

Cascade County 4-H Independent Study and Self-Determined Project Plan

Due to the Extension Office by January 15

Approval

Your 4-H Project Plan need to receive approval from the 4-H Agent. This is an important step as it gives you an opportunity to receive feedback on your plan. The 4-H Project Plan is due to the Extension Office by January 15. The plan will be returned to you with feedback.

Project Deadlines

December 15: Returning 4-H member enrollment due online at 4h.zsuite.org

January 15: Project Plan Agreement due to the Extension Office

Mid-June: Livestock-related project records up to date in order to show

Late-June: Montana State Fair entries due

August 20: Completed records due to your club leader

Project Requirements

- ✿ Set at least 3 specific goals to accomplish.
- ✿ Identify at least one Project Mentor to help you with your project. This may be a parent or relative or anyone who is willing to help you **learn** more about your project.
- ✿ Complete the “You Decide” project book.
- ✿ Turn in records to your club leader by August 20th to include “You Decide” project book, My 4-H Year form, and Project Financial Journal form.
- ✿ Present on your project at least once in the 4-H year at the club level. It is encouraged to present at the County level as well.
- ✿ Enter an exhibit at the Montana State Fair related to this project which must be accompanied with by your “You Decide” project book.

Materials

- ✿ “You Decide” project curriculum
- ✿ My 4-H Year form
- ✿ Project Financial Journal form: Animal or Non-Animal
- ✿ Outside educational resources to use for research and discovery

Definitions

Self-Determined Project offers an opportunity to develop and carry out a project or individual design. This means selecting a topic, decide upon goals, obtaining resources, and designing records. The project can cover any subject and may or may not be related to any current 4-H project. These projects are typically designed around an individual interest in which there is not currently a formalized project offered within the county. Cascade County 4-H has pre-selected Self-Determined projects that you can take that are accompanied with project ideas. You can select one of those or create a completely different plan.

Independent Study is for any youth who are looking for opportunities and new challenges within a specific project in which the member is currently enrolled. The members determine specific experiences needed to accomplish project goals and locate resources helpful in carrying out their plans.

How to set S.M.A.R.T.E.R goals

S: Be Super Specific

Setting a specific goal helps focus efforts and clearly defines what you hope to accomplish. A specific resolution will usually answer the five “W” questions:

- ✿ **Who:** Who is involved?
- ✿ **What:** What do I want to accomplish?
- ✿ **Where:** Identify a location to work towards the goal (i.e. gym, outside, family ranch, etc.)
- ✿ **When:** When should it be performed?
- ✿ **Why:** Specific reasons, purpose, or benefits of accomplishing your goals.

M: Must be Measurable

Establish a method of measuring your progress and evaluating your accomplishments. Measuring your progress ensures you stay on track. A measurable goal will usually answer questions such as:

- ✿ How much?
- ✿ How many?
- ✿ How will I know when my goal is accomplished?

A: Attainable and Achievable

Goals should be attainable and achievable. You need to set a goal that requires energy and discipline to accomplish, but they shouldn't be so difficult that you cannot reach it. An attainable goal usually answers the question: “How can the goal be accomplished and is it realistic?”

R: Realistic and Relevant

Goals should not only be specific, measurable, and attainable, but they should be relevant and should **matter**. A goal that supports or is in alignment with other goals would be considered a relevant goal. A relevant goal answers yes to these questions:

- ✿ Can the goal be achieved in a timely manner?
- ✿ Is the goal ethical?
- ✿ Do I have enough resources to achieve my goal?

T: Timely

Goals have an end point that can be found on a calendar. Timeframes tied to your goals provide a sense of urgency to help motivate you. You should identify how long it will take to complete each step in your action plan and set up a timeline. After all, a goal without a plan is just a wish. A time-specific goal will usually answer the question “When will I reach my goal?”

E: Ethical

Goals must sit comfortably with your moral compass. Most people resist acting unethically. Set goals that meet a high ethical standard.

R: Resourced

You will need to commit enough resource to achieve your goal. This may be time, money, information sources or support from friends and family. You may need to make sacrifices to achieve your goal.

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Due to the Extension Office by January 15

Personal Information:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Club: _____ 4-H Age: _____

Project Information:

_____ Self-Determined _____ Independent Study in _____ (i.e. photography)

Project Title: _____ Primary Project Mentor: _____

Description: _____

Project Goals (Must be S.M.A.R.T.E.R goals)

What will you do? By what amount? By when? With what resource?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

List 5 specific activities you plan to complete to accomplish your goals

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

List 3 ways you plan to showcase what you have learned in this project

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Required Signatures for Approval:

Club Leader Approval: _____ Date: _____

Project Mentor Approval: _____ Date: _____

4-H Agent Approval: _____ Date: _____