

# LESSON 1

## Introducing Youth Development

4-H PRKC: Youth Development (domain): Youth Development (topic)

### MATERIALS

1. PowerPoint slides or posters of:
  - Definition of Youth Development
  - Definition of Positive Youth Development
  - Strengths of 4-H
  - 4-H Historical Timeline
2. Copies of Appendix, Lesson 1 handouts if participants are not receiving 4-H 101 curriculum

### OBJECTIVES

1. To introduce the concept of positive youth development
2. To review the strengths that Cooperative Extension/4-H bring to the non-formal youth development field.

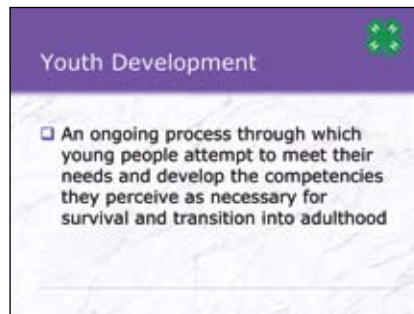
### TIME

20 minutes

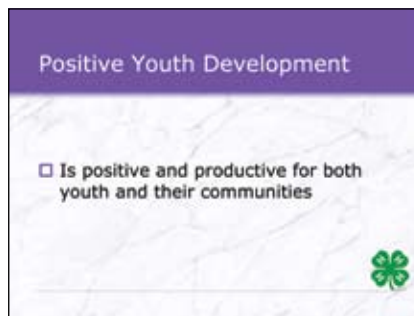
### WHAT TO DO

Review youth development principals and the role of 4-H in the non-formal youth development field.

Show Power Point slide or poster of Definition of Youth Development.



Show Power Point slide or poster of Definition of Positive Youth Development.



### WHAT TO SAY

Before we can begin to understand how 4-H works, we must first understand some fundamental principals that serve as the foundation of how we approach our work with youth and adult volunteers or professional staff. The goal of all 4-H programming is the growth and development of young people. Let's look at some basic definitions of youth development that will be used throughout this training.

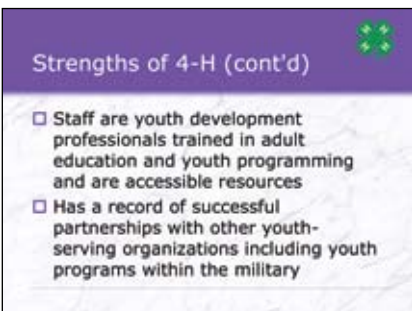
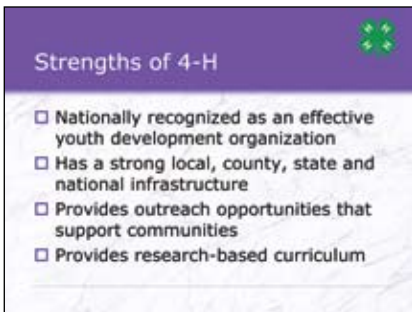
**Youth Development** has been defined as an ongoing process through which young people attempt to meet their needs and develop the competencies they perceive as necessary for survival and transition into adulthood.

**Positive Youth Development** is development that is positive and productive for both youth and their communities. It occurs from an intentional process that promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, choices, relationships, and support.

Caring, knowledgeable and skilled adults are necessary to the success of young people as they grow and develop. Adults do this by providing environments for youth that are safe and nurturing and by offering experiences that help young people develop skills needed for adulthood.

## WHAT TO DO

Show Power Point slide or poster of Strengths of 4-H.



## WHAT TO SAY

Youth development professionals, such as yourselves, help guide and train adult volunteers and staff to provide appropriate positive youth development experiences for the youth with whom they work.

Non-formal, out-of-school programs, such as 4-H, are recognized providers for positive youth development. Universities and youth-serving agencies have identified research that supports positive youth development. Many people in our communities do not realize that work done by 4-H members comes from a research base and that 4-H has a direct relationship to land-grant universities.

4-H is the non-formal youth development program of the Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It is part of the land-grant university system and has access to the most current knowledge and research related to youth development.

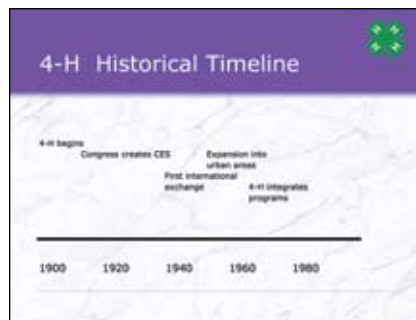
4-H staff and Cooperative Extension Offices are located in almost every county in the United States.

Let's look at some of the 4-H program strengths. 4-H:

- is nationally recognized as an effective youth development organization;
- has a strong local, county, state and national infrastructure;
- provides outreach opportunities that support communities;
- provides research-based curriculum;
- has staff who are youth development professionals trained in adult education and youth programming and are accessible resources;

## WHAT TO DO

Show Power Point slide or poster of 4-H Historical Timeline.



## WHAT TO SAY

- has a record of successful partnerships with other youth-serving organizations including youth programs within the military.

In Lesson 3, we will spend more time learning about the history and structure of 4-H. Right now let's briefly look at how 4-H arrived at where it is today.

4-H began about 100 years ago when researchers at land-grant universities were trying to get farmers to adopt modern farming techniques but were meeting with resistance from adult farmers who did not readily accept new discoveries.

Rural youth programs, which encouraged youth to experiment with new ideas, became a way to introduce new agriculture technology to adults. In 1914, Congress created the Cooperative Extension Service at USDA, which included 4-H. At that time, 4-H Clubs consisted of corn clubs for boys and canning clubs for girls.

Later, the basic 4-H focus became the personal growth of the member. Life skills development was built into 4-H projects, activities and events to help youth become contributing, productive, self-directed members of society. In the 1960's 4-H underwent a major change when it combined clubs divided by gender or race into a single integrated program.

As you can see, 4-H has enjoyed a long, rich history that has helped make it the successful youth development organization that it is today.

## REFERENCES

4-H History. 2006.  
Retrieved January 16, 2007  
from  
[http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/about/4h\\_history.htm](http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/about/4h_history.htm)