



THE HISTORY OF 4-H

Back in 1902, many Americans lived in rural communities and on farms. The community club motto embraced the "learn by doing" philosophy. Created as an extracurricular program, parents were recruited as volunteer leaders partnering with educators to provide fun and educational atmospheres for club members.

By 1907, the United States Department of Agriculture endorsed boys' and girls' demonstration clubs in Mississippi and eventually created the name "4-H." In the early 1900's the initial three leaves of the clover represented head, heart and hands. During the 1920's the fourth leaf was added to include health; hence the final creation of the title 4-H.

The Maryland 4-H Youth Development Program that started approximately in 1905, provides a supportive setting for all youth to reach their fullest potential. Youth learn beneficial cognitive life skills through community focused, research-based experiential education programs. 4-H is one of the largest running youth development organizations in this country. The Maryland 4-H Youth Development Program is a recognized leader for educating and helping youth to become competent, caring, responsible individuals.

Baltimore City 4-H

In Baltimore City, 4-H programming began in 1970 with a pilot effort and a full program was begun in 1972. The first club organized was the Friendship Club that operated through the YWCA. Sewing and Nutrition were initial program emphasis of 4-H in Baltimore. Sewing was the primary project area of the all girls Friendship Club. The first club in public housing was established in the Lafayette Courts Project, and their project area included gardening, community service and child care.

Currently Baltimore City 4-H's program components include: personal development and leadership, citizenship and civic education, healthy lifestyles, nutrition, youth entrepreneurship, photography, youth gardening, clovers (5-7), adventure in science, young teen weekend (11-13), teen leadership (12-18), public speaking, technology, and fashion revue.