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## FACT SHEET

# 4-H Professional, Research, Knowledge, and Competencies 2017

4-H is NIFA's flagship positive youth development and education program. The unique partnership with the Cooperative Extension System through land-grant universities and the National 4-H Council empowers young people to lead for a lifetime. 4-H professional staff provide more than six million young people each year with meaningful positive youth development experiences. An extensive body of knowledge informs each 4-H program, and the professionals who lead them. The 4-H Professional Research, Knowledge, and Competency (PRKC) framework offers 4-H professionals a scholarly guide for professional development.

### PRKC Framework 2017

*Growing Together* is the title of the 2017 4-H PRKC guide which provides a roadmap for the 4-H youth development workforce. The PRKC guide uses a four-level taxonomy including domains, topics, components, and competencies to help 4-H professionals in every aspect of their work, from program planning and evaluation, to volunteer development, diversity training, and organizational effectiveness. The document also offers guidance on essential subject matter necessary in youth development as well as competencies that describe the skills and behaviors people need to be effective youth development professionals. The full framework can be found at <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/4-h-positive-youth-development>.

### Review Process

The 4-H Professional Development Working Group assembled a group of 4-H professionals from across the system that included field level staff, state specialists, and state 4-H Program Leaders. This group conducted an extensive review and analysis to update the guide, last revised in 2004. Special thanks to co-chairs Nancy Hegland, University of Minnesota Extension, Center for Youth Development and Carrie Stark, University of Nevada-Reno 4-H, for shepherding this endeavor.

The PRKC covers multiple areas of focus for professional development:

- **Youth development:** utilizing the knowledge of the human growth and development process to create environments that help youth reach their full potential.
- **Youth program development:** planning, implementing, and evaluating programs that achieve youth development outcomes.
- **Volunteerism:** building and maintaining a volunteer program management system for the delivery of youth development programs.
- **Access, equity, and opportunity:** interacting effectively and equitably with individuals and building long-term relationships with diverse communities.
- **Partnerships:** engaging youth in community development and engaging the broader community in youth development.
- **Organizational systems:** using systems effectively to build capacity of the organization and its people to work with and on behalf of young people.

For more information, contact 4-H National Program Leader Doug Swanson, [dswanson@nifa.usda.gov](mailto:dswanson@nifa.usda.gov), 202-690-1227.