



## Vermont 4-H Independent Member

### Guidelines

#### Definition

The Vermont 4-H Independent Project Member is an individual study 4-H delivery mode which involves youth participation in a planned 4-H program as 4-H Members without 4-H club affiliation. It is a self directed, planned learning experience in a specific subject matter area with limited adult direction. Examples of an independent project member include self study, home study courses, mentoring or “shadowing” with an expert. An independent 4-H member works directly with a trained adult volunteer in an informal setting but not in the traditional group setting. This adult may be a parent, mentor, project or club leader, camp counselor, teacher, or paid 4-H staff who has agreed to serve as a leader for the project. The independent project mentor/advisor must be approved and registered with the local 4-H educator and complete the leader approval process.

Being an independent 4-H member allows a young person to be a 4-H member and learn about a project of his/her choice, even if it is not available in a local 4-H club.

It gives the 4-H member an opportunity to study a non-traditional subject matter area, take a different direction in activities, or expand on an already existing project. It also gives the member the freedom to determine and complete his/her own project without being a member of an organized 4-H club.

#### Objectives

- To provide a 4-H experience for individual youth with varied abilities, interests, needs, backgrounds, and situations.
- To involve youth in the 4-H program when a 4-H club is not available in either his/her subject matter or geographic area.
- To enhance personal growth, communication skills, and family strengths.
- To encourage adults to mentor youth and for youth to bond with a caring adult.

## **Requirements of an Independent 4-H Member**

- All independent members are under the direction of an approved and registered adult mentor/advisor with expertise in the subject matter area, and the local 4-H educator.
- Members must complete a *Vermont 4-H Independent Member Application*. A *4-H Club Member Enrollment form* must be completed unless the member is previously registered.
- Independent members must utilize existing 4-H curriculum whenever possible.
- Evaluation should be conducted on an ongoing basis throughout the project, with the member designing the way to report progress toward his/her goals. The member should also plan to display, exhibit, or report on the work done in the 4-H independent project through existing local and state 4-H events.

- A 4-H independent is eligible for county and state recognition provided that the 4-H member has met all of the requirements for receiving the award.
- Complete and submit 4-H member record and appropriate project records.

### **Resources**

Whenever possible, existing 4-H curriculum must be utilized. These and additional resources are available through your local University of Vermont Extension office.

### **Adapted from:**

*4-H Independent Project Guidelines*, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Middlesex County.

**Visit Vermont 4-H on the Web:**  
**<http://www.uvm.edu/~uvmext/4hyouth/>**



[www.uvm.edu/extension](http://www.uvm.edu/extension)

# VERMONT 4-H



Name: (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Guardian Name and Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**As an Independent Member I agree to:**

- Complete Member Enrollment Form
- Complete Health History and Emergency Treatment Form
- Complete Helmet Release Form (if doing an equine project)
- Complete 4-H Member Record and appropriate project records
- Complete any form required for specific projects/events/activities
- Utilize existing 4-H juried curriculum whenever possible
- Meet with my advisor/mentor and 4-H educator periodically as determined by the Educator
- Submit records annually to the local 4-H Educator
- Consult with the 4-H Educator for specific dates of events and activities

**Participation:**

Independent Project Members are highly encouraged to participate in local, county, regional, state, and national events to experience 4-H fully. Some examples would be; fairs, field days, Regional Day, Teen Congress, etc.

A project is defined as 6-8 hours of sequential learning over a period of at least a few weeks to as long as a full 4-H year in a specific area or field.

Projects you plan to complete:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to the terms, guidelines and requirements of being an Independent 4-H Member.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member Signature

Parent Name and Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read and understand the Vermont 4-H Independent Project Guidelines. I agree to follow the guidelines in providing guidance for the project of the above named 4-H member and will be responsible for signing the 4-H Project Record.

Advisor/Mentor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor/Mentor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor/Mentor Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor/Mentor Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor/Mentor E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

4-H Educator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b><u>Office Use Only</u></b>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Member Enrollment Form	<input type="checkbox"/> Health Form	<input type="checkbox"/> Member has Completed Leader Process
<input type="checkbox"/> Independent Member Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Helmet Release Form	