



# 4-H SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT



In the Service Learning project, youth members engage in service experiences that deepen their understanding of 4-H educational content. Service learning combines meaningful community service and learning.

- Identify and learn about a recognized community need.
- Demonstrate decision making in a safe environment.
- Participate in the development of community partnerships.
- Understand the citizen's role in improving society.

## 4-H THRIVE

Help youth:

### Light Their Spark

A spark is something youth are passionate about; it really fires them up and gives them joy and energy. Help youth find what it is about service learning that excites them.

### Flex Their Brain

The brain grows stronger when we try new things and master new skills. Encourage youth effort and persistence to help them reach higher levels of success.

### Reach Their Goals

Help youth use the GPS system to achieve their goals.

- Goal Selection:** Choose one meaningful, realistic and demanding goal.
- Pursue Strategies:** Create a step-by-step plan to make daily choices that support your goal.
- Shift Gears:** Change strategies if you're having difficulties reaching your goal. Seek help from others. What are youth going to do when things get in their way?

### Reflect

Ask project members how they can use their passion for the community to be more confident, competent and caring. Discuss ways they can use their skills to make a contribution in the community, improve their character or establish connections.

### Starting Out *Beginner*

Make sure that a service activity meets a real community need:

- Find out what foods low-income senior need; collect those foods and donate them to a food bank.
- Learn about young children's literacy needs; go to a daycare center and read aloud to them.
- Learn about shelter pet; participate in pet adoptions days
- Investigate which creeks are polluted and join in a creek restoration project.

### Learning More *Intermediate*

Participate in the development of community partnerships:

- Partner with the local food bank to regularly collect food for low-income seniors that meet their nutritional needs.
- Work with the local library to select age-appropriate children's books. Make book bags for the children to carry books home.
- Team up with an animal rescue group. Teach the dogs basic manners so they will be more adoptable.

### Exploring Depth *Advanced*

Adding an outreach and/or policy component expands the experience:

- Meet with policy makers and encourage them to fund senior nutrition programs.
- Conduct a campaign to encourage aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents the value of reading aloud to young children.
- Create and distribute materials on pet overpopulation and the need to spay and neuter.

The activities above are ideas to inspire further project development. This is not a complete list.

*Light Your Spark*

*Flex Your Brain*

*Reach Your Goals*

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# Expand Your Experiences!

## Citizenship

- Research childhood obesity. Urge policymakers to adopt policies that address the issue.
- Offer “canine citizenship” lessons to dog owners.
- Meet with local officials and tell them how 4-H positively impacts the community. Create supporting materials and fact sheets using information found at [www.ca4h.org](http://www.ca4h.org).

## Healthy Living

- Learn how to prepare healthy snacks. Hold demos/tasting at community club meetings.
- Learn some active games. Regularly go to an afterschool site and play the games with children.
- Map the trails in your community. Create a trail map that shows where families can safely walk, hike, or bike.

## Science, Engineering, and Technology

- Get trained in 4-H Youth Experiencing Science (YES) curriculum. Lead the activities at a community event or afterschool program.
- Organize and stage a science fair for younger children. Collaborate with your 4-H program and community partners.

## Leadership

- Teach 4-H members and adults about service-learning and how to infuse it into every project.
- Organize and stage a “Make a Difference” campaign for your community.
- Publicize your service learning project in the newspaper or through a 4-H Delivers story ([www.ca4h.org/News/Impacts](http://www.ca4h.org/News/Impacts)).

## Resources

- Curriculum and Resources Innovation Center  
[www.theinnovationcenter.org](http://www.theinnovationcenter.org)
- National Youth Leadership Council  
[www.nylc.org](http://www.nylc.org)
- National Service-Learning Clearinghouse  
[www.servicelearning.org](http://www.servicelearning.org)
- Learn and Serve America  
[www.learnandserve.gov/about/service\\_learning/](http://www.learnandserve.gov/about/service_learning/)
- California Department of Education  
[www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/sl](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/sl)
- Book: *The Kid's Guide to Service Projects: Over 500 Service Ideas* by Barbara A. Lewis
- The Search Institute  
[www.search-institute.org](http://www.search-institute.org)
- Book: *Catch the Spirit, Teen Volunteers Tell How They Made a Difference* by Susan K. Perry

### Connections & Events

**Presentation Days** – Share what you’ve learned with others through a service learning-related presentation.

**Revolution of Responsibility** – Apply for funding to support your 4-H service learning project.  
[www.ca4h.org/Support/RofR/](http://www.ca4h.org/Support/RofR/)

Contact your county 4-H office to determine additional opportunities available, such as county-wide service learning projects.

### Curriculum

Conducting 4-H Community Service Learning Projects –  
[pubs.ext.vt.edu/category/4-H\\_citizenship.html](http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/category/4-H_citizenship.html)

Citizenship: Public Adventures –  
[www.4-hmall.org/category/4-hcurriculum.aspx](http://www.4-hmall.org/category/4-hcurriculum.aspx)

### 4-H Record Book

4-H Record Books give members an opportunity to record events and reflect on their experiences. For each project, members document their personal experiences, learning and development.

4-H Record Books also teach members record management skills and encourage them to set goals and develop a plan to meet those goals.

To access the 4-H Record Book online, visit [www.ca4h.org/4hbook](http://www.ca4h.org/4hbook).

The UC 4-H Youth Development Program does not endorse, warrant, or otherwise take responsibility for the contents of unofficial sites.

University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources

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