



Module 2

Recognizing Progress Toward Self-Set Goals

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Recognition for Progress Toward Self-Set Goals

Overview

It is important to help youth learn to set goals, and work toward their goals. The second type of recognition is recognizing young people for the progress they are making toward meeting their goals. Youth should feel good about the progress they make and be encouraged to continue working toward their goals.

Goal setting is an individual and personal matter. However, many youth are not experienced in setting their own goals and may need help. Goals should be S.M.A.R.T: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely. Remember, these are the young person's goals, not the goals of volunteers or parents, nor the goals the program expects them to have.

Goals are motivators only when the person setting the goal owns that goal. When a goal is truly owned by a youth, it will be important to the 4-H'er.

When we review a youth's progress toward a goal, we should do four things. Simply telling 4-H'ers they have done a good job is not enough. Together we need to:

- review the goals with each child
- identify what they have accomplished so far
- help them determine their next steps
- help them feel good about their accomplishments



We should recognize progress toward goals no matter how large or small the accomplishment. Age, ability, background and previous experiences are factors that affect what 4-H'ers plan and complete. Younger members will need to be challenged to think about “what they want to do.” Older, more experienced youth should be able to set and reach goals that are more challenging than the goals of younger or less experienced youth. Recognizing progress toward goals emphasizes individual growth and learning-by-doing.

Feeling good about having accomplished something that one has set out to do is a strong intrinsic motivator. Extrinsic awards however, are a tangible way to recognize reaching a goal. Some Examples of extrinsic awards include positive comments, chevrons, 4-H memorabilia, certificates, and stickers. Extrinsic awards can be given in private or in front of other youth or parents. Be sure to be sensitive about how the youth feels about being publicly recognized; some young people prefer recognition to be given privately. Therefore, intrinsic recognition may be sufficient for 4-Hers who make progress toward their goals. Also, the downside of public recognition is that youth may begin comparing themselves and their accomplishments to others' – rather than to the standard of reaching self-set goals.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is *Progress Toward Goals*?

A 4-H member is expected to “learn by doing” in the 4-H program. Members should have a plan for what they want to do or learn in the 4-H program and work towards the accomplishment of that plan through step-by-step goals.

Why are *Goals a Part of 4-H*?

Goals help youth learn how to: (1) make a plan; (2) devise ways to achieve that plan; and (3) evaluate their progress toward that plan.

Who Helps with the *Setting of Goals*?

Many people can help youth set their goals. Goal setting should involve parent or guardian participation. 4-H volunteer leaders, project leaders, and older teens can also help by giving guidance. However, goals should not be imposed upon a member, but should reflect a youth’s own ideas.

Where Do *Goals Come From*?

Goals: (1) come from the wants and wishes of the 4-H member and what they want to accomplish; (2) are based on options from the 4-H project manual; and (3) are reflected in activities listed and described in project books.

How Many *Goals Should a Member Set*?

This depends upon the age and experience of the member. Fewer steps toward a goal are needed for younger ages. Older children and teens can incorporate several smaller goals and steps toward each goal within a project. When set goals are reached, youth should set additional goals. Tracking their own progress helps youth to see how the step-by-step, task-by-task process turns into an end product, such as a completed project.

What Should A *4-H Goal Look Like*?

A goal should simply state what the member wants to do in that project area. All goals should be realistic and reachable in a set time period. It is also important to know who can or will help the member work towards that goal.

Who Receives The *Recognition For Progress Towards Goals*?

Every 4-H member who strives toward their goals should receive recognition. In the event a goal is not reached in the expected time, progress may have been rewarded and a valuable learning experience has occurred due to unforeseen challenges.

Who Awards The Members For *Progress Toward Goals*?

Parents/guardians and 4-H leaders recognize members through feedback and counseling. Feedback provides motivation towards continued work on a member’s goals. The 4-H volunteer may also obtain Certificates and Seals of Progress from the local Extension Office to present to members working towards their goals.

How Often Should *Recognition be Experienced*?

Recognition should occur as often as possible, but always at the end of each event, experience, or project completion. The Certificate and Seals of Progress may be awarded at the end of the 4-H year.

What Type Of Recognition May Be Provided For *Progress Towards Goals*?

4-H Members Cloverleaf (5-7) Junior (8-10) Intermediate (11-12) Senior 1 (13-15) Senior 2(16-18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback from volunteers, parents, and guardians (notes in record or project book) • Picnics by families or volunteers for completion of goals • Public reception at school, library, or community center • Introduce members by proudest achievement • Post members names in newspaper articles, on bulletin board • Send letter of commendation to parents • Select members to assist new members • Plan a special party • Certificates and Seals
4-H Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A” Congratulations” card from club members or co-volunteers • Newsletter articles about volunteer plans and goals • Photo of volunteer in newspaper about achieving a goal • Invitation to Strategic Planning/Goal-setting Workshop for volunteers • Positive Feedback from other volunteers, Extension agents, parents • Encouragement to apply for state Outstanding Volunteer Competition
4-H Clubs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club celebration • Schedule a Show and Tell night for the club or community • Present skit to outside group with members celebrating their achievement of goals • Progress towards goals award • Certificate and Seals
4-H Groups in alternative delivery modes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive feedback from volunteers, parents, and guardians • Picnics by families or volunteers for completion of goals • Public reception at school, library, or community center • Introduce members by proudest achievement • Post members names in newspaper articles, on bulletin board • Send letter of commendation to parents • Select members to assist new members • Plan a special party • Certificate and Seals

Recognition for Progress Toward Self-Set Goals

Teaching Outline

Intro to Goals – 3 minutes

Barriers and Builders – Present 5 common barriers and builders – 10 minutes
Handout: *Barriers and Builders*

Helping 4-H'ers Identify Progress towards their Goals – Practice Session Examples to identify progress towards goals – 10 minutes

Facilitating Goal Setting For All Ages – appropriate goals for age groups activity - 10 minutes
Handout: *Ages and Stages of Youth*

Choosing Recognition For Progress Towards Goals – What do we do? And In the future worksheets – 10 minutes

Review Goal Setting Principles – 2 minutes

Avoid Barriers, Use Builders Instead

Barriers	Builders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assuming is thinking you know what others think, what they will do, or how they will respond. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking is asking the 4-H'er what they think about the progress they made.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rescuing/ explaining is stepping in to prevent a child from making a mistake or explaining something rather than helping the young person discover the information for themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring is asking "What? Where? When? How?" questions to check how the young person perceives the situation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directing is giving very specific instructions so they can only do it your way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging/inviting sees the special uniqueness of each person and encourages the person to do things in her or his own way.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expecting is setting high standards for a 4-H'er, and then pointing out the 4-H'er's failure to achieve your standards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrating is recognizing progress and encouraging any progress made.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing is wanting a young person to read our minds or to know what we would have done. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respecting is seeking information on what a person thinks, understands, or feels about something and then accepting them and their beliefs.

Helping 4-H'ers Identify Progress towards their Goals

Find a partner. One of you will play the role of the youth. The other will play the role of the volunteer. Practice asking the questions for the first scenario and then switch roles and do the same for the second scenario.

1. What is your goal(s) and why did you decide on it?
2. What have you done to achieve your goal(s)?
3. What did you learn?
4. How do you feel about this experience? Why?
5. What would you do differently?
6. How can you use this experience in the future?
7. What's next?

Modify goal(s)

Continue working on current goal(s)

Set new goal(s)

Always end with some positive comments about their learning experience.

Maria

Maria is a 10-year-old who is interested in being outdoors. She and her mother have talked about having a garden. They are both interested, but Maria's mother is employed outside the home and hasn't much time to spend with Maria and her garden. Maria decides she should start small. Her family likes tomatoes. She thinks peppers sound interesting, too. Her goal this year is to raise enough tomatoes for her family table. She wants to have six pepper plants for fun. It's fall, and the first hard frost is overdue. As her volunteer, you've decided now is a good time to check again on her progress toward her goals.

Bill

Bill is an energetic 12-year-old who lives with his father. His interest is in doing things with his hands. He loves cookies, but his family is so busy that they don't have time to bake homemade cookies very often. He thinks baking might be fun then he can eat what he wants. His goal is to learn to make two kinds of cookies and share them with his grandmother. Bill has shared his cookies with you. One kind was excellent. The other was not too good. You sense Bill has mixed feelings about his goal. This seems like a good time to talk about his progress.

Ages and Stages of Youth



Youth Characteristics	Volunteers help youth by...
7-9 Year Olds	
Learn how to use their bodies by mastering physical skills, ranging from small muscle to large muscle skills.	Providing opportunities to practice skills they are learning
Learn to sort things into categories.	Encouraging them to collect things.
May not be ready to set own standards.	Helping them learn about and set standards.
Need help in understanding and making sense of failures.	Having regular sessions to talk about their progress toward their goals.
10-11 Year Olds	
Active, full of energy, and anything but quiet.	Encouraging learning experiences that are active and include physical involvement.
May change interests often, jumping from one thing to another.	Dividing activities into small pieces or steps.
Are fairly concrete thinkers, tend to be more attentive if they are seeing and doing, rather than just listening.	Designing opportunities for hands-on learning.
Begin to think logically and symbolically and understand abstract ideas.	Remembering that as they consider a new idea, they are apt to think it is either right or wrong, fun or boring (very little middle ground).
Look for adult approval and have a strong need to feel accepted and worthwhile.	Offering lots of encouragement and recognition--even for small successes.
Prefer individual evaluation over group competition. Are easily embarrassed about doing either better or worse than their friends.	Helping them discover how much they have improved and how they can do better next time. Don't compare them with others.
Begin to gain satisfaction from doing an activity. Not as apt to do something just to please a parent or other adult.	Providing positive feedback on their progress toward their goals.



Ages and Stages of Youth (continued)



Youth Characteristics	Volunteers help youth by...
12-13 Year Olds	
May have rapid spurts of growth. Girls mature faster than boys. Some may be uncomfortable with their changing body images.	Being sensitive to their feelings, accepting and willing to listen and talk about their feelings.
Begin a roller coaster ride of hormones and emotions as puberty approaches. Present a major challenge to their self-concept.	Accepting these changes and providing positive reinforcement.
Face so many changes they hardly know who they are. Begin to test values and identities.	Being willing to talk about beliefs, values, and morals, when the young person is ready.
Desire a sense of independence from parents. Are concerned about being liked by friends. Value opinions of peers more than opinions of parents and other adults in the areas of dress, music, and activities.	Providing opportunities to be more independent but at the same time providing guidance, when needed.
Move from concrete to more abstract thinking. Ready-made solutions from adults are often rejected in favor of their own solutions.	Designing opportunities for them to discuss and test ideas with <u>minimal</u> adult guidance.
Want to be part of something important that provides an opportunity to develop responsibility.	Including opportunities for them to be responsible for setting their own goals.
Believe justice and equality are important issues.	Avoiding comparisons of young people with each other, being careful not to embarrass them. Instead of feedback on a project, ribbons sometimes are seen as reflections of the individual's self-worth.



Ages and Stages of Youth (continued)

Youth Characteristics	Volunteers help youth by...
14-16 Year Olds	
Tend to be very concerned with themselves and their peer group. Acceptance by members of the opposite sex may be important.	Helping them develop skills needed to relate to one another.
Want to show they can assume adult-like responsibilities.	Helping them plan as a group where they provide ideas and take responsibility for an activity adults normally do.
Become aware of their own special abilities and talents.	Helping them to use their special talents to achieve their own goals.
Begin to think about the future and make realistic plans.	Encouraging learning experiences that will relate to their vocational interests.
Master abstract thinking. Find new ways of doing things that sometimes challenge adults.	Helping them discuss their own ideas.
Set their own goals based on personal needs and priorities. Are apt to reject goals set by others.	Helping them identify the progress they are making toward their goals.
Can initiate and complete tasks without supervision.	Being an adviser or coach-not a director of activities.
17-19 Year Olds	
Begin to make the transition to adult life. Their future plans and goals influence the activities they continue.	Helping them to set goals that meet their needs.
Determine their own schedule in most situations.	Remembering that only general directions are needed when they do familiar tasks.
Develop close relationships as they become preoccupied with their need for intimacy.	Recognizing that close personal relationships are normal and to be expected.
Make and carry out serious decisions but need adults for support.	Serving as resource people and helping stimulate teens' new thoughts and ideas.

Adapted from:

Karns, Jeanne and Judith A. Myers-Wall. *Ages and Stages of Child and Youth Development. A Guide for 4-H Leaders*, North Central Regional Extension Publication No. 292, Purdue University, Cooperative Extension Service, West Lafayette, IN. 1988.

lash, Marta and Susan Barkman, *Leader Helper Guide for Foods Curriculum*, 4-H 801, Purdue University, Cooperative Extension Service, West Lafayette, IN. 1994.

Appropriate Goals for. . .

7-9 year olds
10-11 year olds
12-13 year olds
14-16 year olds
17-19 year olds

From the box above, put the most appropriate age group of the member who set the following goals.

1. Plan a party for 10 friends after the ball game.
2. Raise money for a park bench at the new community environmental center.
3. Learn to make chocolate chip cookies.
4. Plan a special activity for the children at the special education school.
5. Rake leaves for Mrs. Diaz, their elderly neighbor.
6. Collect 100 lbs. of newspapers for recycling.
7. Make Thanksgiving decorations with residents of the Senior Citizen Center.
8. Make a 4-H display for local community celebration.
9. Grow a tomato plant.

