

UC Agriculture & Natural Resources

4-H, Youth and Family (includes home livestock)

Title

4-H Self- or Group-Determined Project

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/13m396n3>

Authors

Borba, John
Diaz, Claudia
Horowitz, Marcel
[et al.](#)

Publication Date

2018-04-01

DOI

10.3733/ucanr.8624

Peer reviewed



4-H SELF- OR GROUP-DETERMINED 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.

A self- or group-determined project provides youth an opportunity to select, plan, develop, and evaluate their own project. Self- or group-determined projects are part of the 4-H leadership and personal development experience. The project is not an alternative for other project categories but is intended to provide youth more autonomy and control, under the supervision of an adult project leader.

- Take a more active role in deciding what members will learn, the activities undertaken, and evaluating their own progress.
- Strengthen leadership development where members plan learning goals, seek educational experiences, and evaluate their learning.
- Topic areas may be from other 4-H project areas, because the self- and group-determined project emphasizes leadership and personal development.

Project Requirements

- At least 9 years old as of December 31 of the program year.
- Have already completed at least one 4-H project.
- Under the supervision of a certified 4-H volunteer project leader.
- Willing to put in the time to complete the project, which includes a minimum of 6 hours of learning experiences along with approximately another 4 to 6 hours for planning, evaluating, sharing, and reporting.

The Steps to a Self- or Group-Determined Project

1. Select a worthwhile and interesting project topic.
2. Choose project learning and action goals that are meaningful, realistic, and positive.
3. Develop a plan to reach your learning goals, including selecting project activities and learning experiences.
4. Carry out your plan.
5. Evaluate progress toward goals. Record your progress through photos, records, objects, and by talking with people.
6. Report your accomplishments with fellow members, at your club, with presentations or articles.

A self or group determined project is not a miscellaneous or "other" category for a project that does not seem to fit into an existing project code.

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



Expand Your Experiences!

Citizenship

- Prepare a public service announcement for school, radio, television, or the Internet on a topic related to your project.
- Learn about which government agencies or commissions are involved in the subject area of your project.

Healthy Living

- Learn about the risk and safety aspects involved with your project.
- Find out ways your project can improve your health, safety, and wellness.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

- Research the science involved with your project—what field of science is most closely associated? Which do you think is the furthest?
- Go on a field trip to a STEM company that relates to your project.

Leadership

- Become a Junior or Teen leader for a group-determined project.
- Teach someone something that you learned about 4-H or about your topic.
- Prepare and present on your topic to fellow members or to community groups.

Resources

- California 4-H Project Leaders Digest
<http://4h.ucanr.edu/files/4462.pdf>
- Ohio 4-H Self Determined
<http://www.ohio4h.org/books-and-resources/self-determined-projects-and-idea-starters>
- Montana 4-H Self Determined
http://montana4h.org/pub/project_details/4-H%20Self-Determined%20Leader%20Guide-WEB.pdf
- Oregon 4-H Group Determined
extension.oregonstate.edu/morrow/sites/default/files/wedecide_groupdeterminedproject.pdf

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

Curriculum

- California 4-H Guidelines for Self and Group Determined Projects
http://4h.ucanr.edu/Resources/Volunteers/Project_Leader_Resources/

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/>

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

Light Your Spark

Flex Your Brain

Reach Your Goals

Light Your Spark

Flex Your Brain

Reach Your Goals



FOR FUTURE INFORMATION

To order or obtain ANR publications and other products, visit the ANR Communication Services online catalog at <http://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/> or phone 1-800-994-8849. You can also place orders by mail or request a printed catalog of our products from

University of California
Agriculture and Natural Resources
Communication Services
2801 Second Street
Davis, CA 95618
Telephone 1-800-994-8849
E-mail: anrcatalog@ucanr.edu

©2018 The Regents of the University of California. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

Publication 8624

ISBN-13: 978-1-62711-054-9

The University of California, Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC ANR) prohibits discrimination against or harassment of any person in any of its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, gender expression, gender identity, pregnancy (which includes pregnancy, childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), genetic information (including family medical history), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, status as a protected veteran or service in the uniformed services (as defined by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 [USERRA]), as well as state military and naval service.

UC ANR policy prohibits retaliation against any employee or person in any of its programs or activities for bringing a complaint of discrimination or harassment. UC ANR policy also prohibits retaliation against a person who assists someone with a complaint of discrimination or harassment, or participates in any manner in an investigation or resolution of a complaint of discrimination or harassment. Retaliation includes threats, intimidation, reprisals, and/or adverse actions related to any of its programs or activities.

UC ANR is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment and/or participation in any of its programs or activities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age or protected veteran status.

University policy is intended to be consistent with the provisions of applicable State and Federal laws.

Inquiries regarding the University's equal employment opportunity policies may be directed to: John Sims, Affirmative Action Contact and Title IX Officer, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2801 Second Street, Davis, CA 95618, (530) 750-1397. Email: jsims@ucanr.edu. Website: http://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/Diversity/Affirmative_Action/.

To simplify information, trade names of products have been used. No endorsement of named or illustrated products is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products that are not mentioned or illustrated.



An electronic copy of this publication can be found at the ANR Communication Services catalog website, <http://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/>. This publication has been anonymously peer reviewed for technical accuracy by University of California scientists and other qualified professionals. This review process was managed by ANR Associate Editor for Human and Community–Youth Development Lynn Schmitt-McQuitty.

California 4-H Project Sheet Series Authors

JOHN BORBA, 4-H Youth Development Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension, Kern County; CLAUDIA DIAZ, 4-H Youth Development Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension, Riverside and San Bernardino counties; MARCEL HOROWITZ, Healthy Youth, Families, and Communities Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension, Yolo County; ANNE IACCOPUCCI, 4-H Healthy Living Academic Coordinator, California State 4-H Office; SHANNON KLISCH; UC CalFresh Community Education Supervisor, UC Cooperative Extension, San Luis Obispo County; KENDRA LEWIS, 4-H Evaluation Academic Coordinator, California State 4-H Office; KATHERINE SOULE, Youth, Families, and Communities Advisor and Director of UC Cooperative Extension, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties; and STEVEN WORKER, 4-H Youth Development Advisor, UC Cooperative Extension, Marin, Napa, and Sonoma counties.

Light Your Spark

Flex Your Brain

Reach Your Goals

Light Your Spark

Flex Your Brain

Reach Your Goals