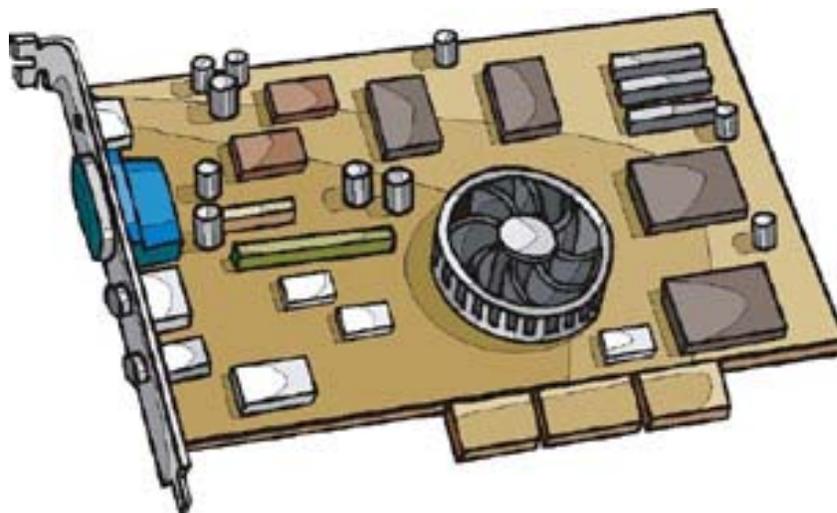


4-H YOUTH TECHNOLOGY LEADERSHIP

A National Vision with Recommendations for the 21st Century 4-H Youth Development Programs



VISION: All youth will have access to information technology through 4-H, opportunities to become skilled in use of information technology and its applications, and the ability to apply technical skills and knowledge as a tool to enhance their lives.

**A Report from the National 4-H Technology Design Team
March 2002**

4-H YOUTH TECHNOLOGY LEADERSHIP

A National Vision with Recommendations for the 21st Century 4-H Youth Development Programs

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INTRODUCTION

Technology has assumed a greater role in the lives of people, bringing the world closer together through economic integration, marketing, communications, and mass media. Telecommunications and information technology are forging a global community with global markets that have an enormous impact on how business is conducted and how lives are led.

Youth are at the forefront of these global developments. Their intellectual contributions, creativity, human relations, teamwork, cultural understanding, and ability to mobilize support will have a profound impact on our society and its future. Four-H is positioned to help youth and adults develop and enhance their skills, and to ensure that youth will bring their unique perspectives and skills to the table as they take a prominent role in designing and building their future.

Since 1995, 4-H members and staff have been formally discussing the role of information technology in the 4-H Youth Development program. Delegates to the National 4-H Conference were among the leaders in this discussion, making recommendations for implementing and integrating technology and information technology in the 4-H program. A number of these recommendations were implemented as demonstration projects at the national level or as local initiatives.

Now is the time to move beyond discussion and disjointed activities:

- *To think strategically and broadly about what technology in 4-H is and can be.*
- *To develop a coherent design and plan of action.*

CHARGE TO THE NATIONAL 4-H TECHNOLOGY DESIGN TEAM

- To consider the possibilities and opportunities that technology and information technology offer youth and how best to incorporate both into ongoing and specialized youth development programs.
- To develop a set of recommendations that address the issues of access and equity, development of technology skills needed for workforce preparation, use of technology as an information source in everyday life, and alignment with the intent and purpose of 4-H Youth Development program.
- To consider the changes brought about by the information technology revolution and how it can be utilized to strengthen and broaden participation in 4-H Youth Development programming.
- To broaden the concepts of membership, time, place, and delivery formats that technology can bring to the 4-H program.
- To align the roles of technology in 4-H with the National 4-H Strategic Plan.

THE NATIONAL 4-H TECHNOLOGY DESIGN TEAM

Youth and adults from across the country served on the Design Team, representing the skills and perspectives of county extension staff, volunteer leaders, teen leaders, state technology teams, state extension staff, National 4-H Youth Technology Leadership Team, CSREES staff, and CYFERnet.

WHY? FOR YOUTH

Information technology is increasingly becoming part of the lifestyle of children and youth as a learning, information gathering, and communication tool. Yet the opportunities to access technology and acquire technology skills through 4-H vary widely across programs and communities. It is time to establish a plan for 4-H information technology and access to technology throughout 4-H for information gathering and research, communication, demonstration of skills, new 4-H delivery formats and activities, and for building life skills needed for education, career, community, and personal growth.

MISSION AND VISION

All school-age children and youth will have:

- Access to information technology through their 4-H program;
- Opportunities to become skilled in the safe and effective use of information technology and its applications; and
- The ability to apply their technical skill and knowledge as a tool to enhance their education, career opportunities, contributions to community, and personal life.

Four-H is the largest public, non-formal educational Youth Development program available to school-aged children and youth nationwide. Four-H has a strong history of building on the interests of youth to develop the basic life skills that they need to be successful in their schools and future careers and to be effective citizens and family and community members.

Regardless of a youth's life choices, information technology will play a major role. Information technology fluency is essential for their success. Four-H and Cooperative Extension have a responsibility to educate communities on the role of information technology, including its safe and effective use. Four-H and Cooperative Extension have the opportunity to increase collaboration with other organizations in providing technology access and opportunities.

The recommendations are based on the deliberations of the Design Team and include use of the National 4-H Strategic Plan: *The Power of Youth in a Changing World*.

THE POWER OF YOUTH

Technology in the 21st Century is an integral part of our society. Both our professional and personal lives are affected by informational, computer and other technologies, requiring a broad array of technological skills. To succeed in life, youth need to be proficient in the use of technology. Youth can achieve additional goals when they are proficient in technology: life skill development, partnerships with adults, and being part of the decision-making process. Four-H needs systems that empower youth to learn, use, and teach technology. Youth will lead the way in increasing the use of information technology in the 4-H Program.

Goal 1: Four-H youth are active leaders in their communities, guiding the way to integration of technology in all areas of life.

1. Encourage and support information technology proficient 4-H youth to apply for community boards, school committees, and other opportunities to provide technology leadership and service in their community.
2. Strengthen 4-H technology teams' abilities to identify technology needs and strengths in their communities.
3. Empower youth to build resources, create partnerships, plan programs, and lead activities for peers and adults that build technology awareness and literacy.
4. Provide youth opportunities to use technology in professional and community settings for service, learning, and teaching roles.

Goal 2: Four-H youth act as catalysts in identifying emerging technologies and integrating these technologies into new and existing 4-H programs.

1. Appoint information technology proficient 4-H youth to 4-H advisory groups, design teams, and management committees.
2. Strengthen 4-H technology teams' abilities to assess the status of technology integration in 4-H.
3. Support 4-H technology teams at local, county, and state levels to advance the integration of technology into the 4-H youth development program.
4. Sponsor technology-savvy youth efforts to initiate and maintain local and regional 4-H technology programs.
5. Emphasize access to cutting edge and innovative uses of technology to provide experiences that enable youth to identify new uses and applications of technology.

*"4-H was started as a way to bring innovation to farming. Working with the kids, based on the four H's : Health, Hands, Heart, Head. And it's happening again, bringing those technologies to the communities. And I see that these kids play a real leadership role."
Max Gail, Actor*



ACCESS, EQUITY, AND OPPORTUNITY

Access to computers and information technology varies across communities, in schools and families, creating an inequity of opportunity to develop valuable workplace and personal skills and knowledge. As a public educational program, 4-H has a responsibility to provide opportunities that help to “level the playing field.” Four-H and Cooperative Extension must act aggressively to bridge the digital divide, to educate communities on the role of information technology and its safe and effective use, and to collaborate with other organizations in providing access and opportunities.

Goal 3: All 4-H participants have access to technology facilities and resources.

1. Develop partnerships with schools, industry, local governments, and organizations to make computer and technology learning centers accessible in local communities at times youth need access, especially non-school hours.
2. Provide technology equipment for offsite use by 4-H staff, volunteers, and youth.
3. Develop self-contained, mobile computer labs with Internet access for use in rural and underserved areas.
4. Develop partnerships with university academic departments, government agencies, community organizations, and businesses to provide 4-H staff and member access to dynamic content, research, technical expertise, and other resources.
5. Assist youth in the development of programs to create public access and other needed community technology services that youth can setup, administer, and use.

“In order to put the future at our fingertips, community learning centers must connect to the Internet, train all Americans to use technology effectively, and expand access to multimedia computers and quality educational content.”

“As a former member of 4-H who benefited greatly from his experiences in this fine organization, I look forward to following your progress as you ‘Lead the Way Across the Digital Divide.’”

Al Gore, Vice President of the United States

Goal 4: Four-H uses technology to increase involvement and usability by diverse groups.

1. Incorporate information technology to adapt or develop programs to remove barriers of transportation, distance, geography, time, language, health, safety, or other conditions that prevent or limit youth participation in 4-H.
2. Work with and encourage individuals and groups with special needs and abilities to increase their knowledge and awareness of technology.
3. Expand 4-H cultural, multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and international programming and interaction with diverse communities through the use of technology.

“4-H will invest in youth and their future by providing access and opportunity to all communities.” *The Power of Youth in a Changing World*

Goal 5: Four-H youth and adults work in collaboration to increase technology literacy in their communities, counties, and states.

1. Develop community service opportunities where youth and adults can work together within the local community to promote technological understanding.
2. Design programs that engage the power of youth-to-youth and youth-to-adult instruction by utilizing youth in a teaching capacity and other professional roles to meet technology needs and increase technology literacy in their community.

"4-H will become technologically savvy so that 4-H youth and adults will thrive in a technology based society." *The Power of Youth in a Changing World*

AN EXTRAORDINARY PLACE TO LEARN

The 4-H model of experiential learning is as valid today as ever. To realize the potential of 4-H in the 21st century, the program must adjust its educational delivery and curriculum models to take better advantage of the opportunities offered by modern technology. Four-H has the responsibility to ensure that all 4-H participants receive current life and career skills training, including access to and use of the latest technology tools. Through up-to-date facilities, tools, and programs, 4-H will continue to be an extraordinary place to learn.

Goal 6: The 4-H educational program is a model for up-to-date curriculum reflecting both integration of technology and experiential learning principles.

1. Develop technology curricula and programs that focus on the application and use of current technologies while adhering to the fundamental principles of 4-H experiential learning.
2. Develop curricula for traditional and new subjects that integrate technology tools, support a variety of learning styles, and use innovative delivery methods.
3. Update the 4-H curriculum model to require effective integration of technology components in all new 4-H curricula.
4. Connect youth with common interests through online forums, virtual communities, and ongoing virtual 4-H programs.
5. Include automatic 4-H member record keeping and reporting in interactive curricula.

"4-H will use new technologies to change learning opportunities that go beyond boundaries of geography, time, expertise and leadership."

Goal 7: Four-H establishes minimum technology competencies that all participants can achieve through their involvement in 4-H.

1. Establish a set of technology skills and competencies to be met through participation in the 4-H program, based on educational standards, professional organizations, and industrial expectations.
2. Ensure that the technology competencies developed through 4-H include educating youth in three components of information technologies: learning specific skills, understanding concepts, and learning how to continue learning.
3. Review 4-H curriculum to determine that 4-H technology standards and competencies are addressed, and adapt or add curriculum and program components where standards are not addressed.

Goal 8: Four-H promotes personal growth, emphasizing the development of good judgment and understanding in the use of technology.

1. Create programs to increase communication, information management, organizational skills, and a sense of responsibility and maturity in the use of technology, information, and telecommunications.
2. Emphasize the safe and responsible use of technology for the protection and privacy of youth, their families, and the public.
3. Develop a model whereby 4-H youth mentor new members in the use of appropriate technologies and practices.
4. Develop national guidelines and procedures on the use of personal identification information (names, photographs, or configuration of identification) that is placed in any 4-H material, regardless of media.
5. Educate staff, volunteers, and youth about copyright laws and intellectual property issues.
6. Develop national guidelines and procedures on the use of the 4-H name and emblem on webpages and other media, including nondiscrimination and non-endorsement statements.

“Technology is not a youth or community development tool in itself, it must be connected to purposeful activities where community and youth come first and the technology application comes second... we found that technology use must be carefully matched with a predefined need, interest or acknowledged goal...”
Integrating Technology Into Youth and Community Development

EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE, INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Empowering youth with technology brings innovation to the 4-H program. As technology becomes infused more and more into our daily lives, it is increasingly important to provide access to innovative technology professionals, mentors, and educators who expand the horizons of youth beyond the local community. Technology delivers opportunities that provide a new era of innovation to the 4-H program.

Goal 9: Four-H provides opportunities to access innovative technologies, up-to-date resources, useful applications, and exceptional people and their practices.

1. Form strategic partnerships with technology leaders of professional organizations, government, and businesses for financial and equipment resources.
2. Develop relationships with professional organizations, business, industry, academia, and non-profit organizations to act as mentors and expand and enhance the learning opportunities available to 4-H youth involved in technology programs, especially career development and the application of information technology in any profession.

Extension and 4-H will invest in its people by providing exceptional learning opportunities." *Power of Youth in a Changing World*

Goal 10: Four-H models the effective and innovative use and application of information technologies to facilitate its adoption in their programs and communities.

1. Effectively demonstrate how technology can enhance different 4-H projects.
2. Model the use of technology in everyday life.
3. Volunteer ideas about alternative uses of a community's existing technologies.
4. Design competitions that celebrate technology innovation.
5. Adopt electronic mail lists, instant messaging, and other collaboration and communications tools to support 4-H youth learning, networking, and program management.
6. Adapt membership and participation rules to encourage technology-based and technology-supplemented program delivery methods.

National 4-H Technology Conferences:
2000 - "Leading the Way Across the Digital Divide"
2002 - "People & Technology: Connecting at the Speed of Youth"

INNOVATION & PRACTICE

USDA/Army Youth Development Project
Teens Teaching Internet Skills
National 4-H Cyber Seniors/Cyber Teens
Florida's Bug Club

Best Buy/4-H Partnership
Power-up Coalition
CYFAR Connectivity Project
4-H Cybercamp

Effective Organizational Systems

As society and the skills required to flourish in our technology-infused environment have changed, so must the Cooperative Extension Service change to maintain and support the 4-H Program as an innovative learning opportunity and positive community youth development organization. While technology has prompted many of these changes in society, these changes also provide more efficient, creative, and collaborative ways of working to support the 4-H program. Bold, innovative resource development initiatives are critical to technology development in curricula, outreach, and other components of a quality youth development program. Through better implementation of technology, 4-H can expand into a new dimension, reaching new audiences, providing new experiences, and developing essential life skills for our youth.

“Yet while the 4-H mission endures, new approaches to achieve the mission require new ways of thinking and working.” *The Power of Youth in a Changing World*

Goal 11: Four-H staff, volunteers, and youth are encouraged to learn about new technologies and integrate them into ongoing programs.

1. Require the demonstration of information technology skills and leadership in 4-H position descriptions, performance reviews, and career advancement opportunities.
2. Provide staff development opportunities for CES staff, including volunteers to learn appropriate uses of technology in the management and delivery of 4-H youth development programs.
3. Develop professional development training teams that partner youth development and education specialists with innovative technology specialists.
4. Implement a system that trains and supports information technology proficient youth as they transition to become volunteer leaders.
5. Provide the range of computers and technology equipment and software needed to implement the 4-H youth development program, which includes innovative technology programming as well as technology integrated throughout all programs.
6. Provide opportunities for 4-H to develop grant writing and other entrepreneurial skills needed to acquire the resources to build and maintain a strong technology presence in 4-H.

“We’re networking the United States.” Angie Groh, Iowa 4-H'er and member of the National 4-H Youth Technology Leadership Team



Goal 12: Four-H materials effectively use technology for communication and learning.

1. Use the telecommunications and distance education expertise of Extension to incorporate the effective use of information technology in 4-H materials, programs, and other curricula as a medium to communicate, teach, and learn.
2. Review new technologies to analyze their practicality, staying power, and potential in 4-H programming.
3. Use technology to ensure the quick and useful translation, dissemination, and transformation of research into application.
4. Maintain a current review of the research literature as it applies to the use of information technology in education and youth development to assist 4-H in program development, curriculum development, evaluation, and implementation.
5. Develop guidelines that support and reward the effective use of Internet resources and software in 4-H youth development programming.
6. Instruct 4-H staff and members in the use of online and web-based “virtual 4-H programs.”
7. Develop self-contained educational kits that include curriculum, activities, materials, and technology tools as portable, hands-on learning modules.

“It can be very important to use the Internet for research in funding opportunities, connecting with job opportunities and lobbying or looking with others.” *Integrating Technology into Youth and Community Development*

Goal 13: Four-H curricula are easily and readily available to all users.

1. Maintain a centralized web portal to direct users to 4-H program information and resources.
2. Develop an online database of 4-H programs, curricula, and community service activities that can be searched by age appropriateness, topic, format, other educational indicators, and ordering information.
3. Make 4-H curricula and program resources available online when appropriate to the format and production.
4. Standardize placement of copyright and any use restrictions on 4-H resources, including contact information to obtain permission to copy or use.
5. Provide a comprehensive array of online volunteer and program support materials.

“We need to reach out more. Not just to the Latino community, but minorities that feel that they are stuck.” Beatriz Bonilla, Oregon 4-H, 2000 4-H NTC Delegate

Goal 14: All 4-H curricula are periodically evaluated for timeliness, relevance, usage, customer satisfaction, and effectiveness.

1. Develop an online 4-H curriculum and program user feedback and evaluation system that facilitates the analysis of user comments and assessments to update and revise 4-H resources.
2. Modify the curriculum development process to enable more timely development and revision of educational materials.
3. Develop a curriculum funding model that supports development and allows cost recovery for online curricula and facilitates continuous updates.
4. Assess the impact of integrating technology into 4-H programs on youth.

APPENDIX

The appendices listed are a selection of resources, programs and examples to facilitate adoption and implementation of the report recommendations.

POWER OF YOUTH:

Goal 1: Four-H youth are active leaders in their communities, guiding the way to integration of technology in all areas of life.

Goal 2: Four-H youth act as catalysts in identifying emerging technologies and integrating those technologies into new and existing 4-H programs.

Building Community: A Toolkit for Youth & Adults in Charting Assets and Creating Change, The Innovation Center

An inclusive, asset-based approach to creating positive change in the community, with detailed information and case studies to give users what they need to create youth/adult partnerships, identify community assets, create community vision and action plan, and mobilize local change. Fee.

<http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/product.asp>

Youth in Decision-Making: A Study on the Impacts of Youth on Adults and Organizations, The Innovation Center

Describes the findings from interviews with 15 organizations and communities around the country where young people are engaged in significant decision-making roles. Free.

<http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/product.asp>

At the Table: Making the case for Youth in Decision-Making, The Innovation Center

Research Highlights from a study on the impacts of youth on adults and organizations; a great tool to help advocates make the case for youth in decision-making. Free.

<http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/product.asp>

Youth Leadership for Development Initiative - Broadening the Parameters of Youth Development and Strengthening Civic Activism, The Innovation Center

Outlines the concept behind YLDI, an initiative that explores civic activism as a youth development strategy. 12-page brochure. Free.

<http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/yldipublications.htm>

Broadening the Bounds of Youth Development – Youth as Engaged Citizens, The Innovation Center.

Overview of youth development theory, the disconnect between youth development and civic engagement, reflects on how youth development is evolving in an atmosphere of enthusiasm toward youth engagement and participation. 22-page booklet. Free.

<http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/yldipublications.htm>

Bridging the Gap of Isolation (BTG), National 4-H Council.

Learn how to strengthen isolated communities by engaging youth.

Youth In Philanthropy, National 4-H Council.

Learn how youth and adults can fundraise together.

Charting Community Technology Connections, National 4-H Council.

Learn about your community's strengths, history, and create a vision for its future.

<http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/product.asp>

Public Adventures Citizenship Curriculum

<http://www.reeusda.gov/4h/curricul/ab19.htm>

Teens Teaching Internet Skills

<http://www.nnh.org/ttis.htm>

CyberSeniors/CyberTeens

<http://www.CyberSeniors.org/CyberTeens>

Land Grant Training Alliance

<http://www.lgta.org>

Master Internet Volunteer Programs (examples)

Iowa: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/navigator/homepage.html>

Minnesota: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/miv/>

Missouri: <http://outreach.missouri.edu/imaster/index.html>

Nebraska: <http://www.ianr.unl.edu/rural/navigator/index.htm>

North Dakota: <http://www.ext.nodak.edu/miv/miv.html>

Access, Equity, and Opportunity

Goal 3: All 4-H participants have access to technology facilities and resources.

Goal 4: Four-H uses technology to increase involvement and usability by diverse groups.

Goal 5: Four-H youth and adults work in collaboration to increase technology literacy in their communities, counties and states.

Community Technology Centers

<http://www.ctcnet.org/>

Americans Communicating Electronically

Check page for government sponsored programs that assist in providing access

<http://www.reeusda.gov/ecs/ace.htm>

The Big Purple Truck

<http://www.bigpurpletruck.org/>

Tech Corps

<http://www.ustc.org>

USDA/Army Youth Development Project Computer Lab Manual

<http://www.usda-army-ydp.org/clom.html>

Youth Development & Technology, National 4-H Council

Learn how computers and the Internet can help isolated communities.

Creating Youth/Adult Partnerships, The Innovation Center

Training curriculum. Youth/adult partnerships are a great concept, but putting them into practice in a positive and effective way requires training. Created by youth and adults, this curriculum outlines training activities for youth and adults separately and together and provides handouts and a list of further resources on youth/adult partnerships. Reviewed and recommended as part of the National 4-H Curriculum Collection.

<http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/product.asp>

Charting Community Technology Connections, National 4-H Council.

Learn about your community's strengths, history, and create a vision for its future.

<http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/product.asp>

Lessons from Powering Up, The Innovation Center

<http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/Area.asp?ID=7>

Teens Teaching Internet Skills

<http://www.nnh.org/ttis.htm>

CyberSeniors/CyberTeens

<http://www.CyberSeniors.org/CyberTeens>

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Minnesota: <http://www.extension.umn.edu/miv/>

Missouri: <http://outreach.missouri.edu/imaster/index.html>

Nebraska: <http://www.ianr.unl.edu/rural/navigator/index.htm>

North Dakota: <http://www.ext.nodak.edu/miv/miv.html>

An Extraordinary Place to Learn

Goal 6: The 4-H educational program is a model up-to-date curriculum reflecting both integration of technology and-experiential learning principles.

CyberCamp

<http://cybercamp.unl.edu>

Rockets Away

<http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/%7Erockets/>

Airplanes and Flight

<http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/%7Eflight/>

The Children's Garden

<http://4hgarden.msu.edu/tour/index.html>

Virtual Farm

<http://www.ext.vt.edu/resources/4h/virtualfarm/>

Wisconsin Online Dairy Judging

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/dairyouth/>

Arts Connected

Interactive on-line activities related to art and art design. Sponsored by the Minnesota Institute of the Arts.

<http://www.artsconnected.org/playground/index.shtml>

Journey North

Students from the US and Canada collaborate with researchers to track dozens of migratory species.

<http://www.learner.org/jnorth/>

Captain Olin's Odyssey

An online environmental journey for grades 5 – 8.

<http://www.kcpt.org/olin/>

The Exploratorium

Museum of science, art and human perception.

<http://www.exploratorium.edu/>

ESRI Community Atlas Project

Teachers and students across the United States define the nature of their community and are able to post text-and-map representations of their community.

<http://gis.esri.com/industries/k-12/commatlas/welcome.html>

The JASON Project

Uses technology throughout its science learning programs.

<http://www.jasonproject.org>

Youth Learning Net

<http://www.youthlearningnet.org>

Goal 7: Four-H has established minimum technology competencies that all participants can achieve through their involvement in 4-H.

Being Fluent with Information Technology

<http://Books.nap.edu/html/beingfluent/es.html>

Goal 8: Four-H promotes personal growth, emphasizing the development of good judgment and understanding in the use of technology.

How to Comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Rule

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/buspubs/coppa.htm>

Citizens in Cyberspace

<http://citizensincyberspace.umn.edu/>

Parents Guide to the Internet

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/parents/internet/>

EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE, INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

Goal 9: Four-H provides opportunities to access innovative technologies, up-to-date resources, applications, and exceptional people and their practices.

Goal 10: Four-H models the effective and innovative use and application of information technologies to facilitate its adoption in 4-H programs and their communities.

4-H Technology Teams

Various State 4-H Youth Development Programs have started 4-H Tech Teams to help integrate technology into projects and close the digital divide.

<http://www.4-h.org/tech/>

CYFERnet

The national network of Land Grant university faculty and county Extension educators working to support community-based educational programs for children, youth, parents and families.

<http://www.cyfernet.org/>

What You Need to Integrate Computers Into Non-Formal Education

<http://www.cyfernet.org/curricul/index.html>

Army/USDA Youth Development Project Computer Lab Manual

http://www.usda-army-ydp.org/resources_clom.html

EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS

Goal 11: Four-H staff, volunteers, and youth are encouraged to learn about new technologies and integrate them into ongoing programs.

Goal 12: Four-H materials effectively use technology for communication and learning.

Goal 13: Four-H curricula are easily and readily available to all users.

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Wisconsin Online Dairy Judging

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/dairyouth/>

Citizens in Cyberspace

<http://citizensincyberspace.umn.edu/>

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