

Crafting your Primary 4-H Message to Legislators

For those 4-H member and volunteers who are delivering our primary messages to legislators or staff, being prepared will help you feel more confident and comfortable. You were invited or volunteered to deliver one of the key message points listed below:



1. Thank the legislator for 100 years of 4-H support
2. Share a story about 4-H's value involving a. youth development, b. community youth development and c. adult & volunteer development
3. Ask legislators to support 4-H in the future & invite them to an event back home

When preparing your message, we hope you will utilize data and impacts from the **Key Message Points for 4-H at the Capitol** handout, mixed in with your own personal experiences with 4-H. Some tips for developing your message are:

- Be very personal - it will include a personal story or experience
- Be very sincere - it will sound like you are passionate and concerned about the topic
- Include some impact data, i.e. *Girls in 4-H are 3 times more likely to take part in science programs compared to girls in other programs.*
- Plan a message lasting around 2-3 minutes
- Use a notecard or electronic device if it helps you feel more comfortable; you don't need to memorize your message but you don't want to read your message either. Bulleting key points on a notecard or electronic device will help you remember what you want to TALK about.
- Establish eye contact with the legislator and speak clearly, loud enough to be heard, and try to relax.

Here's a simple framework to help you create your message:

Introduction: "Hello, my name is _____ and I'm from _____ County. I'm part of _____ (include what 4-H Youth Development program you are connected to - 4-H community club, after school program, teen court, community coalition, etc.)"

Why we're here at the Capitol: "We're here celebrating the 100th anniversary of Wisconsin 4-H Youth Development, and sharing why 4-H Youth Development is important and beneficial to Wisconsin families and youth. On behalf of 4-H members throughout the state of Wisconsin, I'd like to (Insert your key message point here)

_____”

Remember, you can better support your message point by utilizing both personal stories and experience along with the evaluation data.

Personalize it: Include a sentence or two about what 4-H means to you. You could say:

- "My experiences in 4-H are..."
- "I have learned..."
- "My favorite 4-H project is _____ and here's why..."
- "I've been involved with 4-H Youth Development through the _____ program, and here's why it has been beneficial..."

Wrap Up & Thanks: "Thank you for supporting 4-H Youth Development programs in the past and we hope you'll continue supporting these leadership and life skill development programs into the future."

You can use this template to develop and practice your message. Once you are more comfortable, you can condense it down to bullet points.