

# 4-H Makes a Difference

The first-of-its-kind research defined and measured positive youth development. The result is a model that is driving new thinking and approaches to youth development around the world.

## Positive Youth Development

### Competence

- Positive view of one's actions in specific areas, including social and academic skills

### Confidence

- An internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy

### Connection

- Positive bonds with people and institutions reflected in exchanges between the individual and his or her peers, family, school and community and in which both parties contribute to the relationship

### Character

- Respect for societal and cultural norms, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong (morality), and integrity

### Caring

- A sense of sympathy and empathy for others

### Contribution

- Contributions to self, family, community and the institutions of a civil society



## 4-H Youth Excel

Compared with their peers, youth involved in 4-H programs excel in several areas:

- Contribution/Civic Engagement
  - 4-H'ers (grades 7-12) are nearly **four** times more likely to make contributions to their communities
  - 4-H'ers (grades 8-12) are nearly **two** times more likely to be civically active
- Academic Achievement
  - 4-H young people (grades 10-12) are nearly **two** times more likely to participate in science, engineering and computer technology programs during out-of-school time.
  - 4-H girls in grade 10 are **two** times more likely and in grade 12 are nearly **three** times more likely to take part in science programs, compared with girls in other out-of-school time activities.
- Healthy Living
  - 4-H'ers (grade 7) are nearly **two** times more likely to make healthier choices



# The Power of Positive Youth Development

The research is helping families, schools, communities and youth programs develop strategies to support children and adolescents. Effective youth development programs like 4-H are putting the research to work by focusing on three important areas:

- Positive and sustained relationships between youth and adults
- Activities that build important life skills
- Opportunities for youth to use these skills as participants and leaders in valued community activities

The study assessed the key characteristics of PYD – competence, confidence, character, connection and caring – followed by the impact of valued community programs, including 4-H.



## 4-H Formula for Success

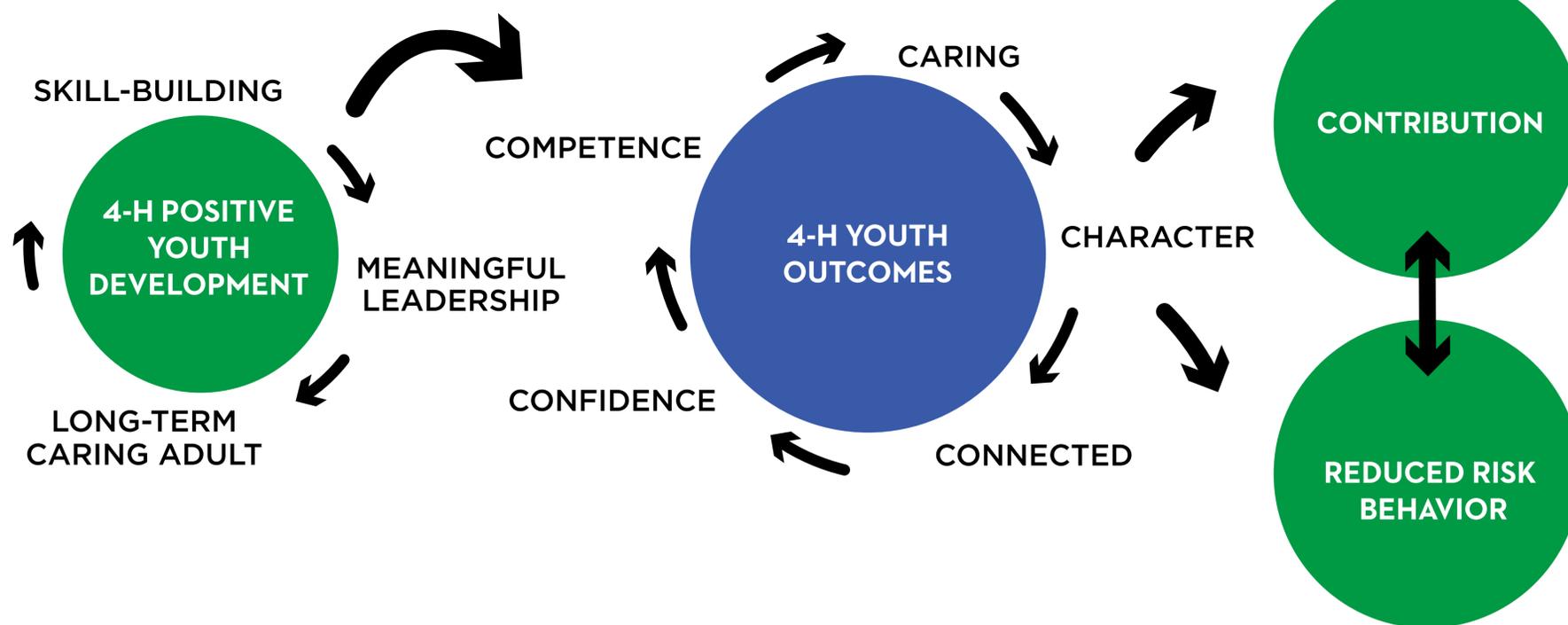
4-H PYD INPUTS

+

OUTCOMES

=

IMPACT



## Background

For more than a decade, pre-eminent youth development scholars Richard M. Lerner and Jacqueline V. Lerner and the team at the Institute for Applied Research in Youth Development at Tuft's University, Medford, Mass., partnered with faculty at America's land-grant universities, including North Dakota State University, to conduct this groundbreaking research.

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