



WASHINGTON STATE  
UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION



## KITSAP COUNTY 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

2014

### BY THE NUMBERS

357 Volunteers

35,700 volunteer hours reported  
in Kitsap

58 Kitsap 4-H Clubs

837 actively enrolled Youth

### Participation:

800 - short-term programs such  
as Day Camps, Nutrition  
Programming, etc.

202 - Technology and  
Engineering Programs

280 - Environmental Education

583 - Animal Science Projects

324 - Plant Science programming

488 - Food and Nutrition  
programming

128 - safety and self-discipline in  
Shooting Sports

64 - TeenLeadership  
Development

18 - WSU 4-H's Teen Conference

### ISSUE

According to the Kitsap County Health Department's most recent report of Health Indicators, youth suicide attempts continue to rise. In 2012, 18% of Kitsap County youth (grade 8) reported seriously considering attempting suicide during the past 12 month. In the most recent report released in May 2015, 20% of Kitsap County youth (grade 8) reported considering suicide. The same report showed about 45% of local high school seniors believing that marijuana use is not harmful and 26% continue to report using marijuana in the past 30 days. Cigarette and smokeless tobacco use is down to 22% high school seniors reporting usage; however more teens, about 27%, are reported using e-cigarettes or vape pens, up from 10% in 2012. According to county health rankings, Kitsap comes in as the 17th healthiest county in Washington State out of 39 counties. With trends on the rise for youth suicide ideation as well as substance abuse, the time is now for training more adult volunteer mentors who will take an interest in guiding and supporting Kitsap youth. Caring adults are foundational to positive youth development and prevention.

### RESPONSE

The 4-H youth development program offers a holistic approach to youth development that includes elements that reduce risk factors and also promotes protective factors such as building life skills and promoting developing assets that provides a successful transition to adulthood. Positive youth development does not target the prevention of negative outcomes, but rather focuses on the positive outcomes that we desire for every youth. All youth need at least one caring, supportive relationship in their lives. Volunteer leaders and fellow youth members provide this camaraderie. 4-H clubs provide a unique opportunity for long-term positive youth development through regularly scheduled meetings and activities.

While research indicates a greater impact for youth in long-term supportive relationships, the Kitsap County 4-H program provides an opportunity for community connections with short term programming. After-school programming can be found in school districts across the county as well as in-school nutritional education in collaboration with WSU's Food \$ense program. Summer Day Camps provide an opportunity for engagement in learning and developing life skills.

Kitsap County 4-H receives additional resources to provide support for military youth and teen programming. In addition to specialized military programming, the Kitsap County 4-H Tech Wizard Mentorship Program facilitates intensive mentorship relationships with at-risk youth in the Bremerton School District.



## QUOTES

*"My daughter's confidence has blossomed so much! I am so thankful for 4-H. I've always known she was awesome, but I feel like 4-H is giving her the tools and confidence that will help her to show EVERYONE how awesome she is!"* - Ginna, 4-H Mom and Volunteer

*"4-H introduces young adults to activities they would otherwise not participate in. The 4-H projects have guided my interests and helped me achieve things I would not have thought possible before joining. Through my projects, I have met amazing people, learned business and advertising skills, improved on public speaking and communication, and found a career path I would not have pursued otherwise."* - Morgahn, Kitsap County 4-H member and competitor for the Jr. Olympics Championship for Air Rifle.

*"I would not be who I am today without 4-H. It has given me friends and teachers. 4-H introduced me to things I never knew about, and taught me more about them."* Andrew – 4-H Council Teen Representative, President of the Green Fever Tractor Club.

## IMPACTS

In 2014, 357 4-H volunteers lead 837 youth in some 58 community-based clubs meeting at least once a month in various communities across Kitsap County. Youth members engaged in Science, Engineering, Technology, Citizenship, and Healthy Lifestyles projects. Another 800 youth were actively engaged in short term projects such as school enrichment programs, day camps, and family learning programs. 18 junior high and high school students were able to view a glimpse of college life when they participated in Washington State University 4-H Program's Teen Conference held at the WSU Pullman Campus in June 2014.

The National Safe Tractor and Machinery Operation Program (NSTMOP) is a project of Hazardous Occupations Safety Training in Agriculture (HOSTA) for youth ages 14 and 15. 15 Kitsap County youth and adults participated and received certification in the 2014 Tractor Safety and Machinery Workshop held at the Kitsap County Fairgrounds with sponsorship of Washington Tractor, Poulsbo. Successful certification ensured participants were trained and tested in Tractor and ATV operation as well as farm and machinery equipment and safety. This unique certification prepares youth for employment on local farms and introduces them to vocational opportunities beyond high school.

Specialized programming for childcare providers of military children and facilitation of Military Family Supper Clubs was provided by the Kitsap County Military 4-H Coordinator. Kitsap County 4-H provided leadership and delivery of WSU 4-H's Adventure Education program to 20 attendees from the Suquamish Tribe's Youth Sports and Recreation Department and New Life Community Development Agency's Youth Program. 60 at risk youth in the Bremerton School District received intense mentorship support from the Kitsap County 4-H Mentorship Program established with Olympic Educational Services District's S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Program.