Basic 4-H Information

Where did 4-H get its name?
The first use of the term 4-H club in a federal document appeared in 1918 in a bulletin written by Gertrude L. Warren. By 1924, wider use of the name  4-H was adopted. This was used thereafter throughout the world.

Why is the 4-H clover green and white?
The green clover, nature's most common color, symbolizes life, springtime, and youth. The white H's symbolize purity.

And, what do those H's stand for, anyway?
Head, Heart, Hands, and Health
Head:  Clear thinking; problem solving; decision making; critical thinking skills; visionary leadership; knowledge useful throughout life.
Heart:  Greater loyalty; strong personal values; positive self-concept; productive family and peer reationships; informal citizenship.
Hands:  Larger service; workforce preparedness; useful skills; science and technology literacy; community service.
Health:  Better living; healthy personal lifestyles; promoting environmental stewardship; creating communities that are safe and nuturing for youth and their families.

So, now that I know what the colors and H's stand for, where did the 4-H clover come from?
The first emblem design was a three-leaf clover introduced by O.H. Benson, sometime between 1907 and 1908. At that time, the three H's stood for head, heart and hands. In 1911, Benson expressed a need for 4 H's. He suggested that the H's stand for Head, Heart, Hands, and Hustle. In 1911, 4-H club leaders approved the present 4-H design. In 1924, the 4-H emblem was patented and in 1939, Congress passed a law protecting the use of the 4-H name and clover, with a slight revision in 1948. Benson's Hustle didn't make it as the fourth H, but O.B. Martin's suggestion of Head, Heart, Hands, and Health did and has been used universally since then.

The 4-H pledge?
"I pledge
my head to clearer thinking,
my heart to greater loyalty,
my hands to larger service,
and
my health to better living
for my club, my community, my country, and my world."

Otis Hall, State Leader of Kansas, is credited with the original wording of the 4-H pledge. It was officially adopted in 1927 by the State 4-H Leaders at the first National 4-H Camp. The pledge remained unchanged until 1973, when it was revised to include "and my world."

The 4-H Motto
"To Make the Best Better"

The 4-H Slogan
"Learn by Doing"
What is the mission of Florida 4-H Youth Development?
Florida 4-H creates supportive environments for diverse youth and adults to reach their fullest potential.

The 4-H Creed
I believe in 4-H club work for the opportunity it will give me to become a useful citizen.
I believe in the training of my HEAD for the power it will give me to think, plan and to reason.
I believe in the training of my HEART for the nobleness it will give me to be kind, sympathetic, and true.
I believe in the training of my HANDS for the ability it will give me to be helpful, skillful and useful.
I believe in the training of my HEALTH for the strength it will give me to enjoy life, resist disease and to work efficiently.
I believe in my country, my state, and my community and in my responsibility for their development. In all these things I believe, and am willing to dedicate my efforts to their fulfillment.

4-H Youth Development Values
- We, the youth and adults of the 4-H movement, value
- Hands-on learning
- Linkages with land-grant systems
- Fun
- Organization history and tradition
- Diversity in programs, participants and delivery modes.
- Volunteerism and volunteers
- People
- Role of communities, families and individuals
- Ability of individuals to make decisions
- Youth
- Leadership development
- Balance between cooperative and competitive
- Youth-adult partnerships

Therefore
We believe that youth are powerful members of society, with the ability to contribute significantly to their communities, to create positive change, and to imagine new possibilities and directions.

We believe that youth are equal and caring partners, bringing unique energy, knowledge, and perspective to the work they do—they are keepers of the vision.

We believe that relationships with caring adults are essential for youth to achieve their potential because of the guidance, respect, knowledge, and wisdom adults can share.

We believe that learning is a lifelong commitment for citizens of a democracy, enhancing self-determination, independent thinking, and self-esteem, and that learning-by-doing promotes practical skills, confidence, and experience for both youth and adults.

We believe that a social conscience is built on service and volunteerism, that a commitment to diversity depends on embracing and respecting difference, and that both are essential to making our society a better place.

We believe that our youth are the future of our nation and our world, and that they deserve nothing less than our best.

Because we believe in these things, we touch the future through the 4-H youth development movement.