

# **THE 4-H LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

**A Member's Guide**



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Cooperative Extension **University of California**  
Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources

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# **THE 4-H LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

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*The Leadership Development Project is one of the most valuable projects in 4-H. Everyone is a leader to some extent and the project gives older members an opportunity to improve their leadership skills. The challenge we have in 4-H is to give every eligible member that opportunity.*

*Although this guide is primarily written for members involved in Leadership Development Projects, it will be helpful to the adult leaders supervising the projects. It contains useful suggestions and encouragement, and is dedicated to helping young people in their efforts to become more able citizens in their club, their community, their country, and their world.*

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## Objectives

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Before the project is completed, as a Junior or Teen Leader you will:

- Select a new skill that will help you in your leadership development. For example: learn to operate a 35 mm automatic slide projector. Practice the new skill at least three times.
- At least once, attend an event or meeting unfamiliar to you. For example: the County Board of Supervisors' meeting.
- Write a plan of work. The plan should cover your Junior or Teen Leader activities for the year, include at least one other person, and have the approval of an adult leader.
- Talk regularly with one or more adults as you carry out your plan of work.
- Be a leader at one or more 4-H events at which younger 4-H members are present.
- Identify a need within the 4-H program, give a written description of that need and your plans to meet that need to a 4-H leader, and carry out your plans.

*"The young member wants to be successful so this is when the Junior or Teen Leader helps them develop skills in project work, demonstrations, and other activities."*

You will be given 4-H Leadership Development Project literature and training opportunities to help you meet these objectives. There are also many resources in your club and in your community that will help you work more effectively on your Leadership Project. Suggestions of the kinds of resources available and how to obtain them are on page 18 of this publication.

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## What is leadership?

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One definition of leadership is "helping a group reach its goals." Leadership is not doing things for the group; it is helping the group decide what should be done and how. Leadership starts with thinking: "What do I need to do to help the group reach its goals?"

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## **What is the Leadership Development Project?**

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It is a project for 4-H members in the seventh grade and above who wish to develop the leadership skills they need to help their clubs. The project has two phases: **Junior Leadership** is for members in the seventh through ninth grades; and **Teen Leadership** is for members in the tenth grade and above.

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## **I realize what I can gain from this project, but what value does it have for a 4-H group?**

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It provides needed leadership for the 4-H groups, and it encourages members of all ages to stay in 4-H longer.

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## **Are there differences between the Junior and Teen Leader projects other than grade in school?**

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Teen Leaders can assume more challenging leadership roles than Junior Leaders. However, tasks have not been designated for Junior and Teen Leaders since there are different opinions about which tasks are appropriate for them. Thus the grade in school is used to determine who are Junior Leaders and who are Teen Leaders.

*"You must give opportunities, but don't force."*

*"Over the years we've increased our percentage of participation in county events and I think that is because older members do participate and younger members follow along."*

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## **Can I as a Teen Leader work with a project group without an adult leader present?**

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If you are enrolled in the Teen Leadership Development Project, you can work with a project group without an adult leader being present and be covered by the University of California's Liability Insurance, provided the following conditions are met:

- You must be supervised by an adult leader who will also guide, counsel, and direct you.

*"I am learning a lot from this experience. I am learning to have patience and to get things across."*

- You must prepare a detailed plan in writing for each group meeting. These plans must contain:

What you expect to do and why—include when and where your meetings will be held and the purpose of each meeting.

A list of the animals, equipment, and/or machinery that will be used at each meeting—include when, where, and how they will be used and why, and the names and ages of those persons who will be handling animals and operating machinery and/or equipment.

A detailed outline of the safety rules you and your members will practice so that safety becomes a habit.

- Your adult leader has to approve your complete plans by signing and dating them.

You will then be ready to function independently. You will be covered by the University's Liability Insurance while traveling to a project meeting, while you are working as the Teen Leader at the project meeting, and while you are returning to your home from the meeting.

Sometimes you may have to change your plans because circumstances have changed. When change is necessary, rewrite your plans to fit the new situation. Your adult leader must approve the changes before you can continue working independently with insurance coverage.

This Liability Insurance coverage does not apply to Junior Leaders.

*"Not only through projects do you show leadership, but by being there, wearing your 4-H hat and uniform, then others follow suit."*

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### **Do I have to have experience in 4-H to enroll in the Leadership Development Project?**

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Although previous experience in 4-H is helpful, it is not required. A first year 4-H member can fill certain leadership jobs. However, some experience or previous training may be necessary in the area you are leading. For example, you will be more effective assisting with leading a Clothing Project if you know something about clothing construction. You may have received that knowledge or training from 4-H or you may have received it from another source such as a home economics class in school or by private instruction.

You need to make your project plan based on your knowledge, your experience, and your willingness and time available to study independently to prepare for leadership assignments. Be realistic and don't overextend yourself.

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## **What do I receive that identifies me as a Junior or Teen Leader?**

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Junior Leaders are awarded a circular felt Junior Leader emblem and Teen Leaders a triangular felt Teen Leader emblem to indicate that they are currently involved in the Leadership Development Project. These are worn on the left front of the 4-H cap. Leadership Development Award winners receive a gold backing as a border for the emblem. Following completion of the project, Junior and Teen Leaders are awarded a certificate available through Cooperative Extension. A gold service stripe for the 4-H cap purchased from Leslie Carman may also be awarded. In addition, Junior and Teen Leader pins can be purchased with local funds from the National 4-H Supply Service.

*"When you give your ideas and then people turn around and actually do it, that is satisfaction."*

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## **How can I become a Junior or Teen Leader?**

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It's easy. Tell your 4-H leader you are interested. Fill in "Leadership Development" on your membership information card. Then discuss with your leader the club's leadership needs and which needs you can handle. Develop your plan. Get your leader's approval and you're in business!

*"As a new Junior Leader, at our swine meetings I hardly did anything at the first few meetings. The leader did most everything. Eventually I became more like the leader and he became more like the Junior Leader. I call him now instead of him calling me. I was glad he recognized my ability after a year and gave me responsibility."*

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## **What can I do in the Leadership Development Project?**

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There are many leadership opportunities. The only limits are your imagination, your own skills and knowledge, and the needs of your club and county.

Before deciding what leadership activity you want to be involved with, look at your strengths, abilities, knowledge, and areas of general interest. Then talk with your Leadership Development Project leader and other members of your leadership group about the needs of your club. Make a list of jobs that would help your club to continue and grow. Below are some suggestions you might wish to add to your list.

**Serve.** Identify and perform a specific task to improve life in the community.

- Decide which programs in the community need to be improved and how the improvements could be made.
- Learn the objectives and policies of these programs, and procedures for working with them.
- Obtain the help, money, or facilities needed to do the job.
- Carry out plans for improvement.

Example: 4-H Teen Leaders worked on community beautification. They led a group that planted a flower garden at a home for senior citizens and cared for the garden all summer.

*"4-H was different as a Junior Leader. I soon found that people were being dependent on me, instead of me being dependent on them."*

**Raise funds.** Organize and conduct effective money-raising campaigns to support programs.

- Find out the needs of the group.
- Brainstorm with other leaders and members and list possible fund-raising ideas.
- Select the idea that seems best.
- Involve others in carrying it out.
- Keep accurate written records.

Example: Two Teen Leaders organized a committee that planned and conducted a "walkathon" to raise money for nature trails at the 4-H Conservation Education Center.

*"People sometimes just want to be there and be a part of it (the event), they are not competitive or really interested in judging."*

**Plan programs.** Work cooperatively with others in exploring situations, helping the group identify their needs, setting goals, and developing a plan of action.

- Plan yearly or short-term programs.
- Develop a meeting agenda.
- Schedule the meetings with the organization's staff.
- Inform others about what happened.

Example: A committee of Teen Leaders planned an overnight weekend at 4-H Camp, with an emphasis on the nation's history and heritage.



**Maintain programs.** Work with adults and other Teen Leaders to insure continuity by maintaining existing programs.

- Know your club's/organization's schedule.
- Make a list of resource people.
- Learn the rules and guidelines for the organization and the existing programs.
- Provide assistance to the group.
- Answer members' questions about the programs.

**Example:** Two Teen Leaders helped with the administration of their club. One handled enrollment and communications and the other took charge of member records and reports.

**Teach.** Instruct others individually or in a group.

- Identify an individual's or group's interests and abilities.
- Determine what you want the individual or group to achieve.
- Develop a plan of action.
- Secure materials needed to carry out the plan.
- Instruct the individual or group.
- Determine what was learned.

**Example:** A Teen Leader taught the Foods Project to three beginning Foods Project members. Another assisted an adult leader with a group of eight Dog Care and Obedience Project members.

**Coordinate.** Organize the activities and resources of two or more groups primarily through other 4-H leaders.

- Know and understand the roles of the 4-H Youth Program staff.
- Determine the needs of the groups whose activities you are coordinating.
- Set goals for the activities.
- Assign responsibilities.

*"I learned that without patience, the younger members lost interest in their project and also lost confidence in themselves. By being patient, the members catch on more quickly to what you're teaching them, and they also have more fun."*

*"There is much to do helping members with animals. You can't do their work but have to guide and tell or show them the skills needed. It is easy for me to clip a cow, but it is more satisfying to see a young member do what they have seen me do. The job may not be the best and I may feel like helping out, but I don't, because giving a member a feeling of accomplishment is my job as a Teen Leader."*

- Determine what resources are available and locate those that you need.
- Develop a plan of action.
- Secure facilities.
- Conduct the activities.
- Evaluate how well the activities were carried out.

Example: 4-H Teen Leaders assumed responsibility for planning and operating a Demonstration Day for all their county's 4-H groups. They contacted judges, provided supplies, and conducted all activities at the Demonstration Day.

**Supervise.** Oversee the work of others.

- Delegate to others.
- Provide challenges
- Listen to problems and successes.
- Show appreciation for good work.
- Counsel as needed.
- Assume overall responsibility for a program.

Example: Each senior counsellor at 4-H Camp supervises the work of four junior counsellors, who are in turn responsible for campers during rest hour and at night.

**Evaluate.** Assess various programs and/or products to measure progress toward stated objectives.

- Make sure you know the objectives.
- Look for signs of progress and record them.
- Develop and distribute questionnaires.
- Summarize answers to questionnaires.
- Compare with similar surveys.

Examples: Advanced Clothing Project members work with beginning Clothing Project members to evaluate their projects. At the county 4-H Fair, Teen Leaders observe the programs and make recommendations for next year's fair.

**Recruit.** Identify, interview, and enlist young people and adults for program participation.

- Know and understand the kind of assistance needed.
- Know the requirements for participation.
- Organize information to be promoted.
- Locate prospective people.
- Select people for specific responsibilities.
- Convince people they can do the job.
- Keep them informed until they start.
- Find out why participants drop out.

Example: Two Teen Leaders were concerned that no young children joined their 4-H club. They spoke to the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades in school and prepared publicity for a news story and a radio program. As a result, 15 new members joined the 4-H club.

*"I learned, however, that one's plans must be flexible enough to allow for change, and that one must occasionally take a dose of 'bad' along with the 'good' to truly grow."*

**Consult and advise.** Assist other young people or youth groups in a specific subject.

- Conduct training sessions.
- Answer questions.
- Investigate resources.
- Understand programs and the opportunities available.
- Keep up-to-date in an area of knowledge.

Example: Two 4-H members who had taken several Conservation Projects worked with sixth grade teachers and students to build a nature trail. The 4-H'ers helped design the trail and served as resource people during construction.

*"The meetings I didn't care for or learn from were 90 percent lecture. I didn't learn as much as actually doing it."*

**Advocate.** Know what other young people are saying and reflect their needs to policy-making groups, the public, and other community groups.

- Listen to other young people.
- Identify their needs.

- Relate these needs to appropriate policy and program groups.
- Become familiar with functions of youth-related groups.
- Serve on committees that consider the needs and problems of young people.

Example: 4-H members had no place to go after their club meeting. Many young people were gathering in the parking lot of the church where their 4-H meetings were held. The 4-H'ers asked to speak at the church board meeting. They asked the board members to consider opening a room in the church one night each week for a teen center. They volunteered to help get the plans underway.

*"I think Junior Leaders are really helpful in that the other members aren't afraid to talk to us as far as their projects or even their problems are concerned. I know I find it easier to talk to people my own age, even in everyday life."*

**Make policy.** Serve on a policy-making board or committee with voting rights and other privileges comparable to adult members of such boards or committees.

- Know the objectives of the board or committee.
- Stay within the purpose of the board or committee.
- Collect needed information.
- Participate in meetings.
- Consider the total youth situation.

Example: Three 4-H Teen Leaders serve on the 15-member committee that determines priorities and establishes guidelines for their county 4-H Youth Program.

When your list is complete, determine (with the aid of your Leadership Development Project leader) what leadership role you think will help you grow as a leader while you are contributing to the needs of others. Choose a role that is realistic and that you think you can achieve. What you decide to do does not have to involve a long-term commitment as long as you are able to grow as a leader while actively helping others.

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## **Now that I have decided on a leadership role, how can I successfully carry it out?**

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Once you know what you want to do in the Leadership Development Project, you must set goals for yourself. Setting goals will give you a clear idea of what you want to accomplish. It will also give you a definite direction to follow as you proceed through your leadership responsibilities. Set goals that are specific, realistic, and achievable. Goals should answer the questions: What results do I expect from my work? What do I expect to contribute to others? Discuss your goals with your Leadership Development Project leader.

Next, plans must be made to turn goals into accomplishments. Goals tell what is to be accomplished, plans tell how. Plans should be clear, realistic, specific, and as complete as possible. Make the plans interesting—a little creativity or imagination can turn a boring time into a rich learning experience. To help develop your leadership plan, use the process approach.

**The process approach** to teaching and learning is structured so that each individual can determine his or her own needs and interests, think creatively, and then design and carry out a program to meet those needs as well as the needs of the group.

There are eight basic steps to the process approach, each involving asking yourself a series of questions, taking action based on the answers, and using necessary resources. As you work through the steps, you will find it helpful to discuss the questions with your Leadership Development Project leader, other young people, and members of your group. The steps are as follows:

1. Determine needs. Look at the demands, concerns, and interests of your community and your group, as well as your own, and decide how you would like to help. You can use the list you have already compiled to help with this step. Have you considered the needs of the group as well as your own particular interests and concerns?
2. Explore resources. List all the help available from people, organizations, printed material, and personal experience. Is the list accurate? Are the resources available and within your budget?

*"It means a lot to me for a first year member to come up to me, with a big smile on their face and a ribbon in their hand to say, 'Thank you for all the help.' I feel without leadership the younger members would not have a chance to learn. I know when I was a first year member, the Junior Leaders really helped me a lot. They play an important part in 4-H; they help to encourage the younger members; and, if they do their job right, they gain respect from the younger members as well as the leaders."*

*"My Junior Leaders impressed me with their knowledge and helpfulness. I never thought I could possess the same confidence, but two years later I was holding the gavel. That same year my light horse leader asked for my assistance; I was thrilled, and a bit nervous. I soon realized learning does not stop when one becomes a teacher. 4-H has helped me expand and grow as a person. These past years have been a wonderful experience—and, I want those members who come after me to feel the same."*

3. Set a goal or goals. Define exactly what you would like to achieve. Is the goal reasonable for the amount of time, money, and other resources available? Will it be possible to know when you have reached it? Do adults and group members agree with your goal?

4. Choose resources and plan. Determine which of the listed resources you will use and develop a plan of action that will enable you to meet your goal. Include what you will do, when you will do each step, and what materials you will need. Do the resources you have chosen apply directly to your goal? Do they represent a variety of viewpoints?

5. Carry out plan. Make use of chosen resources. Would another method work better than the one you are using? Do you need to look for additional resources?

6. Share learning. Tell others what you have done and what you plan to do so that you can benefit from their experience. What is the best way to do this? Who will be interested and why? To be most effective, share your activities throughout the entire process so that you will have continuous feedback. You may learn some things from others that will cause you to change your plans.

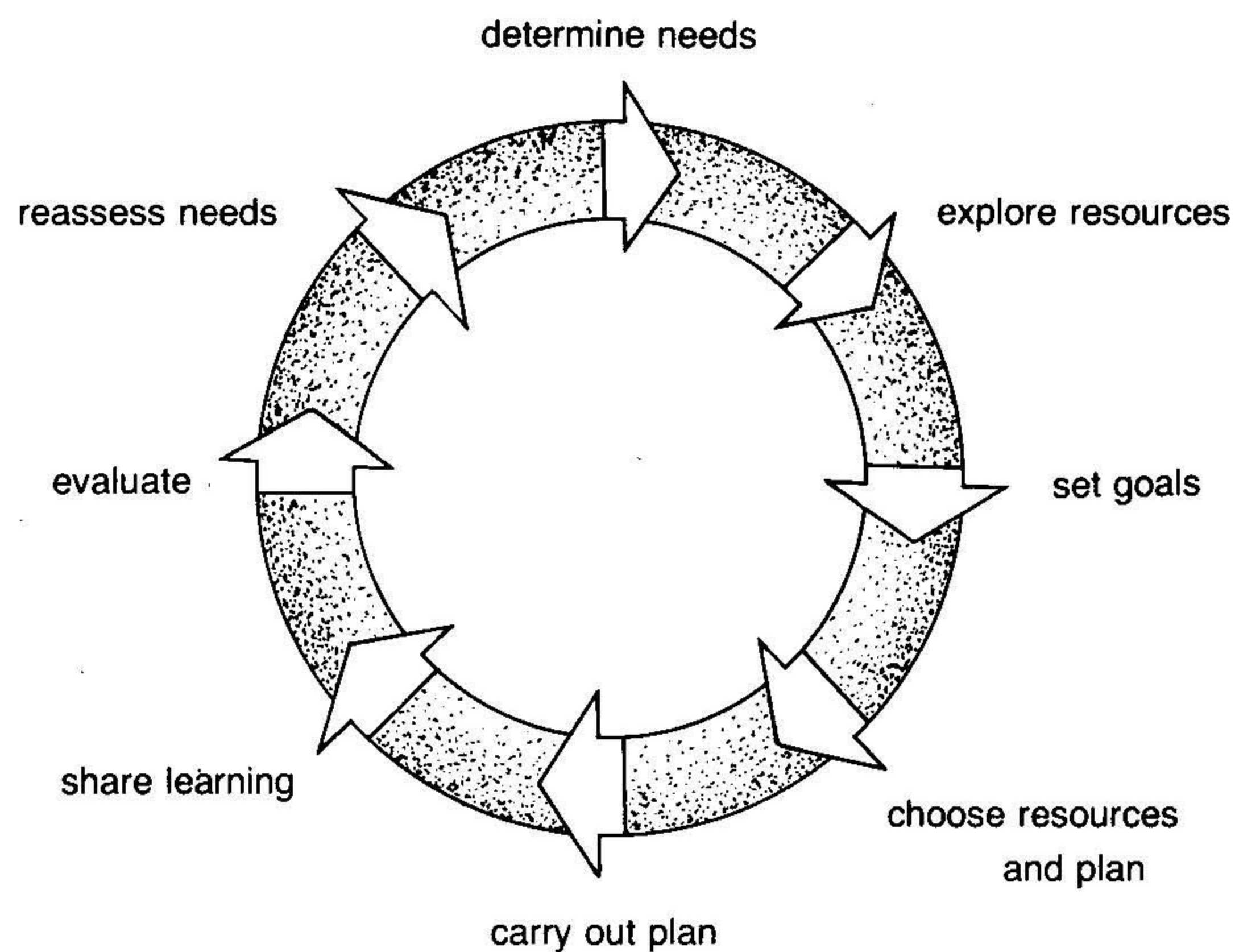
7. Evaluate. Measure the progress you made toward meeting your goal. Was the plan worth doing? What have you learned? Did the plan work? Do you feel good about what you did? Is there anything you would do differently? Did you assess the need correctly?

8. Reassess needs. Look again at your community, your group, and yourself. Do you want to continue working in the same area or do you want to explore an entirely new area?

At this point you begin the process again.

**A special note.** Sometimes you will follow the process approach through all eight steps. At other times, you may join a project when some of the work has already been done. The important thing is to determine how much work has already been done by others and to begin your involvement at the appropriate step in the process. A realistic assessment of the situation will assure that your contribution will help your group reach its goals.

## The process approach



Developed by Irene Imbler, retired faculty member, Department of Community Service Education, New York State College of Human Ecology.

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### What resources do I need and how do I find them?

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A resource is a source of supply or support. A resource might be human, such as people who supply us with information or assistance. Or a resource might be material things, such as money, facilities, visual aids, literature, or supplies.

The following example shows how Lori, Randy, and Mike approached their Leadership Development Project and their use of resources in the Clover 4-H Club:

Lori is a 13-year-old, fourth-year member in her first year as a Junior Leader for the Leatherwork Project, helping Mrs. Bierly. They have ten members enrolled. Randy is a 17-year-old, eighth-year member in his fourth year of the Leadership Development Project. He is a Teen Leader, assisting Mr. Amby in the Sheep Project with eight members. He also is the Recreation Teen Leader of the Clover Club. Mike is a 14-year-old, third-year member in his second year as a Junior Leader. He is a leader of the club Safety Activity.

At the weekend retreat for Junior and Teen Leaders, the 4-H Youth Advisor led a workshop on resources. In one exercise the participants were asked to form teams and list all the resources that could be available in their Leadership Development Project. Lori, Mike, and Randy teamed up and went to work. This is the list they developed.

*"Most members don't get real active until their second year because they don't really know what it is about. Next year I hope to inform new members."*

*"After a busy year, I am still inspired by my experiences to do even more. While learning myself, I can give younger members the chance to experience the challenges of 4-H work as I have."*

Leather	Safety	Sheep	Recreation
<p data-bbox="286 379 613 531">Craft Shop (materials, resource person)</p> <p data-bbox="286 582 642 733">High School Craft Teacher (resource person)</p>	<p data-bbox="701 379 1000 479">Highway Patrol (speak)</p> <p data-bbox="701 531 974 631">Doctor-Nurse (demonstrate)</p> <p data-bbox="701 682 1024 782">Fire Department (speak, tour)</p> <p data-bbox="701 833 963 933">Police-Sheriff (speak)</p>	<p data-bbox="1116 379 1428 479">Breeder (speak, facilities)</p> <p data-bbox="1116 531 1356 688">Feed Dealer (speak, literature)</p> <p data-bbox="1116 739 1428 933">High School Agriculture Teacher (speak, field day)</p> <p data-bbox="1116 985 1439 1179">Livestock Farm Advisor (speak, resource person, literature)</p>	<p data-bbox="1530 379 1755 531">Recreation Department (train)</p> <p data-bbox="1530 582 1727 682">4-H Office (literature)</p>

At this point, they couldn't think of any more. At the suggestion of the 4-H Youth Advisor, they checked the yellow pages in the telephone book and newspaper ads and added the following to the list:



<b>Leather</b>	<b>Safety</b>	<b>Sheep</b>	<b>Recreation</b>
Wholesale Leather House in nearby city (field trip)	Safety Consultant (speak, conduct safety program)	Breed Associations (literature)	Toy Store (game ideas)
Tanning Firm (field trip)	Safety Equipment Firm (demonstrate, display, field trip)	Wool Growers' Association (literature)	Library (literature)
Leather Factory that makes all kinds of items from leather (field trip)	Fire Safety Equipment Firm (demonstrate, display, field trip)	Craft Store featuring wool carding & spinning (demonstrate)	Music Teacher (lead singing)
Parents (transportation for field trip)	Water Safety Instructor (demonstrate)	Slaughterhouse (tour)	Square Dance Caller (lead)
	Health Department (speak)	High School Farm (judging day)	Local Organizations (sponsor weekend camp-out)
	Service Club (awards for safety contest)	Department Store featuring woolens (tour)	Parents (refreshments)

After they completed their lists, they used them wherever they could to develop their plans for the year and to make their programs more interesting.

It's a good idea to brainstorm for resources. Don't forget government agencies such as the Forestry Service, businesses related to the project or activity, Diamond Stars, All Stars, other young people, college students, and your 4-H leaders.

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## **COOPERATIVE EXTENSION**

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