



# 4-H IMPACT!



HAWAII  
4-H YOUTH  
DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAM

## Disaster Preparedness



### The Situation

Hawai'i is susceptible to many significant hazards including tsunamis and hurricanes in addition to routinely experiencing windstorms, flash flooding, mud slides, wildfires, and earthquakes. However, community-based disaster preparedness, especially for youth in middle and high school, is inadequate to meet the need.

### Our Response

The 25-hour My PI Hawai'i Disaster Preparedness program trains youth in fire safety and suppression, light search and rescue, CPR, weather awareness, disaster psychology, and other subjects to complete the national Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Teen Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program. In addition, youth work with family and friends to develop emergency kits and plans in the community.

For the final simulation youth demonstrate knowledge and skills in several areas including first aid, triage, communications, and damage assessment. Youth are coached by MyPI instructors, and adult CERT volunteers.

### Program Outcomes

A 2-year grant through Mississippi State University from the U.S. Department of Agriculture provided funding to pilot the program throughout Hawai'i and deliver it through the Hawaii 4-H youth development program, schools, and other youth organizations.

In its first year, two schools, three community groups, and three 4-H programs on three islands (Maui, Kaua'i, and Hawai'i) participated with a total of **94** trained students and **56** completing the community service.

During the 2018-19 school year the program was added to additional classrooms and the participation rate increased to **195** trained youth and community service completion increased to **152** students.





The project is continuing to be implemented through multiple delivery methods and will be expanded to other islands, with the intent to sustain a statewide program.

### Measured Outcomes from Initial Deliveries

- ✓ In its first two years **289** youth were trained under the teen CERT program and a total **208** youth completed the community service requirement.
- ✓ The percentage of students knowledgeable about emergency management, disaster preparedness, and emergency response has nearly doubled with a 92% increase in scores from pre-test to post-test.
- ✓ Youth were able to competently demonstrate skills in fire suppression, first aid, triage, and damage assessment as part of a final simulation exercise.
- ✓ Each youth who completed the community service project worked with 7 families to develop emergency plans and kits. During the 2-year period the number of families reached translates to **1,456** and an average of **4,368** informed family members.
- ✓ In addition to disaster preparedness and response knowledge and skills, youth responded with nearly 3% higher confidence on questions related to their ability to help their community after the program.

### Take Home Message

Being prepared for a disaster not only requires gathering the right supplies but also having the right frame of mind to be ready when an incident happens. Important skills such as first aid, CPR, and search and rescue prepare youth to respond in an emergency.

Through the **MyPI Hawai'i** program youth in Hawai'i have gained the skills and knowledge to allow them to take a leadership role in an emergency and to help their families, their neighbors, and the community.

### For more information

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### Resources

- <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/mypihawaii/>
- <https://www.ready.gov/teen-cert>
- <https://dod.hawaii.gov/hiema/public-resources/preparedness-information/>