

# EXTENSION TRENDS: **4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development • [www.uidaho.edu/4h](http://www.uidaho.edu/4h)



## UI Extension 4-H Youth Development Leadership Team



**Nancy Shelstad**  
Interim State 4-H Director  
[shelstad@uidaho.edu](mailto:shelstad@uidaho.edu)



**Matt Fisher**  
Ag STEM Area Educator  
[mattfisher@uidaho.edu](mailto:mattfisher@uidaho.edu)



**Tami Goetz**  
Northern District and  
Shooting Sports Area Educator  
[tgoetz@uidaho.edu](mailto:tgoetz@uidaho.edu)



**Mike Knutz**  
Central District and Teen  
Programming Area Educator  
[mknutz@uidaho.edu](mailto:mknutz@uidaho.edu)



**Scott Nash**  
Eastern District and  
Livestock Area Educator  
[snash@uidaho.edu](mailto:snash@uidaho.edu)



**Claire Sponseller**  
STEM Area Educator  
[csponseller@uidaho.edu](mailto:csponseller@uidaho.edu)



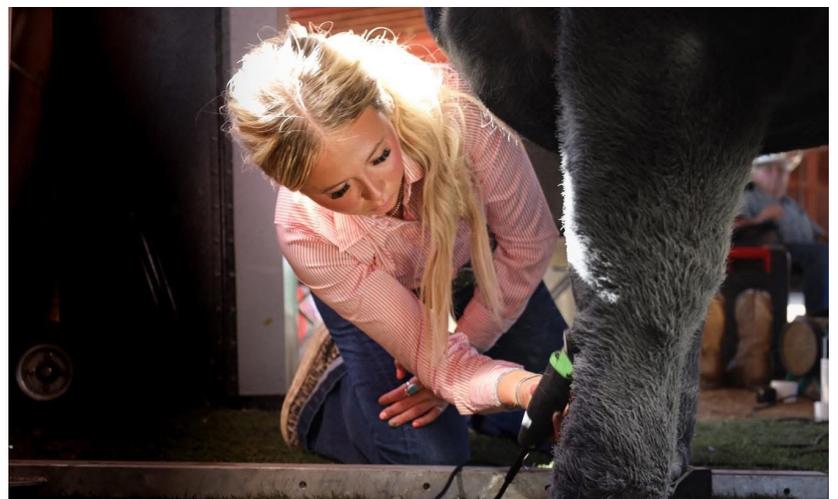
**Mandy Strey**  
Volunteer Leadership  
Development Area Educator  
[mstrey@uidaho.edu](mailto:mstrey@uidaho.edu)

## 2025 By the Numbers

- 11,326 enrolled 4-H club members
- 75,339 youth participants
- 2,207 volunteers statewide

## Animal Science Contests Impact Idaho Youth Development

UI Extension 4-H animal science state contests provide youth with the opportunity to participate in events beyond the county. In 2025 over 350 4-H'ers participated in dairy, horse, livestock and animal contests. From those events, 41 youth qualified to participate in national contests.



Survey data indicates that these youth understand the importance of having a strong work ethic and they learned how to set goals and gained problem solving skills. Youth also shared they developed leadership skills, learned how to make responsible choices and learned the importance of working on a team. 4-H experiences also help youth learn career options. "I've gained confidence, learned to make quick and thoughtful decisions and improved my communication skills. I learned life lessons like using past mistakes as a motivation to become better," said one Idaho youth who participated in a national contest. "When I think about how 4-H has shaped my life, I realize that it has helped me become who I am today and who I hope to become," said another youth. UI Extension will conduct six animal science state contests in 2026.

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## **Learn Everywhere with 4-H**

Learn Everywhere with 4-H is an innovative, project-based learning program that transforms 4-H experiences into recognized high school credit. Learn Everywhere with 4-H connects passion, purpose, and education – preparing students for future careers and lifelong learning. Core or elective credits are offered for 4-H projects by school districts, online schools, and charters while content is delivered by UI Extension 4-H professionals based on state education requirements. Three dedicated program staff were hired through an Idaho Workforce Development Fund innovative grant to ensure that partnerships and course offerings grow. During fall 2025 six students successfully earned credits.



## **4-H Prepares Youth for Success in the Workplace**

In today's job market, 77% of employers prioritize analytical thinking, creative thinking, resilience, flexibility, and adaptability. Research shows 4-H programs effectively build these skills, along with responsibility, teamwork, and leadership in youth.

The UI Extension 4-H Youth Development program offers three statewide programs for grades 8-12: State Teen Association Convention (STAC), LEAD Summit, and Know Your Government Conference. These opportunities include workshops, career tours, service-learning, and leadership training. Participants consistently report gaining skills vital for career success. At the 2025 STAC event youth reported strong agreement that the event prepared them for work. Related to professional and work ethic, 89% now know how to act professionally; 97% understand that employers expect high-quality work; and 88% feel capable of hard work on challenging tasks. Regarding career readiness, 80% felt prepared for work/career and 81% explored aligned career interests. Teamwork and responsibility were also evaluated with 80% feeling confident helping groups succeed; 83% improving as team players; 81% staying positive despite differing opinions; 90% accepting responsibility; 94% making things right after errors; and 88% apologizing when needed.

Evaluation data collected from youth attending the Know Your Government Conference yielded similar impacts. These results highlight how 4-H develops employer-valued skills, equipping youth for success in work, life, and post-secondary pathways.