



BUILDING HEALTHY HABITS FOR A HEALTHIER GENERATION

66,000

Michigan 4-H youth experiences related to healthy living in 2021-2022

166

MSU Extension healthy living educational sessions offered in 2022

PRIORITY

A R E A S

Michigan State University Extension 4-H Youth Development provides healthy living education that empowers Michigan youth to make proactive and healthy choices and helps to generate a healthier future generation. These programs focus on:

- **Nutrition and healthy eating.**
- **Mental and emotional wellness.**
- **Physical well-being.**

In 2022, this programming was made possible in part by a grant from the Walmart Healthy Habits initiative.

For more information about MSU Extension's healthy living programs and resources, visit us online.

IMPACTS

As a result of Michigan 4-H healthy living programming, youth improve their knowledge about healthy lifestyles and choices they could make to improve their overall health. In addition, youth develop positive attitudes about healthy lifestyle choices and begin making important healthy living decisions. Armed with these tools and information, youth are better equipped to make healthy living decisions for a lifetime. A 10-year longitudinal study conducted by Tufts University found that 4-H youth are:



2X

Nearly 2 times more likely to make healthier choices.

“ [I learned] that you control your emotions but you are still allowed to be sad.

”

— Youth participant who attended a 4-H healthy living program.





JUMP STARTING NEW HABITS

In an effort to incorporate physical activity, youth at a Schoolcraft County 4-H camp learned to jump rope. Most youth at the camp had never tried jumping rope before and asked if they could borrow the long ropes to bring to school. Soon, the students started jumping rope near the entrance of the school each morning, encouraging friends and classmates to join them. Each day, ten students joined in for a few jumps before heading into the building.

Over time, students began to realize that they often felt tired when they arrived to school but after jumping, they feel more alert in their first-hour class. One day, a teacher came outside to try jumping. Two weeks later, he told the students that he had ordered his own ropes so he could jump rope at home.

The teacher shared:

“ You inspired me. Jumping rope in the mornings has changed my life. ”



Photo by Michael Morse: www.pexels.com

SIDEWALK ART FOR THE HEART

To expand the conversation about mental health, wellness and positive living, MSU Extension’s Dickinson County 4-H program hosted a 4-H SIDEWALK ART contest in June 2022. Located at the Iron Mountain library, the event brought community members together to create a rainbow of art encircling the library. Families were encouraged to create hopeful messages and inspirational art.

The event fostered a true sense of civic responsibility and pride as community members stopped by to take part. People connected with the idea of a rainbow of art embracing the library and downtown and participants were able to speak about their art in a way that made it clear they were talking about their personal experiences. It was a spectacular and vibrant celebration of community and while drawing, attendees learned about the ways that 4-H provides safe spaces for youth through health, wellness and mindfulness educational programs.



Photo by Antonius Ferret: www.pexels.com