

## 4-H AFTER SCHOOL: RALPH CADWALLADER MIDDLE SCHOOL

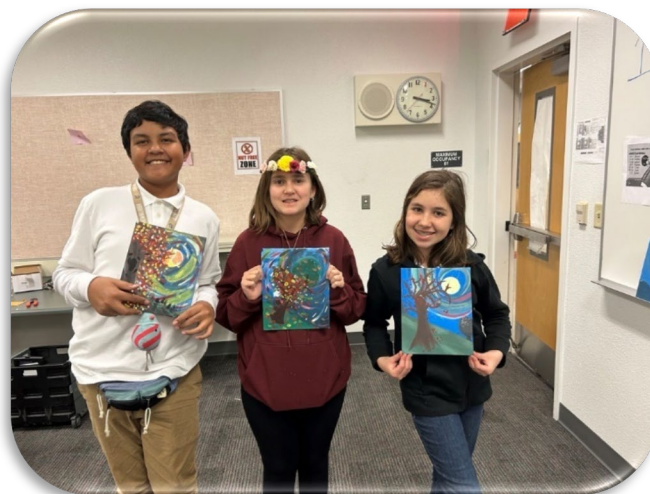


**EXTENSION**  
College of Agriculture,  
Biotechnology & Natural Resources



4-H Youth  
Development

### 4-H After School Report and Student Outcomes at Ralph Cadwallader Middle School



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## 4-H AFTER SCHOOL: RALPH CADWALLADER MIDDLE SCHOOL

### Abstract

The **4-H After School program** by the **University of Nevada, Reno Extension 4-H Youth Development** in Clark County, offers students at Ralph Cadwallader Middle School an inclusive developmental experience. Through the experiential learning model, the program promotes mastery, generosity, friendship, and positive adult mentorship (USDA, 2016). It effectively replaces unsupervised time with hands-on, educational, and recreational activities. UNR Extension forms partnerships with in-school professionals, which deliver the 4-H programming to students. Tailored to student needs and teacher expertise, the after school projects engage and inspire. The UNR Extension supports the program by hiring educators, procuring supplies, and appointing a coordinator for each site, while schools contribute space and liaisons. Together, they recruit and enroll students, and ensuring a nurturing environment. Launched in **August 2023**, the program enriched the school year with five sessions of diverse activities, concluding in **May 2024**. Sessions were held **Monday through Friday**, after school, for an hour, marking a year of impactful learning and growth.

### Student Demographics

Ralph Cadwallader Middle School is in Las Vegas, Nevada—a city with a population of **641,902 residents** (*U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts*, 2023). The student demographics for the 2023-2024 school year at Ralph Cadwallader Middle School are as follows: **46.35% White, 26% Hispanic, 11.96% Black, 10.67% of two or more races, 3.08% Asian, 1.58% Pacific Islander, and 0.36% American Indian/Alaskan Native** (*Nevada Accountability Portal*, 2023). In the 2022-2023 academic year, the school had **1,396 students**, and this number has remained consistent into the following year, showcasing the school's stable and robust educational environment (*Nevada*

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*Accountability Portal, 2023*). In the 4-H Afterschool program, **186 students** enrolled within the 2023-2024 school year. The student demographics for the 2023-2024 4-H Afterschool at Ralph Cadwallader Middle School are as follows: **62.37% White (Caucasian), 6.45% Asian, 9.14% Multi-Racial, 9.68% Black or African American, 2.15% American Indian or Alaskan Native, 1.08% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 9.14% Prefer Not to Answer.**

#### **Attendance**

The 4-H After School program at Ralph Cadwallader Middle School was conducted over **121 days**, starting concluding **August 28, 2023**, and concluded on **May 13, 2024**. The program was structured into five distinct sessions, with each session lasting around six weeks. It was an inclusive program, available to all **1,402 students** enrolled at Ralph Cadwallader Middle School for the 2023-2024 academic year, offering a broad range of activities to enrich their hands-on learning experience. During the academic year, the 4-H Afterschool program saw a total of **186 students** actively participating in various sessions. The attendance for each session was as follows:

- **Session 1:** 135 participants
- **Session 2:** 97 participants
- **Session 3:** 94 participants
- **Session 4:** 101 participants
- **Session 5:** 70 participants

It is evident that there was a decline in participation during Session 5, which can be attributed to the reduced number of clubs available. Despite this, Sessions 2, 3, and 4 maintained a consistent

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level of student attendance, demonstrating the program's sustained engagement and appeal among the students.

##### **Session One**

The first session began on **August 28, 2023**, and concluded on **October 5, 2023**, spanning **22 days** of enriching activities from Monday to Thursday. During this period, nine clubs were actively engaged: 4-H Creative Writing/Book Club, Desert Tortoise Habitat, Latch Hook Kits, Intro to Perler Fuse Beads, Coding, Yoga/Mental Wellness, Theatre Improv, Fun with Art, and Intro to Gardening. The clubs were expertly facilitated by Ralph Cadwallader Middle School's own educators: Scott (4-H Creative Writing/Book Club), Wagley (Desert Tortoise Habitat), Espeleta (Latch Hook Kits and Intro to Gardening), Crumm (Intro to Perler Fuse Beads), ASA (Coding), Scoville (Yoga/Mental Wellness and Theatre Improv), Melaerts (Fun with Art), and Overstreet (Intro to Gardening), fostering a collaborative and creative learning environment.

In the first session of the 4-H After School program, we were pleased to welcome **135 new 4-H members**. The **Desert Tortoise Club** emerged as the most popular, boasting the highest attendance, while the **Creative Writing/Book Club** experienced the lowest turnout.

##### **Session Two**

The second session began on **October 16, 2023**, and concluded on **November 21, 2023**, spanning a total of **22 days**. The activities were scheduled from Monday through Thursday. Throughout this period, participants had the opportunity to engage in ten diverse clubs: Desert Tortoise, Gardening, Outdoor Leadership Volleyball, Latch Hooks, Coding, Artfully Identifying Ourselves, Creative Writing/Book Club, Perler Beads, Yoga, and Theatre Improv. The Outdoor

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Leadership Volleyball club, led by Cali, and the Artfully Identifying Ourselves club, led by Mei Mei, were both UNR Extension 4-H staff. The remaining clubs were adeptly led by the educators at Ralph Cadwallader Middle School. This session, the program was enhanced with the addition of two new clubs: Outdoor Leadership Volleyball and Artfully Identifying Ourselves, broadening the spectrum of activities offered.

In the second session of the 4-H After School program, we were pleased to welcome **15 new students**, alongside **82 returning participants** from the previous session. The **Desert Tortoise Club** emerged as the most popular, boasting the highest attendance, while the **Gardening Club** experienced the lowest turnout.

#### Session Three

Session three of the 4-H After School program began on **December 4, 2023**, and concluded on **January 25, 2024**, spanning a total of **21 days**. The programming was consistently held from Monday through Thursday. During this session, eleven clubs were active: Art, Creative Writing, Desert Tortoise Habitat, Gardening, Ozobots, Perler Beads, Yoga, Latch Hook, Theatre Improv, Zumba, and the 4-H Leadership Council. All clubs were led by the staff of Ralph Cadwallader Middle School or UNR Extension Staff. New additions to this session included the Ozobots, 4-H Leadership Council, Zumba, and Art clubs, further expanding the program's diverse offerings.

In the third session of the 4-H After School program, we were pleased to welcome **21 new students**, alongside **73 returning participants** from the previous session. **Theatre Improv** emerged as the most popular, boasting the highest attendance, while **Zumba** experienced the lowest turnout.

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### Session Four

Session four of the 4-H After School program began on **February 5, 2024**, and concluded on **March 22, 2024**, spanning a total of **29 days**. The programming was consistently held from Monday through Friday. Friday was added to this session. During this session, eleven clubs were active: Basics of Drawing, Desert Tortoise Habitat, Gardening, Intro to Clay, Perler Beads, Yoga, Latch Hook, Theatre Improv, 4-H Archery, Coding, Advance Art, and the 4-H Leadership Council. All clubs were led by the staff of Ralph Cadwallader Middle School or UNR Extension Staff. New additions to this session included the Coding, Advance Art, Intro to Clay, and Basics of Drawing, further expanding the program's diverse offerings.

In the fourth session of the 4-H After School program, we were pleased to welcome **10 new students**, alongside **91 returning participants** from the previous session. The **Theatre Improv** emerged as the most popular, boasting the highest attendance, while **Advance Art** experienced the lowest turnout.

### Session Five

Session five of the 4-H After School program began on **April 1, 2024**, and concluded on **May 13, 2024**, spanning a total of **27 days**. The programming was consistently held from Monday through Friday. During this session, eleven clubs were active: Intro to Sewing, 4-H Robotics 101, Desert Tortoise Habitat, Gardening, Perler Beads, Yoga, Latch Hook, Theatre Improv, 4-H Archery, Coding, Advance Art, and the 4-H Leadership Council. All clubs were led by the staff of Ralph Cadwallader Middle School or UNR Extension Staff. New additions to this session included the Intro to Sewing and 4-H Robotics 101, further expanding the program's diverse offerings.

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In the fifth session of the 4-H After School program, we were pleased to welcome **6 new students**, alongside **64 returning participants** from the previous session. The **Theatre Improv** emerged as the most popular, boasting the highest attendance, while **Advance Art** experienced the lowest turnout.

#### Retention

Participants in the 4-H After School program must complete a registration form. The site coordinator and instructors at the site work together to assist students and families in completing registration for 4-H After School. At the end of the school year, 186 students had attended the 4-H After School program for at least one day. All 186 students completed full registration with 4-H.

As displayed in Table 1, our 4-H After School program saw the highest influx of new students in sessions one and three. Across all five sessions, we observed a consistent number of returning students. However, there was a noticeable decrease in session five, which can be attributed to the end of certain clubs. Interestingly, we noticed a dip in retention from session one to session two. This could potentially be due to limited space or the termination of a particular club that was popular among the students.

#### Evaluation Outcomes

Participating 4-H students are administered a presurvey on the first day they attend, and again at the conclusion of the school year. The survey measures positive youth development outcomes according to the 4-H Thriving Model (Arnold, 2018), such as a positive academic attitude, social competence, personal standards, connection with others, personal responsibility and contribution to others. The questions on the survey also assess social, emotional and cognitive learning, including growth mindset, openness to challenge and discovery, hopeful purpose,

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prosocial orientation, transcendent awareness, positive emotions and setting goals (Arnold, 2018). Of all the students who participated in 4-H After School at Ralph Cadwallader Middle School, 108 students completed the presurvey, and 70 students completed the postsurvey. In total, 61 students completed both the presurvey and the postsurvey.

#### **Greatest Student Outcomes**

The greatest student outcomes from the pre- and post-surveys given in 4-H After School regarded practicing to achieve goals and emotional well-being. Out of the 29 questions on the survey, the four survey items with the greatest growth are highlighted below.

##### ***I talk about my feelings***

In Figure 1, survey results are shown referencing youth talking about their feelings. The significant increase in the number of youths who feel comfortable talking about their feelings (from 30.3% to 58%) indicates that the 4-H Afterschool has effectively created a supportive environment. This improvement suggests that youth are becoming more open and communicative about their emotions, which is important for their personal development.

##### ***If I set goals, I act to reach those goals.***

In Figure 2, survey results are shown referencing reaching goals. The increase in the number of youths who actively pursue their goals (from 54% to 71%) demonstrates the program's success in creating a goal-oriented mindset. This shift reflects the effectiveness of 4-H activities in teaching youth the importance of setting and achieving goals.

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##### ***I make step-by-step plans to reach my goals.***

In Figure 3, survey results are shown referencing youth making step-by-step plans to reach their goals. The increase in youth who make step-by-step plans (from 45.5% to 67%) highlights the program's impact on teaching practical planning skills. This improvement suggests that 4-H is effectively equipping youth with the tools they need to systematically approach their goals.

##### ***I can handle my emotions in different situations.***

In Figure 4, survey results are shown referencing how youth can handle their emotions in different situations. The noticeable increase in the number of youths who feel they can handle their emotions in various situations (from 47% to 73%) indicates that the 4-H Afterschool is successfully helping youth develop emotional resilience. This progress is essential for their overall well-being and ability to navigate different life situations.

#### **Limitations and Areas for Improvement**

Throughout the youth thriving survey, there is evidence of improvement, even if minor, in various areas of the 4-H Afterschool program for youth. The feedback focused on the 4-H areas highlights the following:

##### ***I make step-by-step plans to reach my goals.***

In Figure 5, survey results are shown referencing how youth make step-by-step plans to reach their goals. There is a noticeable improvement in the number of youths who feel confident in making step-by-step plans to reach their goals. This suggests that the program's emphasis on structured goal-setting activities is having a positive impact. However, the slight increase in the "Yes" responses

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indicates that while progress is being made, there is still room for further enhancement in helping youth develop detailed planning skills.

#### ***If I set goals, I act to reach those goals.***

In Figure 6, survey results are shown referencing how youth set goals and how they act to reach those goals. There is a positive shift in the number of youths who take action towards achieving their goals, with a reduction in those who do not act on their goals. This improvement highlights the effectiveness of the program's strategies in motivating youth to follow through on their goals. The decrease in the "No" responses to 0% is particularly encouraging, indicating that all participants are at least somewhat engaged in goal-directed behavior. Nonetheless, the relatively stable percentage of "Sort of" responses suggests that additional support and encouragement may be needed to fully transition these participants to consistently taking action.

The survey results demonstrate that the 4-H Afterschool is making strides in creating goal-setting and goal-achievement behaviors among youth. While the improvements are promising, they also highlight areas where the program can continue to grow. By focusing on enhancing detailed planning skills and providing additional support to ensure consistent goal-directed actions, the program can further empower youth to achieve their full potential.

#### **Open-Ended Responses**

The 4-H Afterschool post-program survey, presented students with three open-ended questions. This format encouraged students to share their thoughts and feelings about the 4-H After School program in their own words. Students were asked to identify the elements of the program they enjoyed the most and those they liked the least. Their honest feedback provided us with a

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unique perspective on the program's strengths and areas for improvement. We also sought students' suggestions for future projects at the school. Their ideas will play an important role in shaping our program offerings in the upcoming academic year. The survey responses highlighted the student's interest, or "spark". As we plan for the future, we will continue to prioritize initiatives that spark student interest.

As shown in Table 7, students expressed a strong liking for various aspects of the 4-H Afterschool program. They responded positively towards a range of activities including writing, acting, drawing, planting, and participating in the Desert Tortoise club. One of the standout features of the program, as per the students, was the opportunity it provided for them to spend quality time with their friends. This social aspect of the program significantly enhanced their overall experience.

As shown in Table 2, students expressed what they liked least about their experience for various aspects of the 4-H Afterschool program. In our effort to continually improve the 4-H After School program, we asked students to share what they liked least about their experience. Their honest feedback provides us with valuable insights into areas that may require our attention. While a significant number of students responded with "Nothing", indicating overall satisfaction with the program, several specific concerns were also raised:

- **Snacks:** Some students expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of snacks provided and suggested improvements.
- **Environment:** A few students mentioned finding rats, and others commented on the temperature being too hot.

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- **Behavioral Issues:** There were concerns about other students being rude or too loud, which seemed to affect the overall experience for some.

These responses highlight the importance of maintaining a comfortable and respectful environment, offering engaging activities, and providing quality refreshments. As we plan for the future, we will take these suggestions into account to ensure our program continues to meet the needs and expectations of our students.

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**Tables****Table 1***4-H After School Registration and Retention*

<b>Registration</b>	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Session 3</b>	<b>Session 4</b>	<b>Session 5</b>	<b>Sessions Combined</b>
<b>Registered</b>	135	97	94	101	70	186
<b>Unregistered</b>	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Students Attended During Session</b>	135	97	94	101	70	186
<b>Retention</b>						
<b>Returners from previous session</b>	N/A	82	73	91	64	N/A
<b>New Students</b>	135	15	21	10	6	N/A

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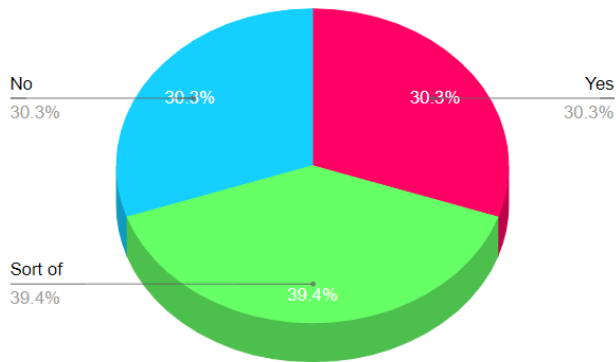
**Table 2***Student Feedback Open-Responses*

What did you like least about 4-H?

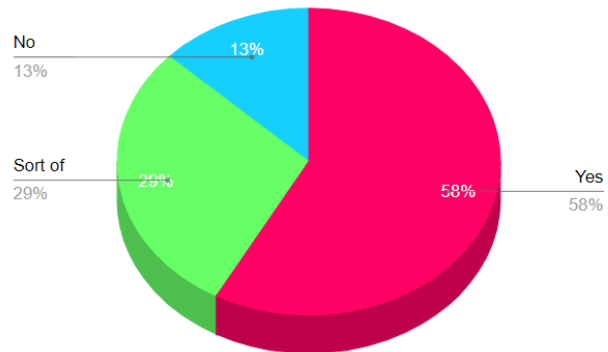
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nothing</li> <li>• Bad snacks get better ones</li> <li>• Better snacks</li> <li>• Nothing</li> <li>• Rats we find</li> <li>• Too hot</li> <li>• Nothing</li> <li>• Nothing</li> <li>• Rude kids</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kids are too loud not enough time</li> <li>• Nothing</li> <li>• Ms. Scott left so there's no book club</li> <li>• Didn't garden enough</li> <li>• Need better garden</li> <li>• It got loud</li> <li>• afterschool</li> </ul> |
|---|--|

**Figures****Figure 1***Pie Chart Data from Survey Item: I talk about my feelings.*

Pre: I talk about my feelings.



Post: I talk about my feelings.

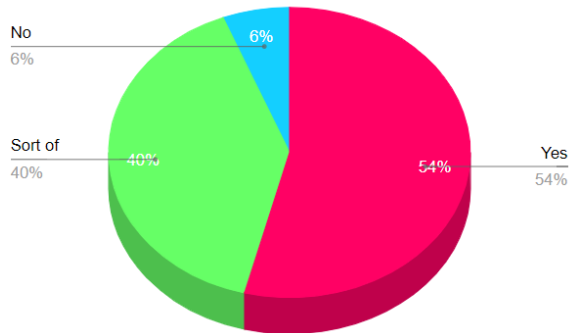


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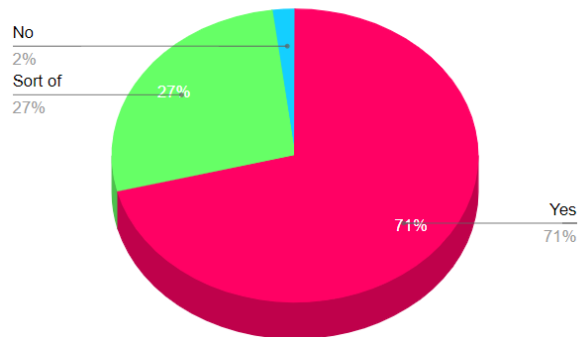
**Figure 2**

*Pie Chart Data from Survey Item: If I set goals, I act to reach those goals.*

Pre: If I set goals, I act to reach those goals.



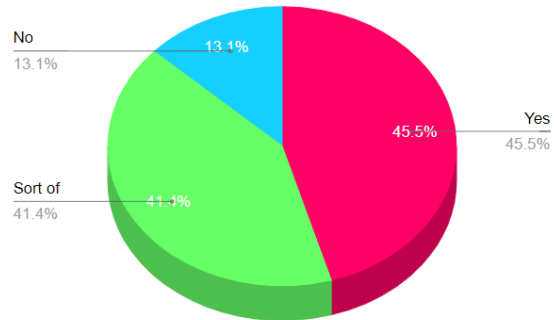
Post: If I set goals, I act to reach those goals.



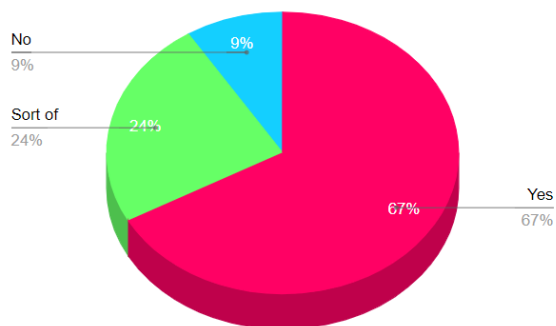
**Figure 3**

*Pie Chart Data from Survey Item: I make step-by-step plans to reach my goals.*

Pre: I make step-by-step plans to reach my goals.



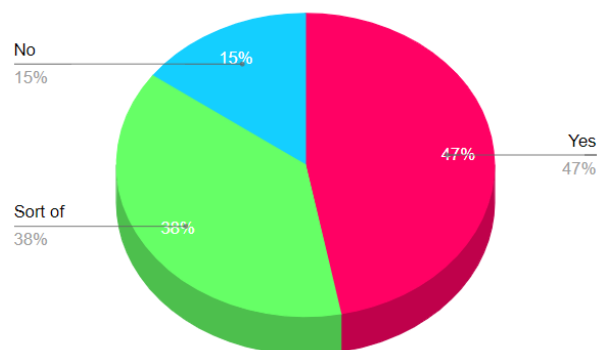
Post: I make step-by-step plans to reach my goals.



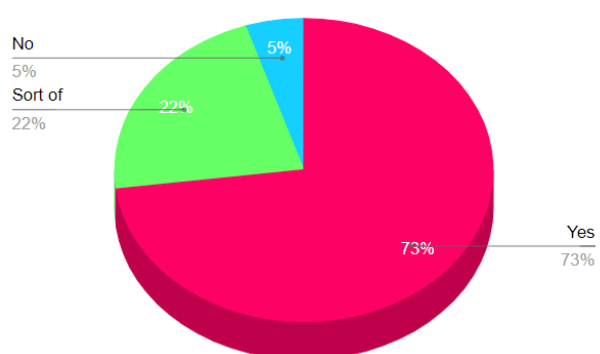
**Figure 4**

*Pie Chart Data from Survey Item: I can handle my emotions in different situations.*

Pre: I can handle my emotions in different situations.



Post: I can handle my emotions in different situations.

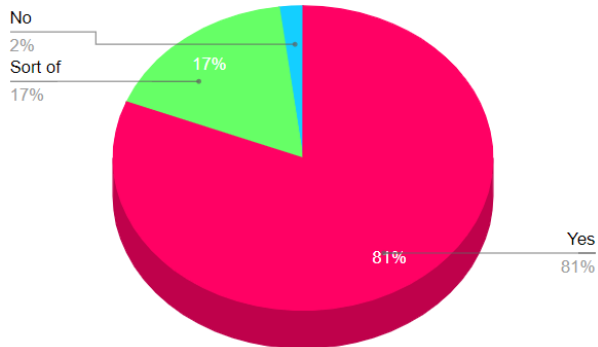


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**Figure 5**

Pie Chart Data from Survey Item: It is important for me to reach my goals.

Pre: It is important for me to reach my goals.



Post: It is important for me to reach my goals.

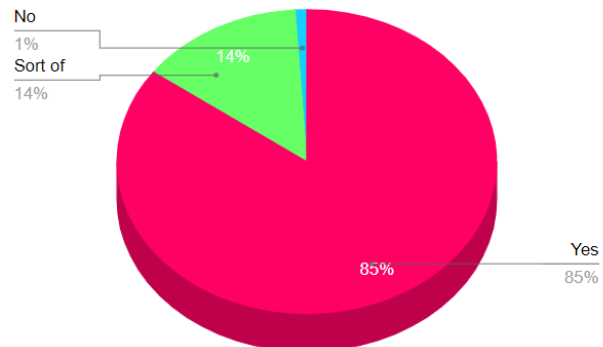
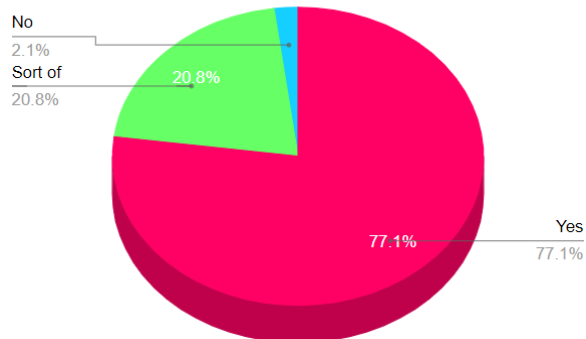
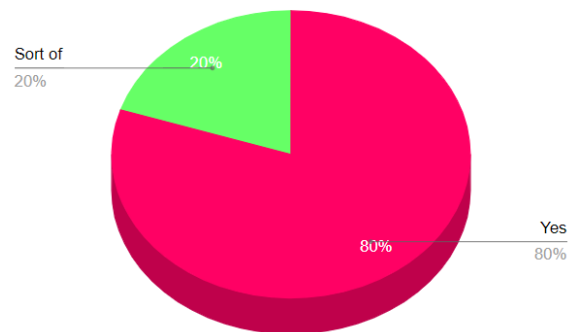
**Figure 6**

Chart Data from Survey Item: I get better at something when I keep practicing.

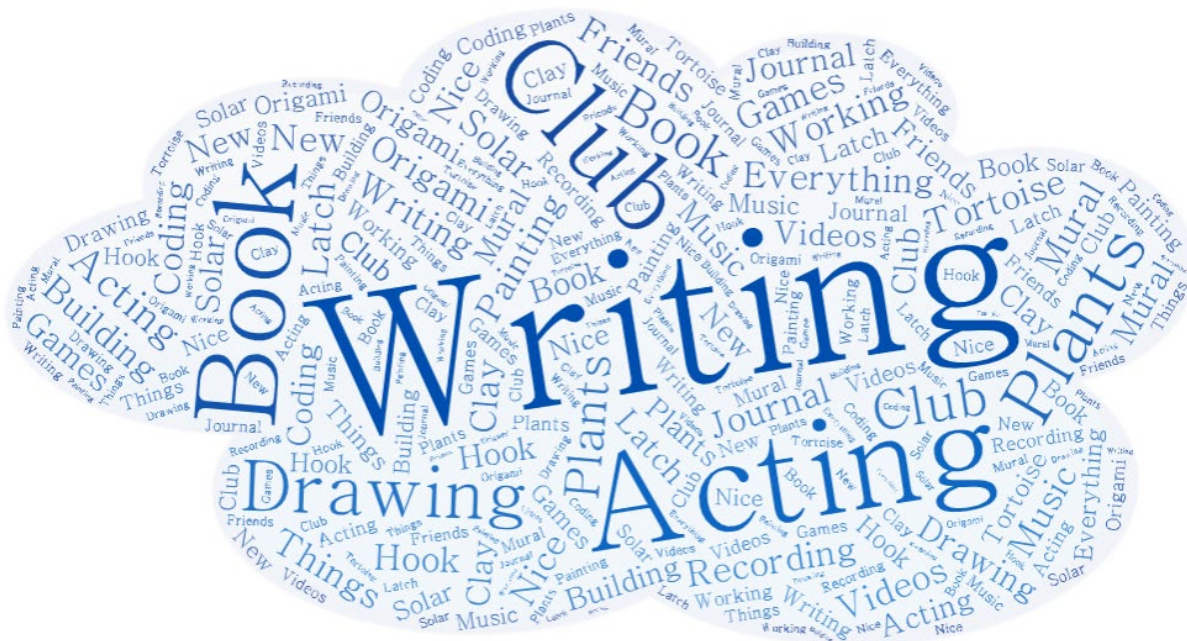
Pre: I get better at something when I keep practicing.



Post: I get better at something when I keep practicing.



*What did you like best about 4-H?*



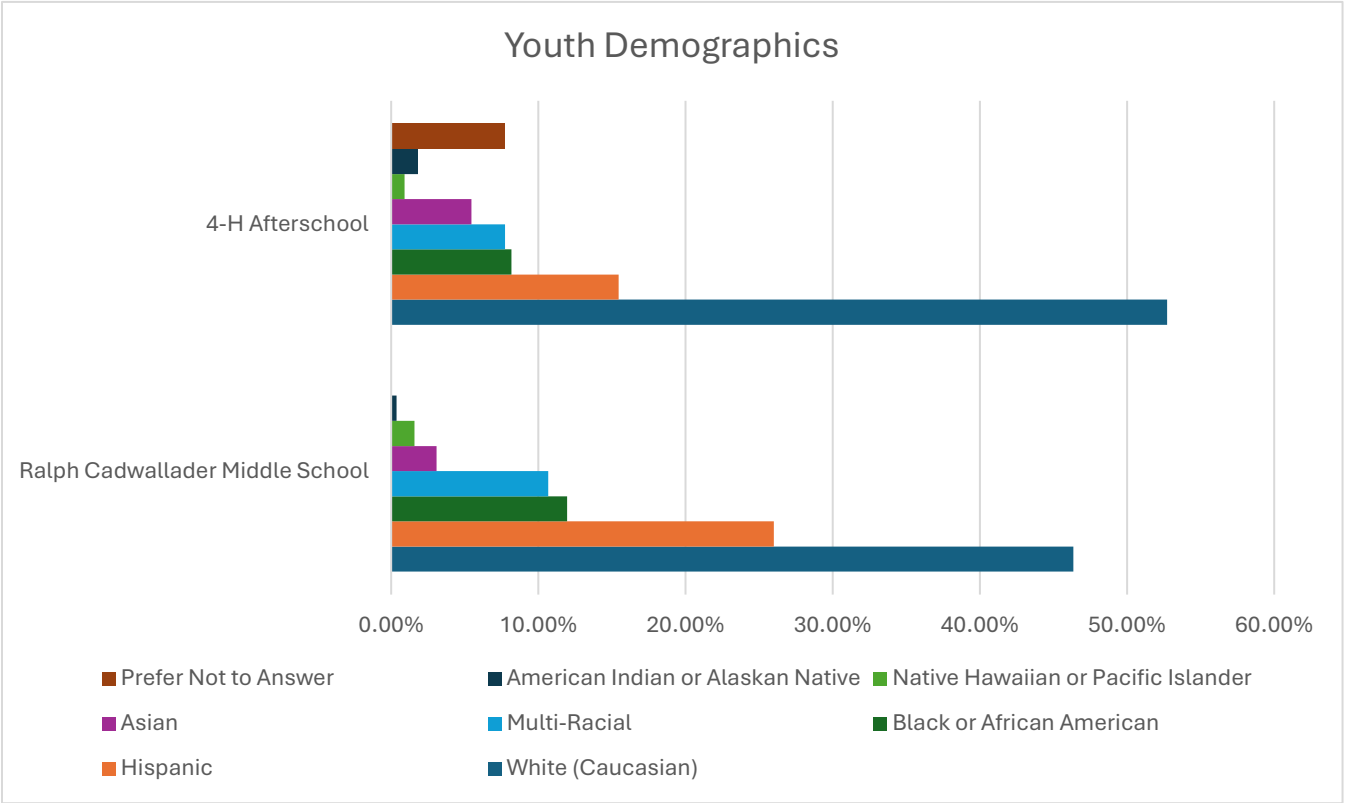
*What other topics/activities would you like to learn in the future?*



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Figure 9

Demographics Comparison of Ralph Cadwallader Middle School and 4-H After School



Note: Data about racial and ethnic makeup of the overall student population at Ralph Cadwallader Middle School was retrieved from the state of Nevada’s Accountability Portal (Nevada Accountability Portal, 2023).

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