CONSUMER MANAGEMENT PROJECT AREA

Use the consumer management project to get more bang for your buck! Find out how to use your money to get the things you want and need.

Ideas for Project Area Learning
• Identify needs and wants and how you spend your money on each.
• Make informed consumer decisions to reach your goals and to solve problems.
• Know your rights as a shopper.
• Set a budget to make a list and go shopping.
• Make a list of your needs and your wants and write down how you spend your money on each.
• Compare the costs of similar products, different stores, or brands.
• Develop a savings plan to save for an item that you want to buy.
• Set goals to spend your money wisely.
• Learn why you decide to buy what you do. Topics include: advertising, perceived needs, and priorities.
• Identify the benefits of different savings account options.
• Identify and make ethical decisions in earning and spending your money.
• Compare return policies of different vendors stores and online.
• Set saving, spending, and sharing goals for your money.
• Identify the actual cost of different kinds of credit.
• Develop a plan for the future: college, car, and independent living.
• Learn about consumer rights and how to use them effectively.
• Compare warranty policies on different brands and stores for similar items.
• Study the costs of fraud.
• Learn about financial security and privacy issues.

APPLY WHAT YOU’VE LEARNED

Communication
• Design a poster comparing similar products.
• Do a presentation about advertising techniques.
• Talk to a group about different Internet shopping sites and the value or concerns with those.

Civic Engagement
• Give a portion of your money to a cause you believe in.
• Volunteer to help manage money at a fundraiser.
• Go to a senior center and teach adults about safe online shopping.

Leadership
• Help your family identify needs and wants.
• Serve as the treasurer of a group or club.
• Organize a fundraiser for a cause that you believe in.

Entrepreneurship
• Manage a garage sale.
• Create a business where you shop best deals for consumers.
• Sell budget-friendly pre-planned menus for home cooks.
Goal Setting and Record Keeping

Goal setting is an ongoing process that guides your project area learning. Having goals is like having a road map to show you how to get you to where you want to go. Record keeping is also an ongoing process and another important life skill. In 4-H, you are encouraged to select from a variety of record keeping formats to meet your own personal needs and your preferred learning style. Keeping records of your learning experiences helps you determine how well you met your goals. Goal setting and record keeping improve your skills in organization, communication, planning, and evaluating.

Iowa 4-H Event Opportunities

- Participate in county and state fair exhibit classes.
- Check with your local county 4-H youth development staff to see if there are special events or workshops in your county that you want to attend to learn more about your project areas.
- Iowa 4-H members in grades 9–12 can apply for State Project Area Awards at State Recognition Day. Applications are open December through January.
- Meet young people from around the state who have completed grades 8–12, and share your interests at the Iowa 4-H Youth Conference held at Iowa State University in late June.
- Each March, hundreds of student researchers in grades 6–12 meet with professionals to discuss their findings and compete for scholarships during the State Science and Technology Fair of Iowa.
- Work with your 4-H club or county council as a treasurer.

Share Your Learning With an Exhibit

- Compare the price of similar pieces of clothing at a variety of places.
- Learn what happens to clothes donated to a thrift store if they don’t sell.
- Track your spending for a month and see where your money goes.
- Track your spending related to each of your 4-H projects.
- Track how you spend another of your resources—your time.
- Compare colleges, trade schools, or other educational opportunities.
- Explore advertised products; who were the various target audiences?

### CAREER CONNECTIONS

- **Financial Planners** work with families and businesses to reach short- and long-term financial goals.
- **Retail Sales Associates** work to greet customers, offer assistance, and provide product information.
- **Retail Buyers** plan, select, and purchase merchandise to sell in stores.
- **Financial Managers** review reports, accounts, and search for ways to include profitability for companies.

### EDUCATION CONNECTIONS

- Learn **financial counseling and planning** if you’re interested in giving advice on investments, taxes, and college savings.
- If you enjoy educating youth and adults, managing personal finances, and creating healthy relationships, **family and consumer sciences** may interest you!
- Students in **accounting** learn reporting, budgeting, tax information, and more!
- Learn **data science** if you enjoy computer programming, data analysis, and thinking critically.

Written Iowa 4-H Youth Development 2013. Revised in 2019 by Bonnie Dalager, 4-H Product Development Specialist, and Payton Sash, 4-H Student Office Assistant, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.