The Oregon 4-H Youth Development Program Model
About the Oregon 4-H Youth Development Model

The Oregon 4-H Youth Development Program Model was developed to provide a clear articulation of the research base and program theory upon which 4-H Youth Development programs are based. While 4-H has always been research-based in its approach to youth development, there has not been a comprehensive program model that articulates the program theory of change and theory of action, both of which are essential ingredients for connecting program activities to program outcomes.

The Oregon 4-H youth development program model reframes some of the traditional aspects of 4-H into contemporary Positive Youth Development (PYD) understandings. In addition to connecting 4-H to PYD nomenclature, the model illustrates:

- A clear program theory of change based on our understanding of how youth develop in the context of out-of-school time programs.
- A chain of action that needs to happen in order for the theory to work.
- Multiple opportunities for program evaluation, that includes implementation as well as outcome measurement.

The model begins with focused attention to 4-H program development that takes into account:

- A young person’s interest or “spark” that is the center of 4-H programs
- The principles of high quality youth-development programs
- The need for sufficient program dosage and fidelity
- The importance of developmental relationships

High quality 4-H programs contribute to a young person’s thriving trajectory, which grows over time. Thriving is marked by six developmental indicators: Openness to challenge and discovery; a hopeful purpose, transcendent awareness, pro-social orientation, positive emotionality, and intentional self-regulation.

4-H Programs provide opportunities for adaptive development relationships, where youth interact with their contexts in ways that is mutually beneficial and empowering.

Thriving is connected by a growing body of research to important developmental outcomes, that lead to long-term outcomes for youth: A successful transition to adulthood marked by health and wellbeing, economic stability and civic engagement.
OREGON 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT MODEL

INTERACTION BETWEEN YOUTH AND SOCIAL CONTEXTS

THRXING TRAJECTORY

Openness to Challenge and Discovery
Transcendent Awareness
Positive Emotionality
Hopeful Purpose
Pro-social Orientation
Intentional Self-Regulation

DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES
- Academic Motivation
- Academic Success
- Reduction in Risk Behaviors
- Healthful Choices
- Social Competence
- Personal Standards
- Connection to Others
- Contribution to Others

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES
- Successful Transition to Adulthood
- Health and Wellbeing
- Economic Stability
- Civic Engagement

Oregon State University
Research Base and References

**Sparks**


**Program Quality**


**Developmental Relationships**

**Thriving**


