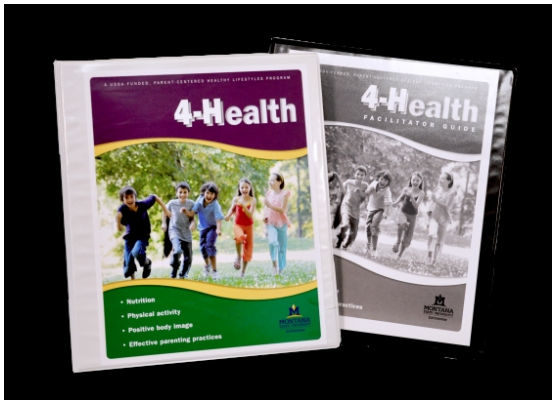
The 4-Health project is a USDA funded research project and educational outreach program that began in 2009 at Montana State University. Goals of the research and outreach project were as follows:

- -Develop an effective parent-centered obesity prevention educational program that changes the behavior of rural families in order to promote health and well-being while preventing childhood obesity.
-
- -Implement the 4-Health program over an 8-month period by offering it to parents/guardians of 8-12 year old children.
-
- -Evaluate participants' self-reported knowledge, skills, and behaviors to determine effectiveness of the 4-Health program.

As part of the project, curriculum materials for the 4-Health program were developed to assist parents/guardians in making lasting changes that are significant in improving preteen and family health, while respecting the constraints of busy schedules and addressing the unique aspects of a rural lifestyle.



The 4-Health curriculum materials are now available for download! The ten, 90-minute sessions are outlined in both a Parent Guide for Participants, and a Facilitator Guide for educators, which includes learning objectives, Power Point presentations, videos, and further facilitation information. Each session includes healthy living information and interactive activities on the topics of enhancing healthy food and nutrition behavior choices, engaging in a physically active lifestyle, promoting positive body image, and practicing active parenting. Goal setting is included in every session and an end of session evaluation tool is provided. In addition to in-session learning, each session includes a "time for action" section of out-of-session activities for use with preteens and families. Examples of out-of-session activities include healthy cooking

assignments for the preteen and parent to complete together, environment assessments that look at the family home in terms of how it promotes or inhibits healthy behaviors, a preteen grocery store scavenger hunt, a nutrition label reading activity, and options for online activities that engage participants in conversation outside of the session meeting time. See the 4-Health Curriculum section for downloading information from Montana State University Extension.

MSU Extension is a statewide educational outreach network that applies unbiased, research-based university resources to practical needs identified by the people of Montana in their home communities.The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Montana State University and the Montana State University Extension Service prohibit discrimination in all of their programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital and family status. Issued in furtherance of cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Jill Martz, Vice Interim Director of Extension, Extension Service, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717