



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

National Institute  
of Food  
and Agriculture

4-H National  
Headquarters

# 4-H Healthy Living: Social-Emotional

## Mission of 4-H:

A world in which youth and adults learn, grow, and work together as catalysts for positive change.

### The Challenge:

There is a direct connection between physical health and mental-emotional-behavioral health. Parents say that a growing number of children [ages 4-17](#) have difficulties with emotions, focus, behavior, and getting along with other people. A significant amount of preteens and teens suffer from health issues such as depression, negative/unhealthy relationships with people, and other problems.

### The Solution:

Through 4-H Healthy Living efforts, youth will...

- Be more aware of their emotions, behaviors, personal qualities, the external supports that connect to decision making, and the feelings of others.
- Increase their knowledge, attitudes, and skills to prevent peer-on-peer bullying.
- Build their awareness of different kinds of stress and skills for coping with stress.
- Improve their ability to find, manage, and express their emotions and behaviors.
- Improve their ability to make positive choices, relationships, and to access external supports.

### The Partnerships:

The following are examples of how partnerships add to the work of 4-H Healthy Living goals.

- **Federal Partners in Bullying Prevention Group:** This committee is a group led by the U.S. Department of Education that works to make and plan policy, research, and communications on bullying topics. As a member of this committee, 4-H provides positive youth development expertise and helps with communication efforts.
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):** This agency, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, leads public health efforts to advance the behavioral health of the nation.

### The Results:

- Michigan State University 4-H developed the [Be SAFE](#) curriculum. Be SAFE: Safe, Affirming, and Fair Environments helps young people aged 11 to 14 and adults work in partnership to create areas that are physically and emotionally safe. Its activities promote social and emotional learning and development, demonstrate how to address and prevent bullying, and develop positive relationships with peers and adults.
- National 4-H Conference delegates have presented plans for addressing bullying to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and to the U.S. Department of Education.

The 4-H Youth Development Program is the youth outreach program from the land-grant institutions' Cooperative Extension Services, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). 4-H serves as a model program for the practice of positive youth development. 4-H National Headquarters is housed within the Division of Youth and 4-H at USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Additional support for 4-H programming is provided through National 4-H Council. For more information email [4Hhq@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:4Hhq@nifa.usda.gov). R2017