

WHY 4-H CLUBS (STILL) MATTER*

- They reflect the norms and values of families, the neighborhood and community institutions.
- Absence of ability group and rigid age segregation.
- Provide a connection between normal, everyday youth and the normal, everyday adults who want to make a difference in the lives of young people.
- Foster a safe environment where young people feel free to have conversations and discuss issues without risk of ridicule, misunderstanding, judgment or negative labeling.
- Facilitate flexible programming and highly personal interactions between members.
- Ability to re-design themselves in different cultural, economic, racial and ethnic contexts to reflect the beliefs, hopes, and values of young people and their families.
- Offer a chance to experiment and explore without feeling the weight of monumental consequences.
- Can serve to meet the developmental needs of youth and support positive youth development.

* From: "Clubs and Groups in the Social Education of Young People," by Joyce Walker, Trudy Dunham and Eric Snyder. The Center, (Winter 1998), pp. 20-27.

"Making 4-H Clubs Vibrant," Strengthening Clubs 2 Training, Kansas 4-H, December 2008