4-H is built on a foundation of Positive Youth Development (PYD).

Positive youth development helps young people become competent, confident, connected, caring people of character.

4-H helps young people develop leadership skills and a sense of responsibility. Through 4-H, they gain confidence and skills. 4-H prepares them for their future.

That kind of impact doesn’t happen by chance. 4-H volunteers and programs work to provide elements of Positive Youth Development called BIG M. Young people need

- Belonging
- Independence
- Generosity
- Mastery

Young people want to feel like they belong. To develop a sense of Belonging, they need a safe emotional and physical environment. And they need a positive relationship with a caring adult. That’s where you come in as a 4-H volunteer.

Independence allows young people to dream of a bright future and have the confidence that they can make that happen.

A spirit of Generosity allows youth to serve others and make their community a better place to live.

Mastery is an important part of all 4-H project work, but is especially important for SPIN clubs. Young people join SPIN clubs because they want to learn about a topic and develop new skills. 4-H volunteers help young people achieve Mastery.

BIG M is an important part of 4-H. It’s an important part of the work you will do as a 4-H volunteer.