RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
4-H Youth Development
New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station

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 shore-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	4th 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
Gardening and Environmental Science	Junior Master Gardeners	Youth will get a hands-on experience with a variety of gardens and environmental topics	K – 13	2nd 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	2nd & 4th 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	1st 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	3rd 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	1st 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	3rd Fri./month	Toms River
Ecology & Environmental	Commun-Ecology	School Based club focused on bringing ecological awareness to the community and promoting green practices with the students.	K-12	Monthly throughout program year	Ocean Academy Charter School
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 www.seeingeye.org	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. Full	K - 13	1st 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