



# Illinois 4-H | Spark Ideas. Ignite Possibilities.

Money management may be one of the most important skills you can learn. Improve your money management skills and become a more informed consumer. Learn to distinguish between wants and needs; identify, set, and evaluate goals; and track expenses and income.



## Exploring My Financial Future

### Spark Activity: Planning Your Dream Vacation

Think for a moment about taking a trip with your family. Where do you want to go? What do you want to do? Sit down with your family and start developing a plan and a budget. How will you get there? How much will it cost? Where will you stay? Explore the differences in cost for lodging, food, and entertainment. What would happen if your budget for the trip was cut in half? What would you change?

What else can you plan and budget for? Maybe a family celebration like a birthday party? Or redecorating your bedroom? Or planning for trade school or college after you graduate from high school?



## 4-H Project Levels and Goals

### Beginner

- Study real-life financial scenarios
- Study future careers
- Set SMART goals
- Create spending plans

### Intermediate

- Learn to manage financial records
- Choose payment methods
- Manage credit

### Advanced

- Develop a physical representation of the career or business product such as a model, prototype or display/portfolio that includes images of accomplished work
- Learn how Microsoft Excel can be used to help track finances

## Put Your Project Into Action

### Show Your Skills

- Create a display that explains needs versus wants
- Set SMART goals for yourself and create a display showing your progress in meeting your goals
- Research two banks and create a display explaining the differences of opening a savings account at each

### Service and Leadership

- Plan a fundraiser for something you believe in
- Organize a dress resale for prom
- Volunteer to be your 4-H club treasurer
- Become a Digital Ambassador and teach others about safely using online resources

### Entrepreneurship

- Explore your favorite hobby and consider how to turn it into a business and write a business plan
- Manage a garage sale
- Create a business where you shop best deals for consumers
- Create a small business selling something you created from a 4-H project

### Technology Connection

- Spreadsheets for tracking income and expenses
- Online financial calculators to discover the cost of using credit
- Mobile tracking system (such as [www.mint.com](http://www.mint.com)) to track your spending for a month
- Financial planning app (such as Goodbudget)

### Connecting with a Mentor

- Community college academic advisers - learn about careers and classes you could take
- Local financial planning office
- Local bank

### Events

- 4-H Illini Summer Academies
- Local University of Illinois Extension workshops
- Take Your Child to Work Day
- Help with a church or organization fundraiser
- Class at a high school or community college about business, financial planning, and financial wellness



### Careers Related to My Financial Future

Finance Teacher  
Banker  
Accountant  
Loan Officer

Insurance Adjuster  
Certified Financial Planner  
Medical Billing Clerk

## Start a Conversation

What are the differences between a savings account, checking account, mutual funds, and CD's?

How do you decide the difference between a need and a want?

What are some goals you have? What are some things you really want to experience in the next few months?

How can we plan to accomplish the goals?

## Want to learn more?

[go.illinois.edu/4Hfinancialfuture](http://go.illinois.edu/4Hfinancialfuture)

## Explore more at Illinois 4-H!

[4-H.extension.illinois.edu](http://4-H.extension.illinois.edu)



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