

The Power of Positive Youth Development

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In today's fast-paced and often challenging world, one of the most powerful investments we can make is in our youth. Not just in their education or future careers—but in their character, confidence, and capacity to thrive. This is the essence of **Positive Youth Development (PYD)**: an intentional, strengths-based approach that recognizes young people as assets to be nurtured, not problems to be fixed.

PYD is more than a philosophy; it's a practical framework that helps youth grow into competent, caring, and contributing adults. At its core are the "5 Cs": **Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, and Caring**. When these qualities are nurtured, a sixth C—**Contribution**—naturally follows. This means young people don't just succeed in their own lives; they give back to their families, schools, and communities.

Programs that implement PYD—like 4-H, are not only teaching practical skills like public speaking, problem-solving, and teamwork, but are also fostering resilience and leadership. These are the qualities that empower youth to face life's hurdles with courage and determination.

We've seen firsthand in Juab County how transformational this approach can be. When young people are given opportunities to lead, make decisions, and be heard, they rise to the occasion. They build stronger relationships with adults and peers. They take ownership of their goals. They begin to see themselves as capable leaders—not just in the future, but right now.

Positive Youth Development also benefits the wider community. It reduces risky behaviors, increases school engagement, and fosters a generation of young people who care about something greater than themselves. In a time when division and uncertainty are common headlines, investing in youth development is a hopeful, unifying solution.

Let's continue to support environments where every young person feels safe, valued, and challenged to grow. The power of PYD lies not just in what youth become, but in what they help us all become—a stronger, more connected community.