



# 4-H THERAPEUTIC ANIMAL PROJECT



Therapy animals provide comfort, aide, and affection to people in confined living situations, people with learning difficulties, people undergoing mental and physical therapy, and people in stressful situations. The goat project will help you:

- Learn the basic principles of animal training and handling.
- Demonstrate knowledge of animal health and care including nutrition, common health concerns, and grooming procedures.
- Learn about the different ways that humans and animals interact and the benefits of such interactions.
- Learn the history and use of different types of therapeutic animals in America.

## Starting Out *Beginner*

- Learn about the most common species and breeds of therapy animals.
- Learn about the anatomy of different species (e.g., dog, horse).
- Learn how to properly groom different types of animals and identify equipment.
- Understand the basic care of different types of therapy animals.
- Understand safe handling practices for different types of therapy animals.

## Learning More *Intermediate*

- Learn about how to train and handle various types of therapy animals.
- Learn about the different ways that humans and animals interact on a daily basis.
- Learn about animal nutrition.
- Identify common animal diseases and their treatment.
- Work with your animal to get it certified as a therapy animal.

## Exploring Depth *Advanced*

- Research specific types of human illnesses/injuries in which therapy animals are often utilized to aide in the healing/coping process.
- Demonstrate knowledge of what makes a good therapy animal.
- Visit different businesses to learn about career opportunities with therapy animals.
- Learn about animal genetics and how they affect health.

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

## 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!

## Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

- Create presentation showing the different ways therapy animals are utilized.
- Research specific types of human illnesses/injuries in which therapy animals are often utilized to aide in the healing/coping process.
- Learn about animal genetics and how they relate to animal health.

## Healthy Living

- Learn about zoonotic diseases. Discuss ways to mitigate diseases and minimize the transmission of diseases.
- Learn about the importance of proper nutrition and care as it relates to your animal's health.
- Learn how to safely and properly handle different types of animals.

## Citizenship

- Volunteer at a therapeutic equine facility.
- Take your dog to visit a local library or elementary school, so that children can practice reading to your animal and build confidence.
- Take your therapy animal to visit a hospital, nursing home, or rehabilitation facility.

## Leadership

- Teach others about how therapy animals are used to comfort and help people.
- Take on the position of junior/teen leader to be a role model to others interested in service animals.

## Resources

- National Service Animal Registry  
<https://www.nsarco.com/service-definitions.html>
- Pet Partners  
<https://petpartners.org/>
- Good Therapy  
<http://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/types/animal-assisted-therapy>
- Healthy pets  
<http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/>
- Dog Play  
<http://www.dogplay.com/Activities/Therapy/therapy.html>
- Therapy Dogs International  
<http://www.tdi-dog.org/>

### 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.

**Fair**– Enter a poster display showing something that you learned in the therapeutic animal project.

### Curriculum

- National 4-H Curriculum- [www.4-h.org/resource-library/curriculum/4-h-dog/](http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/curriculum/4-h-dog/)
- Ohio 4-H Youth Development Curriculum- <http://www.ohio4h.org/statewide-programs/animal-sciences/ohio-4-h-petpals>

### 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.

