



# 4-H SELF/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.

- A project where a member(s) may take a more active role in deciding what they will learn, the activities undertaken, and evaluating their own progress.
- A leadership experience for member(s) to 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 the 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](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](http://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 county 4-H 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/](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/>

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**University of California** Agriculture and Natural Resources

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