

Five Steps of a 4-H Service-Learning Project

The service-learning cycle can be summed up in five steps, which start with the letters IPARC.

1. Investigate

Identify an issue or cause your 4-H club can work on. Deepen your understanding of the issue by scanning the media, interviewing local leaders, surveying a specific group, observing your community, and/or sharing personal experiences with the issue.

2. Prepare & Plan

Get to know your 4-H club members and their interests, skills, and talents. Gather facts and information about your issue, and set an educational goal for what you want to learn. Identify community partners, organize a plan of action, clarify roles, and build timelines.

3. Act

Work as a team to implement your action plan for serving your community, educating others, advocating for a change, or conducting a research project. Plan activities with your community partners around common expectations of what is to happen when, and how.

4. Reflect

Explore 4-H youth's thoughts and feelings about the project during the process, and when you are finished. Answer questions of what you've learned about yourself, your club, the issue, and the people you served. Let results of reflection guide you in planning next steps for the project.

5. Communicate & Celebrate!

Capture what you have learned, the steps you have taken, and the impact your project has had on you, other people, and the community as a whole. Share your story to further educate and inform the community. Wrap-up by celebrating your accomplishments in a way that is meaningful for your 4-H club!



*(Adapted from The Complete Guide to Service Learning,
Cathryn Berger Kaye)*