

Needs Assessment Helps 4-H Alberta Plan for the Future

Thanks to all those who participated in the 4-H Alberta Needs Assessment! Your feedback helps us to understand the varying opinions of 4-H members, leaders, parents and the public. This Needs Assessment is one of the many sources of information we will use to help us make plans for the next 100 years of 4-H Alberta.

The needs assessment results were very encouraging. We heard loud and clear that to know 4-H is to love it! 4-H members, leaders and parents see the lifelong benefits that come from being involved in 4-H. Benefits such as leadership abilities, public speaking skills, teamwork, and self-confidence were all identified as an important part of the 4-H experience.

We were encouraged by the positive results. We also look to the Needs Assessment to help us, as an organization, to identify what we can improve upon to ensure 4-H continues to meet the needs of our members, leaders, parents and the communities they live in.

Here is a snapshot of some of the opportunities the needs assessment helped 4-H Alberta to identify:

1. There is an opportunity to improve awareness of 4-H in urban areas such as Calgary and Edmonton. 4-H has always been a rural based organization. We are deeply rooted in agriculture and we are proud of our country roots. However, what this means in that over the years, urban areas have become more and more disconnected from all that 4-H offers.
2. There is an opportunity to develop new strategies to address travel times for programs and events. 4-H offers a wide range of programs at the district, regional and provincial levels. Our stakeholders are very happy with what is offered and are interested in more opportunities closer to home. This is an on-going challenge for 4-H Alberta because, like all organizations, we have to be strategic with how we spend our human and financial resources.
3. Many comments provided indicate there is an opportunity to clarify member requirements and improve communication so everyone understands the requirements. 4-H member requirements are designed to ensure that members receive the various benefits that 4-H is designed to offer. The majority of those who responded to our survey suggested they were agreement with the member requirements.
4. There is an opportunity to develop innovative strategies for meeting the communication needs of each of our stakeholder groups. It's clear from the results that our members, leaders and parents have a variety of preferred methods for communication from 4-H Alberta and from their Club Leaders.

4-H Alberta is committed to listening to our stakeholders and to continuing with on-going improvements to our projects and programs to ensure that we continue to provide 4-Hers with the best possible 4-H experience. Thanks again to all who have helped by participating in the needs assessment and providing us with such valuable insight.