I often hear 4-H has changed over the years and what great grandparents, grandparents and parents did is different from what today’s 4-Hers are doing. We are a more mobile society. My great grandparents would never have envisioned plugging in their car at night. They tied up their horses and fed hay. Community issues were discussed face to face over a kitchen table, and I doubt my grandparents would have imagined doing face time on hand held phones. While mobility changed how we meet, we have not strayed from 4-H’s mission we embraced over 100 years ago. Community service is not a new concept to 4-Hers.

4-H began as a way to train youth to grow better crops and use safer methods to prepare and store food grown and sold. In order to increase food and plant production to accommodate a growing population, young people began working with land grant colleges. 4-H provided strong plants and healthy food to our communities. Farm to table is not a new concept to 4-Hers.

Reading our 4-H history at www.4-h.org shows in the late 1800’s “helping young people and their families gain skills needed to be proactive forces in their communities’ and develop ideas for a more innovative economy… and introduce new agriculture technology to communities… a first step toward youth learning more about the industries in their community.” STEM, innovation and workforce preparation are not new concepts to 4-Hers.

Increased mobility has changed how people interact, but it has not changed our 4-H mission or the core principles of STEM, health and citizenship.

National 4-H Conference
Connecting • Learning • Engaging • Leading • Impacting

National 4-H Conference is the premier civic engagement opportunity for 4-H members (15-19 years) who are actively engaged in 4-H programs across the U.S. and its territories. The conference is administered by 4-H National Headquarters of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). This experience upholds a tradition dating back to 1927. Known then as the “National 4-H Club Camp”, delegates slept in tents on the grounds of the National Mall in front of the Department of Agriculture (USDA) in Washington, D.C. Held annually, except for several years during World War II, the camp served to develop the next generation of leaders. Delegates attended training workshops, became acquainted with government and had the opportunity to meet with state leaders. In 1958, the event name was changed to National 4-H Conference and, in 1959, the meeting moved from the National mall to the newly founded National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, MD.

The 2015 Connecticut delegation to National 4-H Conference consisted of four youth, Ben Hipsky, Danielle Brazeau and Lily Barton from Tolland County and Molly Barnett from New London County. Their chaperon was Rineicha Otero, Program Administrator for the AFRI 4-H Youth Grant in New Haven County. The focal point of their week was participation in round table discussion groups. The purpose of this exciting activity is to empower and mobilize 4-H youth to create positive change in their communities in a meaningful and genuine way. Connecticut delegates participated in the following round table topic areas: Adolescent Health, Military Families, The Future of Agriculture, Ener-
also learned how great it is to make friends wherever I go in life. I learned that I can connect and talk with these wonderful people, and I learned that I can make friends wherever I go in life. I also learned how great it is to embrace these opportunities when they come. This whole trip just really made me excited for the rest of my life, and I know I can have a voice in this world too. I can’t wait to share what I learned with others in my community.”

Ben Hipsky

“The 2015 National 4-H Conference was one of the greatest experiences I have ever had. Throughout the first four days of the conference we met with our round table groups, did workshops, and other team-building activities. Over the course of the week, I became very close with the members of my round table; I met 4-Hers from all over the country, Canada, and Puerto Rico. It was great to see what people had to say about the differences in other states and countries. In my round table we covered Energy Conservation, which really opened my eyes to all that can change in each state, country, and in the world.

The amount of new information and new personalities I learned and met were extremely eye opening. All the new info on 4-H and its history was absolutely mind blowing. Not only was the 4-H program astonishing but the speakers and performers that attended the conference were also lesson teachers. Another blessing of being in the capitol city is meeting with the senators’ aides and some of the representatives. It was good to see that they understand the importance of 4-H and they hope to continue to fund it. While 4-H has been a huge part of my life I can honestly say that this was the best 4-H experience I’ve had and thank you to everyone who made it possible.”

National 4-H Conference is the pinnacle experience in 4-H Citizenship, providing the opportunity for young people to connect, learn, engage, lead and impact their communities, their nation and their world. Rineacha Otero adds, “The overall experience of the conference has encouraged our teens, to become active leaders in our communities. Through adult and youth partnerships, teens have been prompted to get involved in the decision making process because their views can change the perspective of adults on topics that can impact youths lives.”

Connecticut 4-H teens can apply to attend National 4-H Conference by completing the Connecticut 4-H Recognition Form and submitting it for review to their county 4-H office by the December deadline. Those applying must also participate in an interview as part of the selection process. Don’t miss out on this amazing opportunity!

10 Life Skills Teens Need to be Successful in College: These Skills are More Important than Academic Skills

By Amy Morin, LCSW
Originally published in www.parentingteens.about.com

Just because a teen has finished high school, it doesn’t mean he’s ready for college. Although study skills are an important factor in college success, life skills are even more important. Most of these life skills aren’t taught in school so it’s up to you to make sure your teen is ready for college.
1. Time Management
There aren’t any structured study halls in college. Instead, college students need to know how to manage their time appropriately so they can devote enough time to studying, working and other activities. Teach your teen how to manage his time wisely so he’s prepared to be able to juggle all of his responsibilities in college.

2. Budgeting Skills
Unfortunately, college is a time that many students get themselves deeply into debt and they spend the next decade trying to dig themselves out. Make sure your teen understands how to establish a budget and live within his means. Also, make sure your teen has a good understanding of how debt and interest can cause lifelong problems.

3. Problem-Solving Skills
You can’t prepare your child for every problem he’s going to encounter in college. College students encounter a variety of problems ranging from roommate issues to academic problems. By teaching your child how to solve problems on his own, he’ll be better equipped to tackle whatever problems come his way.

4. Ability to Resist Peer Pressure
Peer pressure doesn’t end just because high school is over. College can be filled with peer pressure to drink, party or skip class. Success in college requires students to be able to resist negative peer pressure.

5. Basic Daily Living Skills
It’s amazing how many teens arrive at college with no idea how to do their own laundry. Make sure your teen has knowledge about basic skills, like cooking, cleaning and good hygiene.

6. Self-Discipline
Most college students experience a new type of freedom that they’ve never before experienced. They get to decide what they want to eat, when they want to sleep and how they want to spend their time with little to no input. Your teen will need to have self-discipline to ensure he goes to class on the days when he doesn’t want to and that he makes healthy decisions, even when there’s no one watching over his shoulder.

7. Goal Setting Skills
Successful college students need to be able to set goals for themselves so they can pass their classes and prepare for their future career. Teach your teen how to set short and long-term goals and how to create action steps to work toward meeting those goals.

8. Assertiveness Skills
College students need to be able to stand up for themselves and behave assertively. Assertiveness skills will help a student ask questions when he doesn’t understand an assignment or address problems he’s having in his dorm with the resident advisor.

9. Communication Skills
Teens need to know how to communicate effectively. It’s an important skill that will serve them well in adulthood and their future career. In college, good communication skills will help a teen establish new relationships, obtain internships and job opportunities and resolve problems with roommates in a peaceful manner.

10. Emotion Regulation Skills
College stirs up a lot of emotions for teens. For some, it can be a time of frustration and loneliness. For others, college can be filled with excitement and happiness. It’s important for teens to have healthy coping skills to help them deal with the wide range of emotions that can be brought on from the stress associated with attending college.

The Connecticut 4-H Newsletter is a publication of the Cooperative Extension System. 4-H Youth Development Program which provides educational and current information to 4-H members and volunteers.

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http://s.uconn.edu/give4h
4-H Volunteers Receive Recognition at the 2015 UConn College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources Awards and Honors Event

Receiving recognition at the annual College Awards and Honors event were Ken Trice, Tolland County, Meritorious Service to 4-H Award; Kelsey McMullen, Windham County, 4-H Leadership Award; and Rineicha Otero, New Haven County, 4-H Alumni Award. All three individuals bring a wealth of experience, enthusiasm and dedication to the UConn 4-H Program. Ken has been a driving force behind the State 4-H Public Speaking Contest for many years, helping to expand the program and orient new judges to the event. Kelsey is the leader of the Quiet Corner 4-H Club in Windham County, a member of the Windham County 4-H Advisory Committee as well as an active volunteer with the State 4-H Horse Program. Rineicha began her involvement with 4-H as a member of the New Haven CYFAR 4-H Club. She is currently the Program Administrator for a $2.5 million grant from the USDA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative related to childhood obesity. Congratulations to all three for their outstanding contributions to 4-H.

4-H is a community of young people across America learning leadership, citizenship, and life skills.