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.

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.

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.

Although this project is not designed for Middle School and Teen youth, 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.

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.

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 Helper’s Guide, page 14, includes a description of community service... 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.

Summary

The Helper’s Guide page 14 includes a description of community service and 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.
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.

Four Fun Activities

1. 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.

2. 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 shared over and over for friends and family.


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.

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.

Integrating Technology

To find additional 4-H resources online go to www.4hcccs.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.

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.

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 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 playing the harmonica orares. 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.

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.