

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE



## Grand Challenges

K-State Extension develops and delivers practical, research-based solutions to challenges faced by all Kansans, which includes the grand challenges:

- Global Food Systems
- Water
- Health
- Community Vitality
- Developing Tomorrow's Leaders

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**KANSAS STATE**  
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## Grand Challenge: Developing Tomorrow's Leaders

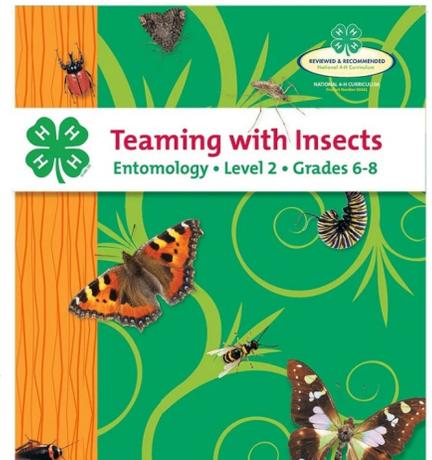
**Title:** After School Programs Provide Valuable Enrichment to Local Students

### Why is this issue important?

After school programs provide extension with another venue to deliver programs. One way to reach a larger audience of youth is to partner with organizations that already have youth on-site. Programs at just one partner site like the Boys and Girls Club of Topeka give us the opportunity to reach over 125 more students each semester than we would without these partnerships.

### How did Extension address this issue?

During the 2025–2026 school year, 4-H Agent Grace Wiens delivered programs at five different Boys & Girls Club sites. These programs covered topics such as deep-sea exploration, entomology, and introductory robotics. Students were highly engaged, and one staff member shared that a participant was more engaged during these sessions than he had ever seen before. At the Teen Center, youth learned to write code to guide a robot through a maze. By the end of the two-hour program, all three groups successfully completed the maze.



### What was the impact?

Students that participated in this round of after school programs reported the following in their post program surveys:

- Ocean Explorers: 40% of the students reported that they felt they could form and test a hypothesis
- Insect Anatomy: 42.8% reported they understood how an insect used its anatomy for survival, 42.8% reported that they could explain what an insect's abdomen is, and 46.1% reported that they could explain what the thorax is.