



4-H Club and Individual Citizenship/Community Service Marion County

Introduction

Throughout its history, 4-H has provided opportunities for meaningful involvement in community service activities.

The 4-H Club Citizenship/Community Service Project is the process by which youth learn how to become more effective in working with a group to make decisions and take action to improve their communities. This process is most easily learned by practice. Community Service activities by youth must be limited in scope to those things which youth themselves, working as a group, can accomplish, or can stimulate others to accomplish. The members, not the leaders, should do the project.

4-H Citizenship Officer

The key to the effort is to utilize the already on-going 4-H Clubs. Each 4-H club may elect a 4-H Citizenship Officer in addition to the traditional local 4-H club slate of officers. Perhaps an Adult or Junior Leader can be assigned to work with this Citizenship Officer.

The 4-H Citizenship Officer in turn is given the responsibility for involving his or her entire 4-H club in selecting and carrying out at least one community service activity. This leader is urged to use the community service process, which follows, in working with the club.

Public Exhibit, Recognition, and Awards

For a club exhibit each 4-H Citizenship Leader and/or the other members of his or her club are asked to prepare an exhibit/display for the County 4-H Fair. Individuals may also highlight their own efforts in community service that they complete outside the 4-H club setting. **Exhibits/displays will not be judged but there will be an opportunity at the fair for members to get feedback about their efforts.**

Clubs or individuals participating in the 4-H Club Citizenship/Community Service Project will be recognized at their own township 4-H Achievement Program with a small gift for club members and leaders.

Exhibit/Display

The purpose of the exhibit/display is to inform the public about what was done and to encourage other clubs to get involved in club citizenship projects. The exhibit at the County Fair can be a poster, display (up to 14" deep, 28" long and 28" high), etc. Pictures with captions are a great way to make your point but they are not a necessary part of the exhibit/display. Creativity is encouraged; but do remember to be effective in telling what you did. Individual exhibits should be standard 22X28 inch poster on a stiff backing and covered in plastic. **Exhibits/displays will not be judged but there will be an opportunity at the fair for members to get feedback about their efforts.**

Displays can be many things. If your club sang songs and did a puppet show for a children's home, you could display your puppets and a song sheet on a poster with pictures of you in action. If you adopted a section of highway or a trash dumpster which is a local eyesore and you keep it clean on a regular basis your display might show before and after pictures, or a group shot of the members with all the bags of trash and a bucket of trash could be part of your display.

Please attach the REPORT FORM securely to the back of the display.

Report Guidelines

Please complete report form and attach it to the back of your exhibit. In completing the report form, remember that the main objective of the 4-H Club Citizenship/Community Service Project is to teach young people how to make group decisions and to take action to improve their communities. This means the 4-Her needs to be involved in the selection of the activity as well as the completion of that activity for a group project.

Citizenship/Community Service Projects

Purposes in conducting a citizenship/community service activity:

1. To learn personal satisfaction by making a meaningful contribution
2. To make the community a better place to live
3. To provide an activity for group cooperation
4. To teach community structure and procedures to participants
5. To make the community aware of the group's existence

Community service projects should be more than contributing money from the club's treasury. They can involve anyone who needs assistance in one way or another. It is ideal for the club to vote on projects. Try to involve all in accomplishing the project.

Do research to make sure your service ideas will work. In talking with one nursing home about Christmas caroling they said there is already too much caroling and that it becomes annoying. They suggested visiting and doing a program on another holiday, such as Valentine's Day.

It would be a very frustrating experience if you made dolls for a hospital children's ward and then found out they couldn't use them because of hospital regulations. That is why it is so important, after you have listed your ideas, to check it out with the organization for whom you plan to do the service. You might also check with these places before you do your idea brainstorming. Ask what would be helpful to them.

This should not be done by the 4-H Leader alone - the idea is to teach youth how to get things done. This a great opportunity to change your individual community service into a club project.

When the project is done-*EVALUATE*. This will help you or your group improve and/or reinforce the successes they achieved. It should be a learning experience. It is not just what you do, but the knowledge of how to do this type of thing that is a real life-skill builder.

Suggested Community Service Projects

Community Beautification

Clean vacant lots
Organize a community clean up of specific neighborhood, park, or school
Repair, paint, and stencil names on mailboxes or paint addresses on curbs
Care for grassed areas at street intersections
Take care of cemetery or local park
Clean in or around community buildings used by 4-H clubs
Plant trees, shrubs, flowers, grass around schools/churches/community buildings
Place garbage cans in community bearing 4-H emblem
Build walks at a community center
Keep trash dumpster area clean
Adopt a highway
Provide recycling at a community event
Sponsor a community garden
Create and disburse seed bombs to encourage native plants
Plant flowers that are beneficial to pollinators

Program Assistance

Organize and/or assist with a summer recreation program
Initiate or assist with a rabies vaccination campaign
Assist March of Dimes, Relay for Life or other similar campaigns or drives
Provide programs for special groups: mentally and physically handicapped, underprivileged, elderly, nursing home residents, shut-ins (entertain, adopt-a-grandparent, provide treats, conduct games, etc.)
Organize a paper drive and educate people about value of conservation
Send get-well cards to the sick
Provide items for such as suitcases, toys, pajamas, and clothes for foster children
Pack holiday/birthday boxes for needy families
Hold white elephant auction for charity
Organize community blood donation drive
Collect old magazines for hospitals
Donate used paperbacks to jails
Assist with Special Olympics
Collect, repair, paint, make, or distribute items (toys, furniture) to needy families
Collect clothes or food for community clothing or food bank
Partner with existing nonprofit groups to assist in their work

Resources:

[Project Planning Guide for Groups](#)

[Group Report Form](#)

[Individual Report Form](#)