

Exploring the Treasures of 4-H

Supporting School-Age Accreditation and Quality Programming

Exploring the Treasures of 4-H include activities designed specifically to interest school-age children and offers both long and short term projects that are essential to keeping the interest of this age group. Children should be allowed to choose the activities they want to explore.

There are activities in the areas of science, art, cultural understanding, active play, drama and much more. All of these areas are required for program quality and accreditation.

Opportunities for Youth Leadership and Development and Cross-age Teaching

Although this project is not designed for Middle School and Teen youth many of the activities could be used for cross-age projects where teens teach the younger children. Some possibilities are Exploring Photography, Sensing the Environment or Learning the Ropes.

Ideas! Ideas! Ideas!

Pages 114 and 115 of the **Helper's Guide** provides 4-H references for additional publications. Many of them will be online.



When exploring careers in Chapter 1 invite guest speakers to talk about their jobs. When exploring manners in Chapter 3 invite guests from other cultures to show and talk about manners in other countries. Let the children suggest guest speakers for projects that interest them and invite parents or teens as possible speakers.

When learning about money in Chapter 3 have a field trip to a bank or credit union. For parliamentary procedure in Chapter 6 plan a trip to a school board or city council meeting. A field trip to an animal shelter can combine community service and learning about pet care.

Community Service Service Learning Opportunities

The **Helper's Guide**, page 14, includes a description of community service... , is a description of Community Service that youth and adult leaders will understand. It also provides many ideas for service projects and how to choose a group project. **Page 12-13**, covers a step by step community clean-up project and can be used as a model for other projects.

Providing Quality Middle School and Teen Programming

This project is designed for school-age children but there are some activities that teens may not have done and would find interesting. Allow the teens to look through the guide and choose some activities for themselves.



Essential Elements of 4-H Youth Development

Youth involved in 4-H know they are cared about and feel a sense of **BELONGING**; they exercise **INDEPENDENCE** by using decision-making and action to influence people and events; they develop a sense of **MASTERY** by learning skills needed in making positive career and life choices; and they experience **GENEROSITY** by helping others through community service. These elements support the Army Youth Development Components of Belonging, Success, Service and Independence.

Summary

The **Youth and Leader Guide's** to *Exploring the Treasures of 4-H* provide 60+ activities that children can choose from to get started with 4-H projects. The **Guides** provide step by step support. All that's needed now is to decide where to start and to gather a few supplies and some curious kids. Have fun filling the treasure chest for a lifetime of skills and interests.

THE Army 4-H EXPRESS GUIDE TO

Exploring the Treasures of 4-H

There are 4-H projects to interest every child. *Exploring the Treasures of 4-H* includes 50 activities that children in grades 2-4 will be excited about. Helping children discover these treasures leads them from one time activities to long term projects with all of the 4-H guides to help both children and leaders.



Project Goals

This curriculum introduces children to a wide variety of topics that will peak their interest and inspire them to join a 4-H project group. Some examples are Citizenship, Expressive Arts and Healthy Lifestyle Education.

Four Fun Activities

1 2nd-4th graders like to talk about their homes and families so here is an activity where they can draw their house and everyone who lives in it. Don't forget the pets, favorite toys, anything they want. Now have them talk about their pictures and hang them up so everyone can see them. **Home Sweet Home, page 12, Youth Guide.**

2 When did you learn the useful skill of sewing on buttons? Well, 2nd-4th grade is a great time to learn! Children can have fun using buttons as eyes on hand made sock puppets that can star in a puppet show for friends. **Sewing Buttons, page 36, Helper's Guide.**

3 It's good to play in the mud once in a while. This activity will teach children how to make a mud-like suspension and learn some science while having fun. **Mysterious Mud, page 102, Helper's Guide.**

4 Bread in a Bag is a food activity, a science activity and a team project. The end product is bread that children can eat and a recipe that can be used over and over for friends and family. **Helper's Guide, page 73.**



Project Activity Guides and Target Age Groups

Fun, Friends and Learning is the **Youth Guide** for *Exploring the Treasures of 4-H*. The "exploration" theme engages children in a personal journey discovering the exciting opportunities in 4-H.

Group Activities is the **Helper's Guide** for *Exploring the Treasures of 4-H*. It is designed to help the adult leader facilitate group explorations. The eight chapters in the guide represent the 4-H project areas Citizenship and Civic Education, Communication and Expressive Arts, Consumer and Family Sciences, Environment Education and Earth Sciences, Healthy Lifestyle Education, Personal Development and Leadership, Plants and Animals, and Science and Technology.

Related 4-H Projects

The **Youth Guide** for *Exploring the Treasures of 4-H* is all about learning what projects there are and choosing some that are interesting to 2nd through 4th graders. Chapter 6 in the **Youth Guide** has activities to do just that. Each activity in the **Helper's Guide** also refers to a 4-H project area.

Integrating Technology

To find additional 4-H resources online go to www.n4hccs.org and use the projects online link, then select *Exploring 4-H*. This site not only offers many additional group activities, it also has links to state 4-H organizations and it's updated frequently so it's easy to find something new.

The photography activity makes reference to digital cameras. To hold the children's interest work in the tech lab. Journaling and record keeping activities can also be done using a computer.



Linking to the Army's Four Service Areas and Baseline Programming

Sports, Fitness and Health Options

Just as this is one of the Army's four service areas, healthy lifestyle education is one of eight 4-H project areas. The skills learned now and practiced in the future will contribute to a lifetime of fitness and good health. The sports and fitness activities include **Double Dutch Jump Rope, page 65, Helper's Guide** and **Heart Smarts, page 78, Helper's Guide**. There are several activities that focus on health including hand washing, food safety, first aid and nutrition.

Arts, Recreation and Leisure Activities

Communications - listening, writing and performing are a part of Arts, Recreation and Leisure Activities. There are several activities in the **Helper's Guide** that will assist in getting children interested in doing these things as fun and entertainment for themselves and others. Some suggestions are listening to the sounds of nature **Helper's Guide, page 18**, storytelling and reading to others. The guides describe at least 8 projects in this area.

Life Skills, Citizenship, and Leadership Opportunities

This is another area that is valued in 4-H as it is in Army youth programs. Any activity that is selected from the guides will teach several life skills. The first nine activities in the **Helper's Guide** focus on citizenship and leadership. Chapter 4 is all about Environmental Education and relates to Citizenship. Chapter 6 contains activities to learn about Personal Development and Leadership.

Academic Support, Mentoring, and Intervention Services

Learning by doing is the 4-H philosophy so it's not a stretch to describe all 4-H activities as academic support since children and youth are encouraged to learn from them. Mentoring is one of the roles of the adult leader and children can be mentors to those younger than themselves or less knowledgeable in a certain area. For example some children can teach others about computer programs, riding a bike or taking care of a garden.

Character Connection

4-H'ers start early learning to be people of good character. As they explore different project areas be sure to include information about the Six Pillars of Character.



Life Skills

"Skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life" are identified as Life Skills (Hendricks, 1996). Life Skills that can be practiced and developed in this project include accepting differences, making decisions, serving the community, communication, team work, developing an appreciation for nature, healthy lifestyle choices, personal safety, keeping records, completing a project/task, being responsible, planning and organizing. Although each activity specifically targets only one life skill, youth have the opportunity to practice several skills during each project.

Experiential Learning

Experiential Learning engages children and youth while they learn, share, and grow through their 4-H experiences. With an adult as the coach, the first step is "doing" or exploring. Next, youth share what they did and discuss the experience with their peers. After they've identified the skills and knowledge gained, help them determine how to apply this to other situations in their lives. The most important thing to remember when using this **Helper's Guide** is to let the children discover the 4-H treasures on their own with as little help from an adult as possible.

