

WHAT IS 4-H COMMUNITY SERVICE?



4-H Community Service (or “Service Learning”) is a critical part of the 4-H Learning Experience. Community Service projects provide an opportunity for 4-H members to participate in meaningful activities that help connect them to their community.

WHAT MAKES A GOOD COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT?

A Good Community Service Project “TAPS!”

- **Timely**
 - Community Service projects should be relevant to the time in which they occur. Focusing a community service around a specific time of year (like an autumn leaf rake up, or a Valentine’s Day visit to a senior center) is a great way to brainstorm fun ideas! Be creative!
- **Active**
 - Community service projects should always involve some “doing.” Members should be taking an active role in their project.
- **Purposeful**
 - Community service projects should always start with a goal or purpose, and the service should always work towards completing that goal.
- **Selfless**
 - Ultimately, community service should end in a positive result that **does not provide a tangible reward or direct benefit** to the service learners-- although members should absolutely feel pride and personal satisfaction at a job well done!



WHAT IS AN EXAMPLE OF A GOOD (AND NOT SO GOOD) COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT?

GOOD COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

- Assist with 4-H programs that benefit the community.
- Raise money through donations/drives/programs/etc., for charity organizations.
 - Note: funds raised MUST be directly given to the organization, and CANNOT be deposited first into a 4-H Club or Council account. Club funds CAN be used to further a Community Service Project, like buying notecards for letter writing, but CANNOT be directly donated.)
- Letter writing campaigns.
 - (Military personnel, seniors, etc.)
- City/Community cleanups.
 - (family homes, parks, waterways, cemeteries, etc.)
- Host a supply drive.
 - (holiday toys, food, coats, school supplies, hygiene items)
- Host a garage sale to benefit a community service organization.
- Installing public space goods.
 - (wheelchair ramps, playgrounds, benches, etc.)
- Assist at an animal shelter.
- Organize & Host a Blood Drive.
- Visit folks in need.
 - (Senior centers, children's hospitals, etc.)
- Plant flowers or trees/clean trails.
- Participate in a charity run/walk.

NOT COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECTS

- Any fundraising activities meant to benefit a 4-H club or council.
- Attending a community event and promoting 4-H.
- Walking in a parade.
- Assisting a club with regular club duties.
- Raising money on behalf of for-profit entities.
- Cleaning up/providing repairs to State or County Fairgrounds.
- Participating on behalf of political organizations.
- Cleaning up the barn/yard of a family member/friend.

4-H Promotional Activities vs. Community Service

Remember: 4-H Community Service should provide a positive, needed and ultimately selfless benefit to the community. Completing a community service project promotes the 4-H Program in a positive light.

4-H Promotional Activities, while a great way to show 4-H Leadership and promote 4-H, do not qualify as community service projects.

