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.

### 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.

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**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.
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/tastings 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, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics**
- 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.

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**Connections & Events**

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

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

Contact your county 4-H office to determine additional opportunities available, such as a field day.

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**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

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**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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**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

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