
THE 4H *of Sweden*



WELCOME TO THE 4H *of Sweden*

4H IS AN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH ASSOCIATION with a large variety of activities, ranging from cultivation and animals to sports and drama. This enables most young people to find activities of their interests within the 4H. You are now holding the folder of 4H of Sweden, which focuses on activities in our country. Before presenting our vision and what 4H represents, here is some information on how our activities are run.

IN SWEDEN THERE ARE SEVERAL HUNDRED 4H clubs spread all through the country. Most activities are carried out in the local clubs. Some of them also have a club farm with cultivation and animals. 4H also organises activities on county and national levels. The main purpose of these stages of the organisation is to support the work of the local clubs. Club meetings are arranged by the club members. Weekly meetings of a couple of hours give the possibility of group activities. There is a long experience of 4H enterprise. Members learn how to run an enterprise of their own—how to develop a business idea (e.g. baking cookies for sale)—how to practically carry out the project and the book-keeping of costs and receipts. As a 4H member one can also take part in courses and go to camps in order to learn new things and get to know people from the rest of the organisation.



THE VISION OF THE 4H

THE VISION OF THE 4H is to enable all children and youth to develop into committed and responsible individuals with respect for the world around them. This vision will be obtained by discovering the rich values and multiplicity of people and nature, through an interplay between the two. Each species and each individual is an important part of the whole, one not being of greater value than anyone else.

THROUGH TRAINING and practising of democratic procedures of association work according to our first H, *Head*, a committed person has the courage to ask questions and take his own stand. He has the ability to go from idea to action, *Hand*, and is committed in the spare time activities of his friends as well as in his own.

A RESPONSIBLE PERSON is honest and acts not just for his own good. The interests of the group are more important. Each individual is respected regardless of sex and social or cultural background, in accordance with the third H, *Heart*. A person showing respect for the world around him understands the interplay between animals, nature and human beings and sees himself as a part of the whole. This interplay is of the utmost importance for the well-being of nature, animals and thus also humans, *Health*.



HEAD *knowledge*

HEAD IS THE FIRST OF THE FOUR H S and the symbol of knowledge. We want to promote the interest in an active life-long learning by interesting and inspiring ways of learning. Knowledge and understanding of the world around us is as highly valued as knowledge of nature and its resources. We also want to bring about knowledge of a democratic way of working. This is put into practise through the democratic work in the 4H clubs where each member takes part in decisions concerning his spare time.

THE INTEREST OF LEARNING. We hope to carry knowledge with us all through our lives. Active learning is of great importance and we focus on interesting ways of learning. As theoretical studies do not always lead to real learning we want our members to use their new knowledge in practise. Hence the motto "*Learning by doing*" (John Dewey). We get the theoretical knowledge at a club meeting by studying a cook-book or by listening to a leader or a hired instructor. Afterwards, when members bake a cake, shear a sheep or put out a camp fire that has spread, their knowledge will become lasting. Seeing the result of new knowledge will stimulate to further learning.



knowledge HEAD

UNDERSTANDING OF THE SURROUNDING world. We want to develop children's and young people's knowledge and understanding of the world around us. Knowledge of the role of animals and plants in nature is to be found at 4H club farms or by visiting farmers nearby. During walks in forests we look for traces and footprints of animals and learn the names of different trees and plants and what they are used for. We learn about historical and cultural monuments by arranging trips to other countries and regions or to communities in our vicinity. We invite people from other parts of the world, which is one way of promoting knowledge and understanding of different cultures. At such club meetings members prepare food, perform theatre plays or play games which are typical for that country or region.

KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT NATURE provides us with. Beside knowledge and understanding of nature we want our members to learn how to make the best use of what our surroundings provide. They learn how to use plants for food and protection against different types of weather, how to use animal meat for food and skin and wool for clothes. This way the knowledge of interaction in nature and our cultural heritage is enlarged.



HEAD *knowledge*

DEMOCRACY. We stress the importance and knowledge of a democratic way of working. It is one of our most important tasks in a society where political extremism and hostility towards foreigners is ever growing. Today it is perhaps also one of the most difficult tasks in a society where the interest for non-profit work is decreasing. A young 4H member learns democracy at work at an early stage since every member is involved in decisions taken in the club. He also has the chance of being on the club management board and sharing that responsibility.



respect, sympathy, empathy HEART

AN ENCYCLOPEDIA DEFINES HEART as "*capability of sympathy*" (among other things). This is exactly what the second H stands for. Sympathy with other people is an important part of one's life. Sympathy and respect for animals and nature is just as important.

THE GROUP AND SOLIDARITY. 4H helps to develop a member's self-esteem and ability within the group. When we learn to work together, sympathy, respect and empathy for one another are important ingredients. The development of this knowledge is based largely on social time together and solidarity. At frequent club meetings, camps and courses we learn co-operation and doing things together. Fun, games and joy play a natural part in making time together more enjoyable and interesting. When we meet age is of no importance—10, 14 or 40—we have fun together and respect each other as members of the group.

EVERYONE IS WELCOME. One of the basic values of 4H is that everyone can take part. Individuals are to be met in the same way regardless of nationality, social background or handicaps. In a society where hostility towards foreigners and difference of class grow more common this becomes a valuable attitude in a person's life.



HEART *respect, sympathy, empathy*

4H OF SWEDEN FIRMLY dissociates itself from organisations with racist or hostile attitudes to foreigners. Different types of international exchange programmes help to increase the understanding of other cultures. The IFYE exchange makes it possible for a 4H member to visit other 4H members all over the world.

RESPECT FOR THE WORLD AROUND US. Love and respect for the world in which we live is highly valued in 4H. Animals and nature are invaluable treasures. At 4H club farms young people get the chance to be around many animals. Love given to an animal is often returned many times over—often a strong experience having an effect on one's personal development. Being around animals is great fun and brings understanding and respect for those with whom we share the world. We try to take advantage of all the adventures that nature provides. 4H clubs often run activities in the woods. Feeding stations are built for wild animals and their "around-the year" life in the woods is studied. If we treat nature and all the species living there with our hearts we will increase the chances of a good environment in the future.



THE 4H MOTTO is "*Learning by doing*". 4H wants to make learning full of fun and to incite curiosity for finding more knowledge from the H of the head. The child wants to know how a kid is fed and what kind of feed it is given. The adult leaders might want to learn how to lead a discussion and how to convey a message.

IN 4H WE LEARN BY TRYING SOMETHING. Following a short instruction and demonstration one can take part in the activity. The leader who is often an older friend helps as moral support and adviser. The member is to think and perform himself and in this way develop his skill.

THE MEMBERS ACQUIRE KNOWLEDGE when doing things together and sharing each other's experience. This will spur them to try and act themselves. A strong solidarity creates a feeling of togetherness when you teach others and learn from them in an environment where the attempt and the will to manage is what counts, and not to be the best or the best-looking. The solidarity of this teaching-learning situation is the driving force and the essence of our skill. When you are accepted by the group in a serious manner you dare and are able to be on stage, perform and speak to an audience or take responsibility to solve a problem. Our goal is for the member to dare perform and by attempting to learn without feeling stupid or out of it. Together we find new and unknown areas to explore. This creates an interest in asking questions and a desire to find out more. Through the skill of the hand we want the member to be a curious and committed person in as well as out of our organisation. A 4H leader is seen when he dares be a leader, acting in a democratic manner.

HEALTH *a sound way of life*

H FOR HEALTH IMPLIES LIVING in a sound and natural way, i.e. keeping body and brain going with healthy food, sports and play and keeping outdoors in woods and fields. You keep your brain fit through an active social life and by taking part in different learning activities for all senses.

OUT IN NATURE we learn to treat it with the best care possible while our own health benefits from time spent outdoors. To ensure a sound and healthy nature for the future it is important to treat it respectfully. In the 4H organisation disposable materials are not used. We don't throw litter and we recycle (bio)degradable materials in composts instead of adding to the refuse dumps.

4H STRIVES TO REDUCE the consumption of tobacco since smoking is incompatible with a sound way of living. Alcohol and other drugs are never allowed at our activities. In addition to the health factor. One benefits more from both social and learning experiences without drugs.

YOU KEEP YOUR BODY FIT by different kinds of physical exercise: playing volleyball or floor ball as well as going for walks in the woods to enjoy nature, experiencing its different stages through the year. Outdoor life is just as good and healthy as exercising in a gym or playing football. Taking part is more important than being the best one on the team.

COOKING IS ALSO INCLUDED in the H of health. We'd rather prepare "plain food" than eat ready-cooked fast food. Learning to cook is useful knowledge and extra fun together with your club member friends. We prefer using raw materials which have been grown by environmental friendly methods. Maybe we have found them at one of our own 4H club farms.

- ❖ The motto of 4H is *"Learning by doing"*.
- ❖ 4H is a religiously and politically independent organisation.
- ❖ 4H exists in 80 some countries all around the world.
- ❖ 4H was started in the USA in 1902.
- ❖ 4H in Sweden was started by JUF (Jordbrukare-Ungdomens Förbund/Agriculturer-Youth Association) in the 1920s and was first called *"Young cultivators"*. The target group was young people in the rural parts of the country.
- ❖ 4H got its independent status in 1979 when JUF and FSU (Förbundet Skog och Ungdom/the Union of Forest and Youth) began a co-operation. Today the 4H of Sweden is open for youth in the whole society and have activities in fields like cultivation and animals, forestry and nature, household and culture, games and play.



4H of Sweden

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