# 4-H School Wellness Project

Youth partner with adult leaders to promote health and wellness on their school campus. Youth may learn about:

- the role of school wellness policies and their impact on student and staff health
- ways students and families can have a voice in promoting health at their school
- skills and strategies for becoming a health advocate

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## 4-H THRIVE

Help youth:

### Light Their Spark

A spark is something youth are passionate about; it really fires them up and gives them joy and energy. Help youth find how this project excites them.

### Flex Their Brain

The brain grows stronger when we try new things and master new skills. Encourage youth effort and persistence to help them reach higher levels of success.

### Reach Their Goals

Help youth use the GPS system to achieve their goals.

- **Goal Selection:** Choose one meaningful, realistic, and demanding goal.
- **Pursue Strategies:** Create a step-by-step plan to make daily choices that support your goal.
- **Shift Gears:** Change strategies if you’re having difficulties reaching your goal. Seek help from others. What are youth going to do when things get in their way?

### Reflect

Ask project members how they can use their passion for this project to be more confident, competent, and caring. Discuss ways they can use their skills to make a contribution in the community, improve their character, or establish connections.

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## Starting Out - Beginner

- Learn about your school district’s wellness policy. Most are available online, in the parent handbook, or in the school office.
- Many wellness policies are written with legal language. Translate key points of the policy into language your peers would relate to.
- Develop a poster or flyer letting students, staff, or parents know about the School Wellness Policy.
- Attend a District Wellness Committee meeting.

## Learning More - Intermediate

- Gather health and wellness data about your school (e.g., physical education testing results, data from health surveys).
- Schedule a meeting with your principal to talk about goals for student and staff health.
- Survey peers to find out their health concerns (e.g., drinking water availability, school counselor hours, long lunch lines, etc.).
- Create a presentation for the District Wellness Committee about your findings.

## Exploring Depth - Advanced

- Plan a service project to address health and wellness issues at your school (e.g., installation of a hydration station, feedback from peers on school menu items).
- Identify local businesses or community agencies that could help fund your project if cost is a barrier.
- Write a letter to the editor or a press release to local media discussing identified health issues and/or what you plan to do about it.

The activities above are ideas to inspire further project development. This is not a complete list.
Expand Your Experiences!

Healthy Living

- Ask your teacher about taking “brain breaks” during class time.
- Get your friends moving at recess. Find games and physical activities that you like to do.
- Make posters and signs to share about the health benefits of eating different fruits and vegetables.

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

- Conduct water quality testing of the school water fountains.
- Collect data from students about which menu items are the most and least favorite; analyze and communicate the data to food service adults.

Civic Engagement

- Present on a new school wellness policy that you would like your school to implement.
- Investigate policies that led to large changes in behavior or saved lives (e.g., seatbelt laws, tobacco laws).
- Attend a local government meeting to speak about safe sidewalks and bike lanes to your school.

Leadership

- Launch a “Wellness Wednesday” program at your school focusing on health and wellness.
- Serve in a leadership role (like secretary or president) of your school wellness committee.
- Present at your school’s PTA meeting about the school wellness committee’s initiatives.

College and Career Readiness

- Interview your district food service director.
- Job shadow a Cooperative Extension 4-H program staff position.
- Visit a college campus to learn more about their public health, nutrition, or kinesiology program.

**Resources**

- CA Local School Wellness Policy [https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/wellness.asp](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/wellness.asp)
- District Wellness Policy Finder [https://www.healthyeating.org/Schools/School-Wellness/School-Wellness-Policies](https://www.healthyeating.org/Schools/School-Wellness/School-Wellness-Policies)

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