



# 4-H COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT



## 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 how this project 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 this project 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.

In 4-H, service is defined as the voluntary action of an individual or a group of individuals without pay. In this project young people learn caring, leadership, and civic engagement.

Youth will

- learn the value of helping others
- develop leadership, communication, organizational skills, and a sense of empowerment
- build self-esteem from the positive results of their service

### Starting Out *Beginner*

- Identify a service activity.
- Brainstorm and prioritize your service ideas, and select the best one.
- Contact an organization you wish to serve, and participate in a service activity offered by the organization.
- Keep a ledger of expenses or income you may have accrued.
- Document your activity.
- Ideas: river/beach/lake clean-up, food or supply donations, visiting seniors.

### Learning More *Intermediate*

- Using your interests/spark, contact a related organization, and inquire about specific needs they may have.
- Identify one or two specific needs, and develop a timeline to carry out the needed service.
- Give a presentation to your club or county about your project's success.

### Exploring Depth *Advanced*

- Build on relationships you have developed with organizations, inquire what their needs may be, and identify service activities.
- Prioritize your ideas and select the best one.
- Develop a plan of action for your activity (identify a date to carry out the activities, what tasks, what resources are needed, who will do it, and by when).
- Submit an article to your local newspaper.
- Celebrate your accomplishments.

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



# Expand Your Experiences!

## Civic Engagement

- Research and share historic contributions of African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos and Native Americans in your community.
- Organize a voter registration drive in your community. Volunteer at a polling site.

## Healthy Living

- Learn about water sheds, and test the quality of local lakes, rivers, and streams. Provide report to county supervisors, water district, or local leaders.
- Determine what the specific needs are for the food bank in your community.

## Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

- Offer computer training to families for senior citizens with limited resources.
- Volunteer at a science museum.
- Develop ways for people with visual impairments to experience local parks.

## Leadership

- Design and create a small discussion group of teens close to your own age.
- Organize a series of community speakers to educate your 4-H unit.
- Become an active member of a county or city youth commission or other group outside 4-H.

## College and Career Readiness

- Contact a local university, and volunteer with them in your area of interest or major.
- Choose long-term volunteering and service rather than short-term “one off” service.
- Record and write about your experiences.

## Resources

- Navigating the Election Process for Students and First Time Voters  
[www.accreditedschoolsonline.org/resources/students-and-first-time-voters/](http://www.accreditedschoolsonline.org/resources/students-and-first-time-voters/)
- Corporation for National Community Service  
[www.nationalservice.gov/](http://www.nationalservice.gov/)
- Annenberg Classroom  
[www.annenbergclassroom.org/page/best-civics-sites-for-teachers](http://www.annenbergclassroom.org/page/best-civics-sites-for-teachers)
- Action Civics  
[actioncivicscollaborative.org/resources/toolbox/](http://actioncivicscollaborative.org/resources/toolbox/)
- iCivics (online Civics games)  
<https://www.icivics.org/>

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### Connections & Events

**Presentation Days** – Share what you’ve learned with others.

**Field Days** – At these events, 4-H members may participate in a variety of contests related to their project area.

Participate in **California Focus** or **Washington Focus** events.

Contact your UC Cooperative Extension office to determine additional opportunities available, such as a field day.

### Curriculum

- Civic Engagement and Service Learning  
<http://4h.ucanr.edu/Projects/CivicEngagement/>
- 4-H Afterschool Resource Guide– Civic Engagement  
<http://4h.ucanr.edu/files/124237.pdf>
- Civic Engagement Curriculum Resources  
<http://4h.ucanr.edu/Resources/Curriculum/>

### 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 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 <http://ucanr.edu/orb/>.



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