

July

Learning by Doing

4-H Focus

July is when we focus on PROCESS. July is the month when 4-Hers are finishing projects in preparation for the local Achievement Days and/or County Fair. The absolute BEST part of 4-H is learning through doing. 4-Hers select a project area because of their interest in the topic, narrowing down that interest and identifying their goals will ultimately lead to a project. The steps will include planning, gathering supplies, utilizing special skills, consulting with experts, carrying out tasks, following directions, learning from mistakes, asking more questions and finally completing the project to exhibit at the county and state level. The PROCESS of doing teaches the life skills that 4-Hers carry with them and that give them confidence to try new things because they know that by following a process, they will learn and find success

Quote

"Learning is an active process. We learn by doing. Only knowledge that is used sticks in your mind."



Dale Carnegie

Building Leaders

Youth Mentors are a great way to build strong relationships within your club and county. 4-H Achievement Days/ County Fair can be intimidating for younger members who are not familiar with exhibiting projects. This is an awesome opportunity to create a Mentor or Buddy system which connects a more experienced member with a less experienced member. They experienced member can introduce the less experienced member to new people, guide them through the Achievement Days/County Fair schedule, accompany them to activities, encourage them to participate, and so much more. This will establish strong relationships between club/county members who have similar interests, and it will definitely be fun.

Learning Life Skills

S.M.A.R.T. Goals are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time Bound. Share the SMART goals template with your members so they can become familiar with the process of goal setting. 4-Hers will learn to create a plan that is purposeful and intentional which leads to a higher degree of skill building, learning and ultimately, success.



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Setting Goals is an important part of the 4-H process of Learning by Doing. Parents, leaders, volunteers, and mentors play an important role in the identification of and development of goals. 4-H focuses on S.M.A.R.T goals

The exhibition of 4-H projects, members have the opportunity to assess how well they worked towards their goals, identify where they would make changes, improvements, and also become cognizant of the fact that they learned through the process even if they didn't meet their goal exactly as they had planned.

It is essential that our members focus on the skills they developed and honed even if the project is not what they hoped it would be. It is easy to set a lofty goal but it requires dedication and determination to reach it. The process of learning teaches us about ourselves as well as teaches us new skills. Be sure to help 4-H members identify what they learned about themselves through the process of creating and exhibiting projects.

4-H Spotlight

This form accompanies Display Exhibits and is a vital tool for the 4-H member to share their process with the judge. At the county level, interview judging provides a wonderful opportunity for members to share the story of the exhibit with the judge. Check out the example form in the Appendix for ideas regarding this process. The form is a fillable PDF found on the Extension website: [Display Exhibit Form](#)

The SD State Fair Book is the best resource to consult as you prepare to exhibit projects at the county and state level. The book is found on the [SDSU Extension website](#) under the 4-H tab. Contact your local county office any time you have questions about an exhibit.