

Keeping Youth Engaged This Summer

By Christi Nicholls, Juab County 4-H Program Coordinator

As school lets out and the long days of summer begin, many parents are left wondering: How do I keep my kids engaged in meaningful ways until fall? It's a great question—and one that matters more than we might realize.

Summer offers more than just a break from homework and early mornings. It's a time when young people can explore new interests, build social skills, and develop confidence—if they're given the right opportunities. The key is keeping them engaged in positive, productive experiences that offer both fun and growth.

Idle time can lead to boredom and even risky behavior, but structured, enriching activities provide a strong foundation for learning and development. Programs like 4-H, Summer in the Park, youth camps, and service projects help young people stay active physically, mentally, and socially. They also promote responsibility, teamwork, and leadership—skills that benefit kids far beyond the summer months.

Here are a few simple ways families can keep youth engaged this summer:

- Explore Local Programs: Take advantage of local offerings like library reading challenges, park events, or 4-H clubs. These are often low-cost or free and provide valuable learning opportunities.
- Encourage Service Projects: Helping others builds empathy and gives youth a sense of purpose. Look for chances to volunteer as a family or support your child in creating their own service idea.
- Try Something New: Summer is a great time to explore new hobbies—gardening, cooking, crafting, coding, or even a beginner's class in something completely different.
- Unplug and Play: Encourage kids to spend time outdoors, away from screens. Nature walks, bike rides, and backyard games all provide important physical activity and creative play.

Remember, it's not about filling every hour of the day. It's about helping youth use their time in ways that inspire curiosity, build skills, and create lasting memories.

At Juab County 4-H, we believe that youth are not just the leaders of tomorrow—they're leaders right now. This summer, let's give them the space, support, and encouragement they need to grow into their best selves.

For more ideas or to get involved in local youth programs, reach out to our office. Let's make this summer one to remember!