

**Title:** Developing Resiliency and Life Skills in Military Dependents

**Summary:** Through 4-H Project Achievement, youth learn valuable life skills such as organization, communication, and confidence. Through the selection, research, development and presentation of the illustrated talks 4-H'ers develop strong life skills. Georgia 4-H works in partnership with teachers, Volunteers, and Teen Leaders to facilitate and promote the participation of student's in Project Achievement and emphasize the importance of this opportunity.

**Situation:** Through 4-H Project Achievement, youth learn valuable life skills such as organization, communication, and confidence. Through the selection, research, development and presentation of the illustrated talks 4-H'ers develop strong life skills. Georgia 4-H works in partnership with teachers, Volunteers, and Teen Leaders to facilitate and promote the participation of student's in Project Achievement and emphasize the importance of this opportunity.

Communities in Georgia are impacted by military residents relocating to other locations where support networks, oftentimes other relatives, live. Communities face police officers, teachers, county extension agents and other civilian members of the community deploying when their reserve units are federalized and deployed. Individual families face greater stress with the lack of high quality childcare and youth programs in communities to build resiliency and support among military youth and families. When the Department of Defense examines installations for increased military missions (growth), it looks at quality of life around the installations. Strong, effective youth development programs and family support mechanisms can result in additional growth and missions relocating to the state as well as a vibrant and engaged civilian-military community designed to support military families through the deployment cycle. Cooperative Extension in Georgia has an appropriate structure to provide knowledge to military caring professionals, volunteers and families in fields related to youth development and family sciences.

**Response:** The Georgia 4-H program is well-situated to respond to the situation facing military connected youth. One of the base programming areas of the 4-H program in Georgia is Project Achievement. In 4-H Project Achievement, youth, based on their age and stage of development, identify a project area, construct a plan to learn more in that area, and share what they have learned with others. For middle school and high school participants, 4-H members create a portfolio to document their learning. This portfolio serves as an introduction to a cover letter and resume for applying for a job.

Because this is a base program, 4-H Project Achievement is available in all 159 counties in Georgia with dedicated staff members and volunteers able to assist military dependents whether they live on a military installation or live in a geographically dispersed area.

Through the 4-H Military Partnership, staff members are trained in working with military connected youth and assist in identifying them. Through a series of workshops at the county

level, young people are able to work on their projects. The amount of programming depends on the county.

Elementary school age students shared what they learned through a day-long experience where they completed against one another for recognition. Middle and high school students earned a weekend long experience at Rock Eagle 4-H Center.

**Impact:** In the 2018 4-H year, over 1,470 military-connected youth participate in the Georgia 4-H Project Achievement recognition process at county, district, or state levels. There were 385 youth that participate in district or state competitive events. Many more participated at the county or club level. Additional data were collected through a sample of over 20 counties with a total of 218 youth participating in the survey. These counties had 183 elementary age students and 35 middle and high school students participate in 4-H Project Achievement.

For the elementary age students:

75% correctly identified at least 2 of the 3 parts of a presentation (introduction, body, conclusion).  
98% correct identified at least 3 of the 6 things they can do to have a great presentation (make eye contact, practice your speech, use a loud and clear voice, research your topic, learn all you can, say thank you, and dress appropriately)

82% of students indicated they were more confident speaking in front of people as a result of Project Achievement

91% indicated they are better at preparing a presentation as a result of 4-H Project Achievement

93% indicated they learned more about their selected topic as a result of 4-H Project Achievement

84% indicated they were better at giving presentations because of 4-H Project Achievement

Among the middle school and high school students:

89% indicated they were better prepared for the workforce because of their participation in 4-H Project Achievement

57% increased their competence in best practices of public speaking because of 4-H Project Achievement

89% increased their confidence in public speaking because of 4-H Project Achievement

89% indicated that 4-H Project Achievement gave them an opportunity to value and practice service for others

63% indicated they felt connected to their community because of their participation.



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The University of Georgia 4-H program is the largest youth leadership organization in the state.  
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