

# Ocean County 4-H

4-H is America's largest youth development organization-empowering nearly six million young people with the skills to lead for a lifetime. 4-H is based on a positive youth development (PYD) approach, recognizing that all youth have interests, abilities, and strengths. Research shows that participation in high quality 4-H programs increases thriving in youth, and thriving youth achieve important developmental outcomes.

New Jersey 4-H is a part of the land-grant institutions, Rutgers University, specifically Rutgers Cooperative Extension. Extension offices are found in every NJ County!

<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/county/>

## What makes 4-H unique?

4-H makes learning fun! In 4-H, young people work with peers and adult volunteers to learn new skills, practice leadership, give back to their community, and make new friends. They learn about topics that interest them through hands-on activities. The 4-H slogan is for youth to 'learn by doing'.

## 4-H is delivered in two ways to Ocean County youth:

**Clubs** – Youth are invited to participate in a 4-H club that meets annually throughout the program year (September – August). Clubs meet monthly or seasonally. Clubs have approved adult volunteers who work with members to organize the club's schedule of events and meetings. There is no limit to the amount of clubs a member wants to participate in. Club members may also participate in S.T.E.P. opportunities.

**Short Term Exploratory Program (S.T.E.P.)** – Youth are invited to participate in S.T.E.P., in which they are not a part of a specific club, but rather participate in Ocean County 4-H through a series of short-term programs that are organized by county 4-H staff or approved adult volunteers. When these programs are available, they are held once a year or multiple times in a season. S.T.E.P. members may also join regular 4-H clubs.

In addition to participating in county-Level clubs and S.T.E.P., 4-H members also have the opportunity to participate in NJ State 4-H Level programs and National 4-H Level programs!

4-H at the County Level: <https://ocean.njaes.rutgers.edu/4h/>

4-H at the State Level: <https://nj4h.rutgers.edu>

4-H at the National Level: <https://4-h.org>

**We R 4-H** 



## 2026 –2027 Current Club Listing

| Project Area(s)                                     | Club Name                     | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Grade  | Time                                        | Location                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Archery                                             | Bow Benders                   | Learn about the different disciplines of shooting archery with emphasis on safety                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 4 – 13 | Various throughout program year             | Toms River                        |
| Arts & Crafts, Food & Nutrition Clothing & Textiles | Food, Fun, & Frills           | Create art, sew, cook, and more!                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 2 - 13 | Various throughout program year             | Toms River                        |
| Dog Behavior & Training                             | D.O.G.                        | Focus on canine care, training agility and obedience. Must have a dog to participate with.                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | 4 – 13 | 4 <sup>th</sup> Thurs./month                | Toms River                        |
| Environmental Stewardship & Outdoor Recreation      | Ecology                       | Explore the great outdoors while you learn to care and advocate for the environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 4 – 13 | Various throughout program year             | Barnegat                          |
| Equine Science                                      | Saddle Squad                  | Learn about the breeds, are, and management of horses through hands-on activities. In addition, join the equine study team as you prepare for annual NJ 4-H State Level equine competitions. Participation in this club requires you to have access to an equine (lessons, lease, or own). <b>Club on Hiatus</b> | 4 – 13 |                                             | Forked River                      |
| Gardening and Environmental Science                 | Junior Master Gardeners       | Youth will get a hands-on experience with a variety of gardens and environmental topics                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | K – 13 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wed./month                  | Toms River & Various Gardens      |
| Homeschool Arts & Crafts, Food & Nutrition          | Radiant Spirits Homeschoolers | For Youth who are homeschooled to meet new friends and participate in a variety of fun, educational, and hands-on activities                                                                                                                                                                                     | K – 13 | 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup> Fri/month | Toms River                        |
| Leadership & Community Service                      | Teen Council                  | Lead your own service project while building life skills and making connections with others.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 7 – 13 | 1 <sup>st</sup> Monday/month                | Toms River                        |
| Livestock – Goats, Pigs, Cows, etc.                 | Udder Chaos                   | Learn about livestock breeds, care, and showmanship. You do not need to own an animal to participate                                                                                                                                                                                                             | K – 13 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Thurs./month                | Toms River                        |
| Poultry & Waterfowl                                 | Fine Feathered Friends        | Learn about poultry breeds, care, and showmanship. You do not need to own an animal to participate                                                                                                                                                                                                               | K – 13 | 1 <sup>st</sup> Tues./month                 | Toms River                        |
| Rabbit, Cavy (Guinea Pigs), & Small Animals         | Critter Craze                 | Learn about animal breeds, care, and showmanship. It is recommended that you own, or plan to own, an animal to participate                                                                                                                                                                                       | K – 13 | 3 <sup>rd</sup> Fri./month                  | Toms River                        |
| Seeing eye Puppy Raising                            | Puppy Power                   | Take a puppy into your home for approximately 18 months. You will learn through this program how to care and train it. This prepares the puppy for formal training to becoming a guide dog. Visit <a href="http://www.seeingeye.org">www.seeingeye.org</a>                                                       | 4- 13  | Various throughout program year             | Various locations in Ocean County |
| Science, Technology, Engineering, & Math            | STEM Club                     | Participate in a variety of STEM based fun experiments and activities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | K - 13 | 1 <sup>st</sup> Wed./month                  | Toms River                        |
| Short Term Exploratory Program                      | S.T.E.P                       | You will have the option to pick and choose 4-H events you want to participate in throughout the year instead of joining a specific club.                                                                                                                                                                        | K - 12 | Various throughout program year             | Various Locations in Ocean County |
| STEM, Arts & Crafts, Food & Nutrition               | 4-H Lightning Bolts           | For Youth whose families are a part of Joint Base McGuire-Dix Lakehurst, this club explores a variety of science and arts activities.                                                                                                                                                                            | K – 13 | Various throughout the year                 | Joint Base-Lakehurst Youth Center |