



Foundations of Positive Youth Development for Early Career 4-H Professionals

Academy Syllabus Fall 2023

Dates at a Glance

October 16th through December 7th (Learning Phase)

December, 2023 – April, 2024 (Application Phase)

About the PYD Academy

The 4-H PYD Academy equips 4-H and other youth development professionals with the essential knowledge and skills to plan, implement, and evaluate high-quality youth development programs that help youth thrive. The National 4-H PYD Academy is an output of the [4-H PLWG Chartered Committee on Positive Youth Development](#). 4-H PYD Academies are convened and supported by National 4-H Council in collaboration with Extension 4-H professionals from across the country. The purpose of the PYD Academy is to ensure that 4-H educators possess the knowledge and skills they need to plan, implement and evaluate high quality 4-H Positive Youth Development programs for youth.

Audience and Purpose

The 4-H Foundations of Positive Youth Development (PYD) for Early Career 4-H Professionals provides educators with a comprehensive introduction to the science and practice of positive youth development in 4-H. The academy is recommended for all 4-H professionals within the first three years of their 4-H career, including educators, specialists and 4-H program leaders. The academy takes place in two phases, and participants are encouraged to participate in both phases. Phase one is the learning portion of the academy, where participants develop a fundamental understanding of the science and practice of positive youth development, and the 4-H Thriving Model as the PYD theory guiding 4-H program development. Phase One contains 30 hours of virtual learning, taking place over five weeks. Each week participants engage in self-paced learning followed by a 2-hour live webinar session. In Phase Two participants take part in monthly learning circles designed to support putting learning into practice. Learning circles consist of eight academy participants who are guided by a mentor over 5 monthly session, providing support and guidance as academy learning is put into practice in 4-H programs.

Tuition

Full tuition for the academy is \$1,500.

Due to the generous support of academy sponsors, the actual cost per participant is \$500 for both phases, and \$375 for Phase One alone. Participants are encouraged to complete both phases for maximum benefit.

Certificate of Competency

- Participants who **complete all requirements for both phases** of the PYD Foundations Academy will receive a **Certificate of Initial Competency – PYD Foundations**, a prerequisite for more advanced PYD academy offerings in the future.

Learning Outcomes

Participants in this academy will explore the research base of positive youth development and the science of learning and development that inform everyday 4-H practice. Participants will learn how this research is reflected in the 4-H Thriving Model, and how the model is used to predict the way that 4-H has its positive impact on youth development. Participants will learn the critical elements of programs necessary to ensure a high quality and impactful PYD experience for youth. The final session will focus on application of PYD research to 4-H practice, with an emphasis on creating learning opportunities that are developmentally appropriate, inclusive, and intentional.

Specifically, participants in this academy will

- Learn the definition and research base of positive youth development
- Understand the history of the research base used in 4-H
- Understand how the 4-H Thriving Model reflects current research in PYD
- Understand the parts of the 4-H Thriving Model and how they work together to predict the impact of 4-H on positive youth development
- Learn the aspects of 4-H program settings that are critical to ensuring positive youth development
- Learn key practices for ensuring diversity and inclusion in 4-H programs so all youth have the opportunity to grow and thrive
- Understand the seven indicators of youth thriving and their relationships to life skills.
- Learn how intentional practice is the critical to help youth thrive in 4-H programs
- Apply what is learned to real-life 4-H practice
- Explore all that is learned in the context of unique program settings and audiences

Academy Schedule

Session One: October 16 to October 26

Introduction to Positive Youth Development and the 4-H Thriving Model (6 hours)

This session introduces participants to each other and to the research base of positive youth development (PYD) and how that research is reflected in the 4-H Thriving Model. Self-paced learning assignments include academy welcome and introduction activities, information on the history and development of the 4-H Thriving Model, and the historical application of social science in 4-H programs. During the live webinar session, hosted by two 4-H PYD Champions, participants will learn more about the 4-H Thriving model with time for questions about and reflections on the learning in Session One.

Session Schedule

- Virtual Learning Content Open October 16 (4 hours, self-paced)

Live Sessions: Tuesday October 24 **OR** Thursday October 26 (2 hours))

12:00pm to 2 pm ET (11am- 1pm Central; 10am – Noon Mountain; 9am to 11am Pacific)

Learning Objectives:

- Learn the historical research base of 4-H youth development
- Learn the science-base of the 4-H Thriving Model
- Learn the 4-H Thriving Model as the theory of PYD in 4-H
- Learn the four components of the 4-H Thriving Model
- Understand the connection between 4-H participation and positive youth development impact

Session Two: October 23 to November 2

Facilitating Youth Sparks (6 hours)

This session will introduce participants to the concept of youth sparks, which is one of the three critical aspects of a high-quality developmental context. Participants will learn what youth sparks are, how they are connected to youth thriving, and how adults can help youth find their sparks. During the live webinar session, hosted by two PYD champions, participants will experience the Sparks module of the PYD curriculum, a curriculum that they can then use to train volunteers and teen leaders on the concept of Sparks.

Session Schedule

- Virtual Learning Content Open October 23 (4 hours, self-paced)

- Live Sessions: Tuesday October 31 **OR** Thursday November 2 (2 hours)
 - 12:00pm to 2 pm ET (11am- 1pm Central; 10am – Noon Mountain; 9am to 11am Pacific)

Session Three: October 31 to November 9

Fostering Developmental Relationships (6 hours)

This session will provide an in-depth look into developmental relationships between youth and adults, learning why relationships are so important in youth development and why they are more than just “being there” for young people. During the live webinar session, hosted by two PYD champions, participants will experience the Developmental Relationship module of the PYD curriculum, a curriculum that they can then use to train volunteers and teen leaders on the concept of Developmental Relationships.

Session Schedule

- Virtual Learning Content Open October 31 (4 hours, self-paced)
- Live Sessions: Tuesday November 7 **OR** Thursday November 9 (2 hours)
 - 12:00pm to 2 pm ET (11am- 1pm Central; 10am – Noon Mountain; 9am to 11am Pacific)

Session Four: November 6 to November 16

Ensuring Program Quality and Belonging (6 hours)

This session will provide a framework that outlines the eight key indicators of a high-quality youth-development program, with a particular focus on youth belonging. Participants will understand the essential and positive role that a sense of belonging plays in youth development. During the live webinar session, hosted by two PYD champions, participants will experience the Program Quality module of the PYD curriculum, a curriculum that they can then use to train volunteers and teen leaders on the concept of program quality and youth belonging.

Session Schedule

- Virtual Learning Content Open November 6 (4 hours, self-paced)
- Live Sessions: Tuesday November 14 **OR** Thursday November 16 (2 hours)
 - 12:00pm to 2 pm ET (11am- 1pm Central; 10am – Noon Mountain; 9am to 11am Pacific)

Thanksgiving Break November 17 - 26

Session Five: November 27 to December 7

Driving the Thriving from Theory to Practice (6 hours)

In this session we begin to build the bridge from research to practice, integrating what has been learned so far into three important aspects of 4-H youth development practice: (1) developmentally appropriate practice through the lens of ages and stages of youth development; (2) diversity and culture awareness; and (3) youth engagement. During the live webinar session participants will apply what is learned to program decision making and celebrate the impact that 4-H has on helping youth thrive.

Session Schedule

- Virtual Learning Content Open November 27 (4 hours, self-paced)
- Live Sessions: Tuesday December 5 **OR** Thursday December 7 (2 hours)
 - 12:00pm to 2 pm ET (11am- 1pm Central; 10am – Noon Mountain; 9am to 11am Pacific)

Phase Two – Application Learning Circles

Learning the theory of positive youth development, and the research upon which it is built is only the beginning! For if what is learned is not turned into practice, then the outcomes we know are possible for youth won't happen. The application learning circles of the PYD Foundations Academy will provide support and guidance as participants take what they have learned and put it to work in the real world of 4-H Youth Development practice.

Application learning circles consist of small groups of approximately eight academy participants that meet for five monthly sessions (December to April) with a learning circle facilitator. Guided by the interests of participants, the learning circles will encourage the application of learning to specific aspects of 4-H programming. Participants will learn from and support each other as each works toward a specific application goal over the five month period.

The schedule for the 90 minute learning circles is listed below. There are three group times available each month. Because the learning circle is a small community that works together across sessions, participants must stay with the same learning circle group month to month. You will be offered the opportunity to select your preferred group time, but those cannot be guaranteed.

**All learning circles take place from 12:00pm to 1:30 pm ET on the dates below:
(11am- 12:30pm; Central; 10am – 11:30am Mountain; 9am to 10:30 am Pacific)**

	Group Time A	Group Time B	Group Time C
December	Tuesday December 12	Wednesday December 13	Thursday December 14
January	Tuesday January 16	Wednesday January 17	Thursday January 18
February	Tuesday February 13	Wednesday February 14	Thursday February 15
March	Tuesday March 5	Wednesday March 6	Thursday March 7
April	Tuesday April 2	Wednesday April 3	Thursday April 4