



United States
Department of
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National Institute
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<http://www.nifa.usda.gov/youthdevelopment4h.cfm> @USDA_NIFA



DIVISION OF YOUTH AND 4-H (D Y & 4-H)

USDA's Division of Youth and 4-H within the National Institute of Food and Agriculture is the federal partner for the nation's land-grant Cooperative Extension System positive youth development program, 4-H. 4-H is the positive youth development programmatic outreach and engagement of Cooperative Extension which reaches into the 3100 counties across the states and territories. The mission is to translate the research into practice within communities. Being responsive to local community needs is a key feature for Cooperative Extension's 4-H program. Here are few examples of how 4-H and Cooperative Extension are collaborators and community partners for youth in transition:

Michigan Extension 4-H program in 1988 convened the first meeting of the Campus Kids 4-H Club at the Lenawee County's Maurice Spear Campus Detention Unit, a court-operated juvenile detention and treatment facility. In 1988, the first meeting of the Campus Kids 4-H Club was called to order at Lenawee County's [Maurice Spear Campus Detention Unit](#). The "Campus" is a court-operated juvenile detention and treatment facility directed toward 13 to 17 year-old court adjudicated delinquents of both genders with educational, emotion and behavioral problems. Monthly meetings are held 10 months out the year, with an average of 12 students attending. Last year, approximately 108 incarcerated boys and girls learned about 4-H through crafts, animals, cooking and recycling projects, in addition to benefitting from the knowledge of special guests speakers.

The benefits of the program are evident when one hears about the students who used their 4-H cooking experiences and accompanying certificate to get a job in a restaurant or to earn credit in their home economics class, a valuable achievement they can put to use once they complete their incarcerated time and return to their high schools.

In the 24 years of existence, more than 2,000 teenage youth have recited the 4-H pledge and promised "[to make the best better](#)" during a very troubled time in their lives. As each youth is released from their incarceration, they leave with a connection to a positive youth development program that will embrace their involvement if they choose to continue on a path of positive youth behavior. The goal of this program is to reach youth during a challenging time in their lives, and make a connection that will make a difference. Youth that have been incarcerated are a prime example of the motto of 4-H, "To make the best better." Youth are the best – sometimes they just need redirection to make them better! http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/4_h_programs_in_michigan_juvenile_institutions

USDA NIFA's grant program, **Children, Youth and Families at Risk (CYFAR)** has demonstrated application and replicability such that as one of the three programs National 4-H Council promoted for replicability and scalability was the **University of Missouri Extension 4-H L.I.F.E.**, (4-H Living Interactive Family Education) program for OJJDP National Mentoring Program. The overall objective of the 4-H LIFE Program is to promote a strong, healthy, and nurturing family environment

for children of incarcerated parents, while helping incarcerated parents and trained 4-H volunteers become positive role models and mentors. Attached is a table of the adaptability of the program by the 1890 land-grant extension partner, **Alabama A & M**. – *see separate table*
Rutgers offers community support as a partner to the Juvenile Justice Commission of **New Jersey** such as 4-H through the Rutgers Transitional Education and Employment Management (T.E.E.M.) Gateway which is a systems-based support service and logistical facilitator of Positive Youth Development, to support at-risk and disconnected urban youth across the state of New Jersey. The Youth Education and Employment Success Center ([YES Center](#)) of Newark is their flagship collaborative located in the heart of downtown [Newark](#). A second Youth Success Center is located in our state capital - [Trenton](#) and two additional sites have been opened in [Camden](#).

<http://www.teemgateway.rutgers.edu/>

The **Wake County** Juvenile Crime Prevention Council, **North Carolina**: Using research-based curriculum, community service learning and the experiential learning model, 4-H BASES provides small group facilitation and mentoring relationships to help youth develop and maintain life skills and protective assets. These experiences may be structured as activities, explorations, or community service projects. **Charlotte County Youth One Stop Center, Fort Myers, FLA**, 4-H is a community partner for reentry. <http://www.charlottecountyfl.com/HumanServices/FamilyServices/CommunityResources/SharedYouthVisionReport.pdf>

From the August 2002 Journal of Extension article titled "What Incarcerated Youth Say Would Help Them Succeed: Can Extension Play role?" there were several areas where extension professionals could provide essential programming and collaborative support. Some items listed at that time were job training, computer skills and having a safe place to go when needed with prosocial youth and adults to support youth. The conclusion at that time was that "*programming with incarcerated youth, as well as community reentry programs and parole supervision, should focus more on the importance of the experiential component of the program cycle, which is the foundation and strength of Extension's youth development programs.*"

<http://www.joe.org/joe/2002august/iw2.php>