



Life Skills in 4-H

Lesson Summary: 4-H is known for teaching youth “life skills”. This lesson provides an overview of some of the life skills learned in 4-H and distinguishes them from livelihood skills that a 4-H member might also learn.

Audience: Participants can be parents, adult volunteers, or other stakeholders in the 4-H program. This lesson is not appropriate or intended for 4-H members themselves.

Objectives:

Participants will define a “life skill” and a “livelihood skill.”

Participants will list ways that 4-H promotes life skills in their country’s context.

Time: 40 minutes

Materials:

Cards or slips of paper with life and livelihood skills listed. (A list is at end of this lesson.)

Tape

Flip chart

Steps:

1. Ask members to define a life skill.

Answer: Life Skills are competencies that help people function well in their environments. A life skill can be applied to almost any job or personal situation.

In 4-H: Life skills are learned in sequential steps related to the member’s age and developmental stage.

They are acquired through “learn-by-doing” activities.

2. Ask members to define a livelihood skill.

Answer: Livelihood skills are skills that we can get paid for performing. They are usually specific to a given type of job or profession.

In 4-H: Youth may learn skills that help them earn a living in agriculture or agribusiness, for example. Boys and girls who learn sewing (tailoring or dressmaking) in 4-H can use those skills to earn money as a tailor.

Livelihood skills can also be learned in sequential steps related to the member’s age.

They can also be learned by doing.



3. Randomly hand out the slips of paper or cards that each has the name of a life or livelihood skill on them. Mark one sheet of flip chart paper “Life Skills”, and another sheet “Livelihood Skills”. Instruct participants to tape their card on the chart that they think best fits their type of skill. (For example, if they think “self-discipline” is a life skill, the person should tape the card on the flip chart paper that says, “Life Skill”.
4. After everyone has placed their card on one of the two charts, discuss the lists.
Suggested lists:

Life Skills	Livelihood Skills
Contributing to Group Efforts Sharing Planning/organizing Healthy lifestyle choices Self-esteem Disease prevention Self-discipline Keeping records Self-motivation Resiliency Cooperation Communication Learning to learn Stress management Self-expression Self-responsibility Decision making Teamwork Leadership Caring for the environment Marketable skills Goal setting Personal safety Social skills Responsible citizenship Conflict resolution Nutrition knowledge Problem solving Concern for others Community service Critical thinking Managing feelings Wise use of resources Character Empathy	Business accounting Teaching skills Learning about teaching about our homes Painting Keeping animals Cooking Dress making Preparing a field for planting Poultry keeping Dancing Repairing and automobile How to start a business How to borrow money for a business Using a computer (also a life skill) Digging Rotating crops Building houses Caring for children



5. Some discussion questions:

- Can some of these skills be in both lists?

Answer: Yes. But look further.

- Does everyone, regardless of their income, status, job, etc. need each of the *life* skills?

Answer: Yes

- Does everyone, regardless of their income, status, job, etc. need each of the *livelihood* skills?

Answer: No. For example, a teacher does not need to know business accounting skills to earn income as a teacher.

- Can life skills also help us earn a livelihood?

Answer: Yes. But life skills can also help us in other parts of our lives that do not involve income-generation.

- Which list of skills do you think prospective employers would find more important when hiring someone to work for him/her?

Answer: Life Skills. They take more time to learn but can be applied in multiple situations. Livelihood skills have more limited application.

- How can 4-H promote and build life skills?

Answer: Some examples include giving youth opportunities to work in teams, plan events, lead activities, try new agricultural techniques (builds self-esteem), keep records, give demonstrations, etc. in the 4-H club activities. The process of 4-H can build life skills. The projects, such as gardening, can develop livelihood skills. Both are important.



**Social
Skills**

**Problem
Solving**

**Responsible
Citizenship**

**Concern
for Others**

**Conflict
Resolution**

**Caring for
Children**

**Nutrition
Knowledge**

**Community
Service**



**Dress
Making**

**Personal
Safety**

Character

**Personal
Safety**

**How to borrow
money for a
business**

**Using a
Computer**

**Building
Houses**

**Goal
Setting**

**Managing
Feelings**

Empathy

**Keeping
Animals**

**Poultry
Keeping**

**Caring for
the
Environment**

**Repairing an
Automobile**

**Business
Accounting**

**Stress
Management**

**Critical
Thinking**

**Decision
Making**

**Self-
Motivation**

Self-Esteem

Sharing

**Healthy
Lifestyle
Choices**

**Wise Use of
Resources**

Cooking

Teamwork

Resiliency

**Keeping
Records**

**Self-
Discipline**

**Preparing a
field for
planting**

Dancing

**Self-
Responsibility**

Painting

**Learning to
Learn**

**Learning and
Teaching about
our Homes**

Digging

**Contributing
to Group
Efforts**

Cooperation

**Disease
Prevention**

**Rotating
Crops**

Leadership

**Planning/
Organizing**

**Teaching
Skills**

Communication

**Self-
Expression**

**How to start
a business**

