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## What's cooking? City kids are stirring up some fun in 4-H

**Littleton, Colo.** --- Anyone who still believes 4-H is only about raising animals, needs to get with the times. Although 4-H, a youth development program for kids ages 5 - 18, traditionally catered to rural communities, it has expanded its offerings to cater to the interests of all youth, urban and rural alike.

The goal of 4-H remains the same: providing young people with the skills they need to succeed in life; giving them confidence, compassion and connections with caring adults; and teaching them leadership, citizenship and teamwork. The 4-H slogan "Learn by Doing" illustrates the program's hands-on approach to learning and allows youth to see the results of their hard work.

Young people can explore their own interests through the variety of 4-H activities. If your child is interested in raising or tending to an animal, she could participate in horse, pig, chicken, goat, cattle or rabbit projects.

If your child still asks Santa for pony each year but it isn't likely he'll be fitting that into his sack of gifts, check out 4-H's horseless horse club (it's much cheaper than forking over the real thing, and it gives your child an opportunity to learn about the responsibilities of owning and caring for a horse prior to doing it).

Other more popular projects include dog obedience, food and nutrition and clothing design. Each project can be done in the comfort of your own home and it teaches youth the skills they will use throughout their lifetime.

Dog obedience helps youth develop stronger relationships and responsibilities with that four-legged family member, and food and nutrition teaches youth about the importance of healthy eating and enables them to learn to cook (this may make your life a little easier too).

One key component of 4-H is parent involvement. "If you are looking for a babysitting service, 4-H is not the program for your family," said Shaylen Florez, 4-H Program Coordinator. "4-H strongly encourages parent involvement and research has shown that the family unit strengthens as a result of parents participating alongside their children."

By exercising independence and leadership through 4-H opportunities, youth develop self-discipline and responsibility, learn to better understand themselves and become independent thinkers.

Enrollment begins Oct. 1. If you are interested in receiving more information, contact the Arapahoe County 4-H Office at 303-730-1920 or visit [www.arapahoeextension.org](http://www.arapahoeextension.org).

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To download photos click on the following link: <ftp://www.co.arapahoe.co.us/Pub/CM/4-H%20ftp/>

Captions: Show&Tell Horse kids: 4-H is fun and educational. These siblings team up to learn the parts of a horse.

Steer&KatyIn or Aspen & Meghan: 4-H youth get up close and personal with farm animals.

Abigail Nanouw, 11, loves the cake-decorating projects.

Hope Shuford, 15, demonstrates the proper way to brush a horse.

Fly & Esther: Youth can learn dog obedience in 4-H.