

How Can Your Members Learn and Serve the 4-H Way?

We all enjoy playing on our home court. For you and your 4-H members, this means a special place you call your 4-H home – neighborhood, township, city, or county. [Community Service](#) and [service learning](#) projects are your club's community connection to putting "my hands to greater service" into 4-H action. The ultimate outcome is your club "Makes a Difference" in your community and your members learn new skills, apply knowledge to real world needs and develop positive character qualities. Service learning experiences teach members empathy, social-responsibility, caring, respect and fosters self-esteem and confidence.

Community service is admirable, but service learning strengthens members and reinforces the importance of service. Successful service learning begins with purposeful selection, planning, implementation and evaluation of service learning projects involving members in every quarter of the "Community Service Learning Game". Use [Planning A Successful Community Service Learning Project](#) to successfully guide your club through the four quarters.

***"Tell me, and I will forget.
Show me, and I will remember.
Involve me, and I will
understand."***
Ancient Chinese Proverb

Community Service Learning Game

1st Quarter: Members Select the Project

- Identify a community need. Encourage members to bring their ideas to a club- meeting, brainstorm as a club, conduct a survey or visit the web for ideas. Challenge members to think past last year's community service projects. Does your club always plant flowers or trees, pick up trash, donate food, adopt a family or visit a nursing home?
- Recognize skills, abilities and interest of members to address the need. Consider club size, members' ages, available time and resources.
- Decide collectively on a service project that meets a real community need.

2nd Quarter: Members Plan the Project

- Set learning goals "We will learn..." and service goals "We will make a difference because...".
- Define objectives to meet goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and timely.

- Develop an action strategy to include a timeline, to do list, resource inventory, promotion plan and risk management checklist.

3rd Quarter: Members Do & Evaluate the Project

- Members do the work, adults guide and supervise. Are there enough tasks for everyone? Can members learn while having fun and being safe? Do the activities promote teamwork and build friendships?
- Reflect on personal experiences, member role(s), community benefit(s), and future project connections.

4th Quarter: Members Celebrate the Project

- Express gratitude to each other for a service well done.
- Share experience and results with local media, community leaders, and others.
- Rejoice together in "Making a Difference" in the community.

When the buzzer sounds, will your club have won the Community Service Learning Game, playing every quarter to its fullest. Will your club's community service learning activities encourage members to participate in service experiences with their projects?