



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.



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.

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).

Resources

- Curriculum and Resources Innovation Center
www.theinnovationcenter.org
- National Youth Leadership Council
www.nylc.org
- National Service-Learning Clearinghouse
www.servicelearning.org
- Learn and Serve America
www.learnandserve.gov/about/service_learning/
- California Department of Education
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
- 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/

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

Citizenship: Public Adventures –
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.

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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