogans have also become part of the 4-H program. These have varied over the years, but some you may be familiar with include:

Learn by doing

Be your own best exhibit

Win without boasting- lose without frowning

Plan your work- work your plan.



4-H Grows in the 20s



- **State Fair becomes the “ultimate” showplace**

- **Boys state fair camp was started**

- **The first state dress revue was conducted**



By the 1920s, the foundation of club work had come to rest upon the idea that there was a definite state program that served the local endeavors, and that many groups and agencies cooperated to build the effort.

During this decade, the State Fair became the ultimate “show place” for 4-H projects. A beef show was held in 1921, and a sheep show in 1922. State Fair canning exhibits were first held in 1921, and by 1925 club work at the state fair included competitive exhibiting in swine, calves, sheep, corn, potatoes, apples, canning, sewing and baking. Club members entered 1718 exhibits in 1925.

The first state fair boys’ camp was held in 1924 with 203 boys and leaders participating. By 1926, two large buildings had been built for the camp. Bob Amick became Camp Director in 1929 and served in that capacity for more than 30 years.

The 1927 Roundup featured the first state dress revue. The event was held in the Purdue Memorial Union ballrooms with judging on general appearance, suitability of costume to the individual and occasion, economic factors, ethics of costume, and the suitability of accessories.



Strengthening Leadership Highlight of the 30s



- Leader training was held in every county
- 1808 women, 1020 men were local leaders in 1939
- Adult Advisory committees were formed
- The first State Junior Leader Conference was conducted
- Rural youth was organized



Despite the difficulties of the thirties, Indiana 4-H continued to flourish. One of the highlights during this decade was the growth and strengthening of local 4-H leadership.

State staff conducted leader trainings in every county in the state, and adult advisory committees were established to plan and administer the local programs.

In 1939, 1,808 women and 1,020 men served as local club leaders in the state. Junior leaders numbered nearly 3,800. Adult volunteers were mainly teachers, Farm Bureau members, home economics workers, public-minded farmers, and parents of club members.

In June of 1932, the first State Junior Leader conference was held at Shakamak State Park with attendance from 46 counties.

Blackford County organized the first Rural Youth Club in the state in 1934. This organization served the 18-35 young adult population.



4-H Instrumental in 1940's War Effort



•4-H members participated in Food For Freedom

- Planted Victory Gardens
- Preserved food by canning, drying, and storing
- Used substitutes
- Gave demonstrations

•The State fair was cancelled during 1942-1945



Interest in 4-H club work during the 40s continued unabated. In fact, 4-Hers accepted and participated in club work as a serious responsibility.

Enrollment in 1940 stood at 32,499 girls and 20,876 boys.

In the early part of the decade, Food for Freedom was uppermost in everyone's mind, and Indiana club members did their part for the war effort by growing victory gardens thus producing high quality food, by giving demonstrations on food preparation and preservation, by using substitute fabrics, and by helping in the collection of scrap metal and other needed products.

One of the disappointments of the war, was the cancellation of the state fair from 1942- 1945. However, a state 4-H club show was held in 1943, 44, and 45 with 84 of our 92 counties participating.

One of the good things to come out of this decade was the establishment of the local township committees that were organized to help carry out the program. Tippecanoe County first experimented with this concept in Fairfield Township and the idea soon spread throughout the state.



50s Period of Growth and Challenge



- The organization grew to 72,041 members in 1950
- More adults became leaders
- Increased involvement led to bigger and better fairs, shows, and judging
- There was an effort to reach out to cities and suburbs



The 1950s were a harmonious time for the Indiana 4-H program. The Organization grew and many new programs and projects began.

The decade opened with a statewide membership of 72,041.

After the war there was a change in lifestyle in America. Throughout the country, and here in Indiana, young people were eager to participate in new experiences and to accept leadership roles.

More adults wanted to be a part of the program, serving as leaders, advisory members, or instructors. This increase in involvement led to bigger and better 4-H fairs, shows and judging experiences.

Enrollment continued to be dominated by rural areas and small towns, but there was a drive to reach out to the cities and the suburbs.



Some 50s Firsts



- Many new activities began in the 1950's:**
- First Outbound IFYE Group**
 - County and District Share-the-Fun Festivals**
 - First State Fair Achievement Trip Awarded**
 - 4-H Key Awards Program**



The 1950s were also a time for new beginnings for 4-H in Indiana. Some of the programs that began during the middle decade include:

- The first outbound IFYE(International Farm Youth Exchange) group
- County and District Share-the-Fun festivals began in 1952
- The First State Fair Achievement Trip was awarded to 4-Hers in 1955. 17 girls and 16 boys made the trip to Washington D.C.
- The 4-H Key Award program was established in 1956 with the 586 gold keys for boys and girls awarded.



The 1960s – Changes and Challenges

- **Indiana was ranked 6th in the nation**
 - **over 90,000 (triple that of 1930)**
 - **60% of enrollment was non-farm**
 - **girls accounted for 3/5 of membership**
- **The Indiana 4-H Foundation was established in 1961**
- **Age limits were changed to 9-19**
- **The horse and pony project started**

Indiana 4-H ranked 6th in the nation with enrollment of 90,101 –
- triple that of 1930. 60% of enrollment was non-farm with girls making up 3/5

The Purdue University Board of Trustees authorized the formation of the 4-H Foundation with its official incorporation on January 5, 1961. This organization, located in Indianapolis is a completely separate entity whose purpose is fundraising outside of the university. It provides significant financial support, and special program support to activities such as the Junior Leader Program, volunteer training, and scholarships.

In 1965, the age limit for 4-H participation was changed to 9-19. Previously, young people ages 10-21 could be involved.

Horses were being ridden as a source of pleasure, not as a necessity during these days, and as a result, Indiana 4-H established the Horse and Pony Project in the early 60's. Within a few years, membership in this project doubled to over 6,000 members many of whom were from suburbs and cities.

The Cooperative Extension service changed its structure in the late 60's and this had a large impact on the 4-H program. The new area approach provided for a separate youth agent in each county giving them equal status to the agricultural and family living agents. It also assigned each youth agent with special resource responsibilities that would be shared across county lines



4-H Continues to Reach Out in the 70s



- The traditional program continues to flourish
- Activities were expanded to all youth (EFNEP, TV, Urban projects)
- Emphasis on individual and personal growth



The 70s were a busy time for Indiana 4-H. The traditional programs continued to grow and flourish, but there was a shift in the emphasis. While there was still club work and projects, one also noticed that more and more resources were being directed toward the individual members, and his or her personal growth and development.

Another major thrust in the 70s was the efforts to provide programming to all Indiana youth. Additional funding provided by the Expanded Foods and Nutrition program allowed youth agents to broaden their reach to economically disadvantaged families. Television programs like Milligan Stew provided children with basic food information, and other urban projects like Windowsill Gardens began to be used by school teachers.



80s Were Period of Adjustment for 4-H



- There were cuts in Federal support
- Enrollment leveled off
- New programs were added
- Restated vision, mission and goals



The 1980's required adjustments in how programs were conducted. Cutbacks in federal support brought new challenges including reductions in paraprofessionals and students who helped with a number of key programs. Still, 4-H continued to reach out to all youth, age 9-19 regardless of their place of residence, race, or creed.

4-H did add new programs in the 80s. These included computer workshops, the Shooting Sports program, and Project LEAD (Legal Education to Arrest Delinquency). Another new program of the 80s was the The Blue Sky Beneath My Feet program which was designed to interest upper elementary students in science-related topics. The program was popular partly due to Indiana's interest and association with NASA's space program. Two Indiana 4-Hers were astronauts in the 80's. Lieutenant Colonel Jerry Rice of Lake County and Naval Captain Donald Williams of Warren County. In January 1989 Ross presented the state organization with a 4-H Flag and tree seeds he had taken with him on the December 1988 shuttle mission of "Atlantis". Williams was the commander of the Oct. 89 flight of "Galileo."

Late in the decade, 4-H in each county participated in extensive program reviews to ensure that it still kept pace with changes in society. Ultimately, the 4-H mission was restated. to be to emphasize the development of youth through nonformal educational programs and projects, enabling them to become more responsible and productive citizens.



1990's Focused on Safety and Security



- **Societal changes required policy changes**
 - **ABE forms**
 - **Safety/Security**
- **Curriculum revamped**
- **Membership ages changed to grade in school**



Changes in society in the 90s required a number of policy changes to the Indiana 4-H program. Life is not as simple as it used to be, and not everyone who wants to work with children has their best interests in mind. In order to ensure the safety of both children involved in 4-H activities and the adults who serve as volunteers, a formal application process for new volunteers was begun. We now screen volunteers who wish to work with the program and have also developed Adult Behavioral Expectations in place.

Much effort was put into the upgrading and revamping of traditional projects to keep up with the changes members were seeing in the world around them.

Also, in an attempt to better meet the needs of the youth that 4-H serves, the age requirements of 9-19 were changed in 1997 to school grades. Today, youth may become 4-H members when they enter 3rd grade. They may continue their membership through the completion of grade 12.



Indiana 4-H Has Helped Hoosiers Grow!



- **4-H has touched the lives of millions in your own community**
 - **Farmers, doctors, teachers, secretaries, others**
- **Famous folks were 4-H members too**
 - Jim Davis (creator of Garfield)**
 - Governor O'Bannon**
 - Orville Redenbacher**
 - Jane Pauley**
 - Others???**

It is easy to see how the Indiana 4-H program has touched the lives of millions of young Hoosiers, providing them with the educational, citizenship and leadership experiences that allow them to grow and develop into productive Hoosier citizens.

Many of your friends and neighbors are alumni of the Indiana 4-H program. You will find 4-H graduates in all walks of life. They are farmers, doctors, teachers, homemakers, secretaries, foundry workers, electricians, entertainers, athletes, and librarians. They come to us from all walks of life.

You probably know many of the people in this community who have participated in the Indiana 4-H program. Maybe you didn't know some 4-H alumni who have become a bit more famous. Folks like Jim Davis, Jane Pauley, Orville Reidnebacher, Sue Ellen Reed, Governor Frank O'Bannon and his wife, Janie Fricke, and the Jackson Five were all involved in the 4-H program here in Indiana while they were growing up. There are many others you'd recognize who have also benefited from the projects, programs and activities of 4-H. Perhaps you can think of some on your own.



Indiana 4-H in the New Millennium



- Provides a strong youth development program
- We utilize a variety of settings
- Caring, capable, contributing adults



The Indiana 4-H program in the new millennium serves the youth of Indiana by providing a strong educational youth development program.

Our program delivers educational experiences in a variety of settings. Caring, capable, and competent adults assist in the 4-H program as models for young people.

We treasure the rich heritage of Indiana 4-H and want to build on that to ensure that 4-H is always available to the future generations of Indiana youth.



The End!



Questions????

Optimizing Your Potential as a 4-H Volunteer

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Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service

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