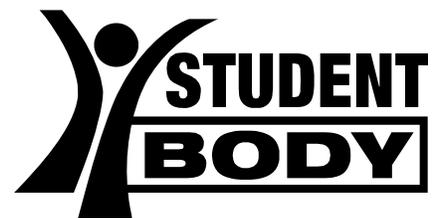




## Michigan FCCLA

# Project Ideas

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## **Families First Project Ideas**

There are many different projects that fulfill the goals of *Families First*. The projects that follow are ideas only. Members do not need to limit themselves to the projects on this list.

### **"Families Today" Project Ideas**

1. Develop a definition of family by completing the phrase, "A family is..." Invite your peers to do the same. Work with a small group to write a definition with which you all agree. Create a bulletin board with the definition and graphics that symbolize it.
2. After reviewing *Families First* materials, studying other resources, and observing families around you, make a list of traits shared by strong, united families. Publish the list, along with ideas for how young people can strengthen these traits in their families. Prepare a series of newspaper articles that describe the traits and offer tips to help family members develop them. You might invite other young people or community experts to write some of the articles. Ask the newspaper editor to publish one article each week or month.
3. Ask the mayor or city council to proclaim "Celebrate Families Day" in your community. (You might want to use the sample Family Day Proclamation from the *Get Connected...CD-ROM*.) Tie your celebration into National Family Week, the week of Thanksgiving. Or, such an event might be held between Mother's Day and Father's Day in the spring. Publicize the local celebration and hold a special event for families.
4. Sponsor a family culture festival at school or during a community event. Showcase cultural traditions of local families. Encourage other students to set up displays reflecting their families' cultural backgrounds, including information about special family traditions, foods, clothing, and activities. Send children home with a booklet of fun family activities. Distribute a list of traits shared by strong families, no matter what their cultures.
5. Make a list of your personal qualities that have been influenced by your family. Write a note thanking family members for the positive ways they have shaped your personality. Encourage other young people to do the same.
6. List all the functions your family serves. Don't forget its physical, emotional, social, and psychological accomplishments. Share your list with family members, and celebrate your family's accomplishments. As a family, write a "letter to the editor" congratulating other

families for all the roles they fill, as well. Try to have the letter published in the local paper.

7. Ask other members to lead their families in a family scavenger hunt. (See the Family Scavenger Hunt Handout on the *Get Connected...CD-ROM* for instructions.) All family members can be involved in finding the objects that symbolize the family, then putting the discoveries into a scrapbook or box. Encourage families to set this aside and make plans to look at it again in two to three years. They can then review the items and discuss how the family has changed in this period of time.
8. Sponsor a panel discussion with speakers representing different types of families—single-parent, blended, dual-earner, nuclear, extended, etc. Discuss how the family type influences decision making, family roles, etc. Ask questions about the downfalls and benefits of each family structure. At the end of the session, ask audience members to write about which structure is most effective at meeting the needs of family members.
9. Sponsor a coloring contest for elementary children, asking them to draw their families. Select a panel of judges made up of middle school and/or high school students representing different types of families. Have the judges decide which pictures will receive blue, red, and white paper ribbons. Display the drawings at a local community center, health care facility, or shopping mall with a banner that says, "Kids Know: Families Take the Prize." Post a list of upcoming *Families First* events.
10. Research the status of families served by your school. How are they structured? What cultures do they represent? How are they doing economically, socially, and emotionally? Publish your findings in the school newsletter, and make them the basis for future *Families First* projects.
11. Ask your classmates to list all the family-related news stories they see or hear in one week. List the issues reflected in the stories: rights of birth and adoptive parents, government involvement with families, public assistance, tax credits, domestic violence, etc. As a group, choose one area to explore. Stage a debate presenting facts and opinions on each side of the issue. Analyze sources from which your peers can obtain reliable information on which to base their opinions.

### **"You–Me–Us" Project Ideas**

The projects that follow are ideas only. Don't limit yourself to the projects on this list!

1. Spread the word about communication basics with the Family Communication Contract from the *Get Connected...CD-ROM*, through which you commit to work on family relationships. Distribute in Family and Consumer Sciences classes, at chapter meetings, and during *Families First* events. Remind families to use the contract by publishing articles in the school and local newspapers. Offer information and training in communication and conflict resolution. After six weeks, survey participants to see how the contract worked.
2. Give your peers an "excuse" to spend time getting to know family members. Distribute the Family Friendship Starters Worksheet from the *Get Connected...CD-ROM* and ask members to interview one or more family members. At the next class or chapter meeting, have participants share one thing they learned. Publish a newspaper article listing the

things members learned about their families. Suggest that other families conduct a similar activity.

3. Design a placemat or tray liner with information and word games/mazes related to strong family relationships. (For example, a word search on the keys to good communication or a crossword puzzle about fun things to do as a family.) Find a sponsor or use chapter funds to print the mats. Distribute them at local restaurants that are popular with families.
4. Coordinate plans for a National Family Volunteer Day (the Saturday before Thanksgiving) in your community. Work with other organizations to promote opportunities for families to volunteer together. (For resources and ideas, consult [www.pointsoflight.org/](http://www.pointsoflight.org/)) Ask the local newspaper and radio and TV stations to cover the event. At the end of the day, host a celebration for participating families. Distribute take-home brochures that share even more ideas for building strong family relationships.
5. Promote family table time. Encourage young people to plan at least one meal each week that family members will share together, without any interruptions from television, phone calls, etc. They might ask family members to take turns "hosting" the meal by planning a simple menu, coordinating its preparation, and suggesting topics to talk about.
6. Train young people to organize weekly family meetings, when families make decisions and solve problems together. After two months, survey participants to find out how many tried to set up family meetings, how many succeeded, and how the meetings went.
7. Encourage families to plan activities around a designated theme each month. Sample themes might include "new traditions," "family communication," "family council" or "learning together." Several themes could relate to other national FCCLA programs, like Financial Fitness, Student Body, or FACTS. Publish the themes, suggested family activities, and related information in the local newspaper as each month begins.
8. Collect information about how television viewing, computer games, and other media affect family relationships. Survey young people to find out how many hours they spend watching TV and using a home computer each day. Share your findings in an article or illustrated talk.
9. Present family communication lessons to elementary students. Members gather information about different types of communication, then prepare age-appropriate lessons on communication skills, understanding family members, and how to eliminate some of the stresses families face.
10. Family stories often involve a lot of fun and humor. Ask young people to collect funny family stories, then write a story or draw a cartoon depicting one. Publish the creations in a booklet. Introduce it at a "Family Laugh-In" event with skits, entertainment, and games. Emphasize that humor and fun times can strengthen family relationships.
11. Create a Web site with family-related information. Work with fellow members to research information about family communication, then present it as a tutorial on the site. The FCCLA chapter might also sponsor family community nights, set up family-related displays in school, and send holiday cards with a family message to area businesses.

### **"Meet The Challenge" Project Ideas**

The projects that follow are ideas only. Don't limit yourself to the projects on this list!

1. Sponsor a "supporting families fair" to make young people and adults aware of local organizations and agencies that work with families. Invite family-related groups to distribute information and meet with attendees. Set up performances and carnival booths for children. Offer door prizes for students who attend.
2. Help sponsor a "summit on families" in your community or neighborhood. Involve professionals and volunteers who work with families in crisis. Publicize local statistics related to domestic violence, child abuse, unemployment, poverty, and substance abuse. Discuss support systems now available to families, and develop recommendations to strengthen local family support systems.
3. Sponsor a series of "family focus" events for families. Ask local experts to teach youth and parents family coping skills like conflict management and how to deal with change. Try The Conflict Management Game Learning Activity from the *Get Connected...CD-ROM* so participants can apply some of what is learned. In the meantime, other chapter members can provide fun learning activities for younger children.
4. Publish a series of flyers with tips to help young people cope with the challenges their families face. For a start, provide the Shape Up Your Family! Flyer from the *Get Connected...CD-ROM* that describes the benefits of "family fitness"—flexibility, strength, and endurance. Follow-up topics might include family communication, conflict management, stress management, and sources of help for families. Distribute at school, local libraries, and businesses.
5. Invite students to share family-related challenges and frustrations at "sound off" sessions held during the lunch period. Help young people see they're not alone. Consider designating certain sessions for those living in stepfamilies or intergenerational households. Pass out tips for coping and information about sources of help for serious problems.
6. Invite a speaker from a domestic violence shelter, community agency, or Parents Anonymous to discuss family violence. Find out ways to deal with anger and stress without becoming violent. Focus on the family's role in violence prevention through learning activities, fair displays, bulletin boards, activities, guest speakers, news articles, workshops, and family events. Present strategies that help youth and adults prevent violence in their own lives by strengthening the family bond.
7. Help young people understand the realities of running away from home. Research the costs of living alone and not going to school. Using this information, teach a Family and Consumer Sciences class about the benefits of living together as a family and attending school. Share the information with other students, too.
8. Sponsor family nights featuring fun activities, entertainment, and stress-reducing information for family members to enjoy together. Conduct a public awareness campaign to encourage members to use fitness activities as stress-busters.
9. Illustrate the special challenges holidays present for families through a project to help shut-ins, those who are financially stressed, and others in need. Work with other members to organize a fundraiser, set up places for families to drop off donated toys and other items, and provide handmade holiday decorations. Research and publish tips to help families cope with holiday stress.
10. Learn about the needs of elderly persons or those with physical handicaps—particularly people who are living with their families. Volunteer to provide a few hours of care for a

person with these needs so family members can have a break. Set up a program to train other young people to also volunteer in this way.

11. Investigate which local agencies and organizations help families deal with challenges and crises. Publish a family services directory. Sponsor a youth tour of several of the related facilities. Also invite staff members to speak to students at school.

### **"Balancing Family and Career" Project Ideas**

1. Ask young people to list the jobs that have to be done around their households and the time each requires. Compile lists from several people, and calculate average times spent on these chores. Investigate current technology—major household appliances, small appliances, lawn equipment, computer programs, telephone options, etc.—that reduces the time families have to spend on household tasks. Hold an essay contest challenging other students to dream up technology that would do the jobs even better. Publish winning suggestions in a pamphlet, along with notes on current technology.
2. Set up a cable television show on which local employers describe the family-friendly work policies they currently offer. Invite a panel of Family and Consumer Sciences professionals, parents, and employers to discuss future efforts that could pay off for both businesses and families. To publicize the show, distribute the Family–Career Issues from the Handout from the *Get Connect...CD-ROM* to students and adults.
3. Publish a family scheduling calendar that suggests "family times" and has space to note each family member's significant upcoming events. For graphics, use children's drawings depicting their families. During FCCLA Week, remind families to use the calendar. Identify and honor families that successfully balance family, career, and community roles.
4. Survey local employers to discover the skills, abilities, and attitudes they consider most important for young workers. Make a list of the top five, then develop ideas for how those skills are also used in the family setting. Develop one-minute skits demonstrating each skill at work and at home. Once a week, put on one of the skits in a place where students gather during lunchtime. Hand out flyers that suggest steps young people can take to improve that skill, ability, or attitude in themselves.
5. Publish a directory that lists all local options for day care of children and elderly family members. Include information about state licensing requirements, costs, and tips on how families can find care that's right for them.
6. Publish a resource management newsletter for families. Include ideas for managing time, finances, housing, food, clothing, and other possessions. Also provide fun suggestions for how families can make the most of the time they "create" through better management. Ask students to take newsletters home to their families, and also distribute them at local businesses and agencies.
7. Host a "balancing family and career" day. Invite various organizations, and businesses—day care centers, play groups, after-school programs, health care providers and businesses that provide time-saving services—to set up informational booths. Develop fun carnival-type games focusing on the skills families need to successfully balance family and career. You might even stage a contest similar to kid-oriented TV game shows, with families working together to work through an obstacle course that represents typical household jobs.

8. Survey young people to discover their top 10 career choices. Then, investigate each career and how it influences the lifestyle and family time of the people who work in it. Describe the pros and cons of each choice in a computer database or school newspaper article.
9. Develop and publish a family job chart listing all the things a family must accomplish, along with spaces to write which family member will handle each. Distribute at a school sporting event. Develop a software version of the chart that families can use on their computers. Post it on the chapter's Web site. Or, sell it for a small fee and use the profits to support *Families First* projects.
10. Hold a family night that provides both family togetherness time and information to help families balance their roles. For example, adapt the Stretching the Budget Learning Activity from the *Get Connected...CD-ROM* for families to play together.

### **"Parent Practice" Project Ideas**

1. Build children's self-esteem by pairing chapter members with younger children through a "little pals" program. Plan group activities as well as opportunities for one-on-one tutoring or sharing. Gather chapter members occasionally to discuss what they are learning through the experience. Share these findings in the school newspaper.
2. Sponsor monthly play days for children and parents or other adult family members. Encourage both moms and dads to participate. Provide a safe environment, organized activities, and take-home tips on ways to help children learn through play.
3. Set up a program that involves young people as volunteers at a nonprofit child care center. Organize follow-up discussions to explore whether the experience met their expectations and what they learned about working with children and/or being a parent.
4. Research the average cost of having a baby in your community, including prenatal care; purchase of clothing, furniture and supplies; and delivery costs. Share your findings in a one-page flyer titled, "Babies Aren't Cheap." As a follow-up project, calculate the costs of raising a child to the age of 18.
5. Line up local resource people for a series of lunchtime presentations about what it takes to be a good parent. Ask the speakers to cover different roles and responsibilities that parents fill. Invite students and other young adults who might be considering parenthood.
6. Talk to teen parents about the trade-offs of parenting. Although they no doubt love their children, they'll probably mention several reasons to delay becoming a parent. Without mentioning the teen parents' names, create a series of posters with "10 good reasons not to become a teen parent." List and illustrate one of the teen parents' reasons on each, and post them around school.
7. If your school has a child care center, explore whether its services could be made available to parents who volunteer in elementary classrooms—more parents might be able to volunteer if they had a place for their preschool children. Present awards to parents who volunteer in the schools. Publish and distribute suggested ways other parents can become involved in their children's education or in national FCCLA programs.
8. Conduct an educational campaign to help youth and young adults realize the importance of prenatal care. Publish articles, set up displays, pass out flyers, and try to arrange for

- free health screenings. Target your efforts in places young people tend to gather, like youth centers, malls, etc. Tie the activity into Student Body efforts.
9. Research child abuse in your neighborhood or community. Produce and distribute flyers with helpful tips for how parents and other adults can keep from hurting children. List places parents can call if they need help.
  10. Hold a panel discussion on what parents want from their adolescent children and what youth want from parents. Invite both students and parents to the event, and open the discussion for questions and answers at the end.
  11. Sponsor a babysitter training course for students. (Try to partner with a local chapter of the American Red Cross, which already has a course.) Cover all the basics, from safety to fun learning activities to responsibilities. Publish a directory listing all the students who complete the course.
  12. Involve young people reading to children in their families or at a local library, child care center, hospital, or shelter. Send the children home with the Read to Succeed Flyer from the *Get Connected...CD ROM*, which encourages parents to read with children. Publicize local literacy programs so parents who don't read can learn.



## Financial Fitness Project Ideas

There are many different projects that fulfill the goals of *Financial Fitness*. The projects that follow are ideas only. Members do not need to limit themselves to the projects on this list.

### "Banking Basics" Project Ideas

1. Organize the FCCLA chapter to tour a local bank\*. Distribute a scavenger hunt form for members to fill out during the tour, and offer small rewards for those who complete it correctly. Report on the tour for the school paper.
2. Search the World Wide Web for ideas and tools to teach children about money. Present related lessons in elementary classes and at after-school enrichment programs.
3. Learn to use a computer-based banking/financial management program. Analyze different programs to see which are the most user-friendly and flexible. At a parent open house, demonstrate the various programs and explain their benefits.
4. Investigate the advantages of keeping money at a bank\*, rather than at home. Create a poster that shows the services offered by local banks\* and how these benefit the consumer. Explain the poster to Family and Consumer Sciences students.
5. Collect information from local banks\* about the fees they charge for various services. Create a table or spreadsheet that compares the fees. Confirm that all information is correct, then distribute it to other young people.
6. Create a puzzle or word search using banking\* terms, like "checking," "savings," "compounded," "FDIC," "withdrawal," and others. Set up a "Banking Basics" display in the school library. Distribute the puzzle as a handout, and offer a prize to students who complete it correctly.
7. Create a bulletin board showing "20 Ways to Save \$1 a Day." Offer tips for how young people can save money, such as cutting back on candy bars or bringing lunch from home. Include a chart that shows how much money young people can accumulate by saving \$1 a day, every day for four years and depositing it in a bank\* account that pays compound interest.
8. Offer a \$100 savings bond to the young person who saves the most money during the school year. Present the award at a school event. Find out how the student saved so much, and write up his or her tips for the school paper.

9. Partner with a local bank\* or financial services professional to sponsor teams to participate in the Stock Market Game™. Through the game, young people learn about and practice investment skills and compete for awards. Complete details and materials are available at <http://www.smg2000.org/>.
10. Investigate careers with financial institutions. Invite people who work in these careers to speak to Family and Consumer Sciences students. Introduce each speaker, and lead a question-and-answer period after they speak.

\* The words "bank" and "banking" are being used to refer to all types of financial institutions, including banks, credit unions, savings and loans, and thrifts.

### **"Cash Control" Project Ideas**

1. Ask class or chapter members to write down all the money they spend in a week. Then, ask them to work in teams to categorize and tabulate the results. Each team reports the amounts its members spent in various categories, such as food, entertainment, clothing, school supplies, etc. After comparing similarities and differences, create a spending plan that illustrates the ranges (from \$X to \$Y) that peers spend in each category. Format and print the spending plan onto tray liners and distribute them at the school cafeteria and local eateries popular with youth.
2. Collect information on local and national credit cards available to teens. Make a poster charting application requirements, interest rates, and fees. Set up the chart in a busy school area, and answer peers' questions about credit card choices.
3. Find out how much it costs each month to operate a "typical teen car." Create a skit that shows a young person discovering the monthly costs. Present the skit in Family and Consumer Sciences classes.
4. Arrange to decorate and furnish a child's room for an organization that rehabilitates or builds affordable housing for low-income families. Start by developing a project budget, then obtain funds to support it. If possible, work with the child who will live in the room and decorate with his or her favorite colors, characters, etc.
5. Create a "Generation \$" Web page with tips on how to track and plan personal spending. Link the "Generation \$" page to chapter and school Web sites.
6. Recruit a small team of young people who agree to try the "pay yourself first" principle. This involves setting aside part of all income for savings, before spending it on anything else. After the team has followed "pay yourself first" for two months, interview participants. How have they benefited from this approach? Was it difficult? Why should young people follow "pay yourself first"? Write up participants' testimonials about the benefits, and submit them to the school paper.
7. Display posters around the school challenging young people to identify how much it costs and how long it takes to pay off a \$500 item on a credit card with 18% interest when they pay only the minimum payment each month. Collect responses during one or two lunch periods. Give the correct answer (\$939 and eight years!) via the school announcements. Congratulate students who answered correctly.
8. Create a brochure telling young people what to do if they lose their wallet or purse. Include information about identity theft—the crime of using someone else's personal information for financial gain. Provide tips on how to protect against identity theft and other problems that can result from losing personal and financial documents.

9. Evaluate Web sites that allow young people to set up online spending accounts. Create a display that tells parents about how to guide their children while using such sites, along with tips for how to encourage wise spending. Set up and staff the display at an elementary school parents' event.
10. Set up a committee to develop and track an FCCLA chapter budget. Follow guidelines in the *FCCLA Chapter Handbook*, available from national FCCLA at [www.fcclainc.org](http://www.fcclainc.org) or through the *FCCLA Publications Catalog*. Include budget reports during each chapter meeting. Recognize active committee members at a chapter awards event.

### **"Making Money" Project Ideas**

1. Survey students, family members, and neighbors to discover what young people are paid to care for children, mow lawns, care for pets, wash cars, and do other odd jobs. Tabulate and chart the findings. Ask the local newspaper to publish them.
2. Use the information in The Part-Timer Puzzle from the *Get Connected...CD-ROM* to create a brochure with questions young people should consider before taking a part-time job. Hand out the brochure at a school career day.
3. Set up a small business that provides a service, like pet sitting, respite care, child care, children's birthday parties, etc. Develop business and marketing plans. After three months in business, report to Family and Consumer Sciences and business classes about business successes and roadblocks.
4. Work with other FCCLA members to organize a chapter fundraiser. Follow real-world procedures to set income goals, track sales and expenses, place orders, make deposits, and figure profit. Use proceeds to send chapter members to an FCCLA event, like state conference or the National Leadership Meeting.
5. Publish a simple brochure that explains taxes in young people's terms. Explain how youth benefit from tax spending. (For ideas, see [www.irs.gov/](http://www.irs.gov/).) Identify types of taxes, when they are paid, and how.
6. Investigate what young people do when they receive a paycheck. Prepare a talk about the benefits and dangers of various options, such as depositing the entire check, using a check-cashing service, or cashing the check. Present the talk to students in co-op and apprenticeship programs.
7. Talk to a small business owner about the financial aspects of operating the business. Create an "Entrepreneur's Financial To-Do List" showing the owner's money-related responsibilities. Ask Family and Consumer Sciences and agriculture teachers to distribute the list when they teach about entrepreneurship.
8. Set up a class to teach young people how to prepare income tax returns. Recruit members to work with other volunteers through the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program to help students and elderly citizens prepare their returns. Share your know-how by publishing tax tips for working students in the school paper.
9. Create a bulletin board with sample forms that workers must fill out and reports they may receive, such as an employee data sheet, INS Form I-9, IRS Form W-4, W-2, 1099, and state and federal tax returns. Display the bulletin board near an office where students check about part-time jobs. Offer a lunchtime workshop to help youth workers understand and use the forms and reports.

## **"Consumer Clout" Project Ideas**

1. Make up a list of items a "typical" young person might buy for back-to-school use. Collect prices, and compare the cost of buying these items locally versus traveling to another community or an outlet center to buy them. Be sure to include travel costs! Publish a fact sheet with the findings, and submit it to the school paper.
2. Shop for a local social service agency's holiday gifts for needy families. First, plan a budget based on donations, then comparison shop to find the best value, quality, and usefulness for gift recipients. Share the experience and results at a chapter-sponsored youth volunteer fair.
3. Create a display that illustrates consumers' rights and responsibilities. Set it up at a community festival or local shopping mall, and distribute copies of a Consumer Rights & Responsibilities Flyer.
4. Form teams and practice for the "LifeSmarts Ultimate Consumer Challenge," an online game of consumer skills that covers personal finance, health, safety, the environment, and consumer law. (Check it out at [www.lifesmarts.org](http://www.lifesmarts.org).)
5. Teach a lesson about advertising practices at a Family and Consumer Sciences class or FCCLA chapter meeting. Challenge participants to create television-style commercials using some tricky advertising techniques. Videotape participants' commercials. Later, edit the tapes and add commentary about how to analyze advertisements. Ask school and local cable TV stations to air the tape.
6. Invite young people to be part of a "Personal Style on a Budget" fashion demonstration. Challenge peers to put together, then model, popular and stylish looks at the lowest possible price. Host the fashion show during lunch period.
7. Distribute the Responsible Giving Flyer from the *Get Connected...CD-ROM* during school and community events at holiday and tax times. Survey people about ways they decide how to "spend" their charitable contributions. Create a home page that contains survey results and the flyer's tips. Link it to chapter and school Web sites.
8. Sponsor a poster contest with the theme, "Escape the Scams!" Challenge each participant to create a poster that illustrates a particular type of consumer scam, such as bogus scholarship offers, pyramid schemes, telemarketing fraud, etc. Offer a prize to the winner, and display all entries at a school open house.
9. Teach children how to be smart consumers. Present lessons at an after-school enrichment program or in elementary classrooms.
10. Research careers in consumer services and consumer and family resources. Identify companies and agencies in your community that employ people in these careers. Create a flyer or pamphlet that shares this information and explains the various related careers. Distribute your flyer/pamphlet at a school career fair.

## **"Financing Your Future" Project Ideas**

1. Create a bulletin board showing items young people might buy on a vacation trip. Challenge other youth to match a list of prices to the correct items on the bulletin board. Students with all answers correct win coupons for "two-for-one" or free food items, donated by a local restaurant and featuring menu items that young people might encounter when traveling, such as international cuisines.

2. Research the costs of setting up an apartment, including rent, utilities, insurance, furnishings, and security deposits. After shopping for the best buys, make a videotape that shows sample apartments and furnishings in various price ranges.
3. Set up a computer with an Internet connection and invite young people to take the "Reality Check" on [www.jumpstart.org](http://www.jumpstart.org). Nearby, create a display that shows the pro's and con's and related costs of financial choices given in the "reality check"—eating at home vs. going out; car vs. public transportation; utility, entertainment and personal care choices; insurance, etc. Ask youth to "sign in" on a log book and share their reactions to the information they discovered on the computer and in the display. Summarize and report on these responses in a report for the school's newsletter.
4. Invite financial services professionals to speak to Family and Consumer Sciences classes about why and how young people should build solid financial habits.
5. Set up an "Affording College" seminar. Invite speakers from the school guidance department, bank loan departments, and college and job training institutes' financial aid offices. Publicize to students and families. To boost attendance, ask businesses to contribute door prizes. Emphasize that most workers will need some advanced training, so most families need to know about funding possibilities.
6. Teach a lesson about insurance to a Family and Consumer Sciences class and hand out a flyer that describes insurance types and benefits.
7. Offer several "scholarship search sessions." Encourage sophomores and juniors to participate, because the most effective scholarship searches start early! Collect scholarship-related resources from the guidance office, library, and World Wide Web. Ask participants to work in teams to research scholarships for which they might be eligible. Enter the information into a computer database, and make it available to other students. Track and publicize the total scholarship funds received by young people who participate in the scholarship search sessions.
8. Investigate the costs of having a baby and raising it through the first year, including medical expenses, housing, clothing, furnishings, food, and supplies like diapers and bottles. Identify ways families might save on some of the expenses. Create a brochure that shares the information, and distribute it at medical offices.
9. Interview a financial services professional, such as a financial planner, investment adviser, insurance agent, etc. Create a one-page written report about the person's career, including daily work, education/training requirements, pro's and con's of the career choice, and salary ranges. Collect reports from several members, and place them in a notebook in the school's guidance office, career center, or library.
10. Organize the FCCLA chapter and its supporters to present the "Welcome to the Real World!" program and simulation (order from the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Catalog at <https://pubsplus.illinois.edu/browsedollars.html>). Invite newspaper reporters to attend the simulation and report on students' financial learning.



## STAR Events Project Ideas

*Note: Consult current national FCCLA materials for updated STAR Events information. STAR Events, including number of events, event names and guidelines, are subject to change.*

**Note: These project ideas may not completely fulfill the national STAR Events guidelines! They are provided as “thought provokers” to start members thinking about their own projects.**

### **Applied Technology**

*This individual or team event recognizes participants who develop a project using technology and show evidence of problem solving, critical thinking and integration of applied communication, math and/or sciences skills in a family and consumer sciences and/or related occupations area.*

- Create a PowerPoint presentation about money management.
- Create a video about preschoolers’ mental development.
- Conduct computer diet analysis for high school students.
- Create a computer program or home page that explores a family and consumer sciences career.
- Develop a fashion photo essay about fall fashion trends. Using technology, shoot and develop photos and produce a portfolio with captions.
- Analyze the advertising and consumer education components of web sites that target children.
- Analyze how home computers influence family nutrition and wellness.

## **Chapter Service Project**

*This team event recognizes chapters that develop and implement an in-depth service project that makes a worthwhile contribution to families, schools, communities and family and consumer sciences and/or related occupations skills.*

- Conduct a seatbelt check in the school parking lot.
- Sponsor a schoolwide food drive built around the USDA's Food Guide Pyramid.
- Teams up with a clothing bank to operate a classy boutique for homeless teens. Every few months the "store" offers school clothes, sports equipment and gifts. Members set up displays and serve as fashion consultants. The clothing bank identifies teens eligible to receive free merchandise.

## **Entrepreneurship**

*This individual or team event recognizes participants who develop a plan for a small business using family and consumer sciences and/or related occupations skills and knowledge of sound business practices.*

- Study the market and develop a business plan for a company providing personal and home care for elderly residents, as well as respite care for families with ill or handicapped members.
- Invite an interior designer or other entrepreneur to discuss the ups and downs of owning a housing-related business. Incorporate this information into the business plan you develop for the Entrepreneurship event.

## **Focus on Children**

*This individual or team event recognizes participants who use family and consumer sciences and/or related occupations skills to plan and conduct a child development project that has a positive impact on children.*

- Sponsor a family fun night for parents of young children.
- Obtain costumes to dress as Vince & Larry, Buckle Bear or McGruff, and visit elementary classrooms.
- Create an activity book for Head Start parents.
- Develop and present nutrition games for elementary students.
- Develop a series of self-esteem-building programs for elementary students. Feature fun activities while educating children to make positive lifestyle choices.
- Decorate and furnish a child's room through a local program that builds low-cost housing.
- Teach first graders about proper nutrition and the food guide pyramid. Teach them how to make nutritious snacks at home, and let them practice.
- Conduct age-appropriate conflict management and violence prevention activities with children.
- Create a project that includes money management lessons and/or entrepreneurship experiences for youngsters.

### **Illustrated Talk**

*This individual event recognizes participants for their ability to make a presentation about life issues concerning family and consumer sciences and/or related occupations.*

- Develop a presentation about why young people need to become aware of careers and how FCCLA chapters can help.
- Develop a presentation about the challenges people face as they try to integrate work and life.
- Suggest specific ways young people can build the skills they need through FCCLA.
- Develop a presentation that reflects research on eating disorders and explains how FCCLA members can avoid related pitfalls and/or help peers.
- Develop a presentation about local low-income housing needs or some other current issue related to housing.
- Develop a presentation about the effects drinking and drugs have on an unborn child.
- Develop a presentation that addresses the need for financial management education.

### **Interpersonal Communications**

*This individual or team event recognizes participants who use family and consumer sciences and/or related occupations skills to develop an individual, school or community project designed to strengthen interpersonal communications and apply communication knowledge and skills to similar situations.*

- Teach middle school students how to “just say no” (refusal skills).
- Teach peers how to communicate effectively with parents.
- Surveys concerns and communication needs of teens and parents. Report results in school and local newspapers and offer communication-improvement tips with the daily school announcements.
- Research family relations and communication techniques for conflict resolution. Demonstrate an understanding of the information by developing various case studies and offering solutions for each.

### **Job Interview**

*This individual event recognizes participants who use family and consumer sciences and/or related occupations skills to develop a portfolio, participate in an interview and communicate a personal understanding of job requirements.*

- Assess your current earning potential. Identify skills you could use to offer services, such as child care or home maintenance, then investigate current rates for such services. Use this information as the basis for a Job Interview entry.
- Research appropriate dress for job interviews, then demonstrate your findings at a chapter meeting. Encourage members to use this information while preparing for the Job Interview event.



## STOP the Violence Project Ideas

There are many different projects that fit *STOP the Violence*. The projects that follow are ideas only. Members do not need to limit themselves to the projects on this list. Please note that all FCCLA national programs are subject to change. See [www.fcclainc.org](http://www.fcclainc.org) for current information.

### Anger Management Sample Projects

The Twin Falls High, Idaho, FCCLA chapter organized an assembly program to help sophomores and juniors learn how to deal with their anger. The program featured the STOP the Violence introductory candle presentation and video, as well as a guest speaker. Later, several hundred students signed a poster pledging to manage their anger.

Anger management emerged as a top concern when the Page County High, Shenandoah, Va., FCCLA chapter completed its Local Snapshot. Blue Ribbon Panel members spoke about the issue at a meeting that included 300 members of FCCLA and the school's other career and technical student organizations. The chapter created an anger management public service announcement (PSA), spoke with the elementary school's PTA, presented information in classes, and asked peers to sign a "resolution of respect" pledge. Members also distributed 250 plastic cups imprinted with guidelines for good sportsmanship.

Harrison High, Ark., FCCLA members taught fourth graders about anger management. The members visited fourth grade classrooms at four schools. The lessons covered the consequences of unhealthy anger, internal and external cues to anger, and anger triggers. Members led the children through role plays to practice handling various situations without expressing their anger in negative ways.

The Louisa County Middle School, Mineral, Va., FCCLA chapter bought "stress balls" that help people take out their stress and aggressions on a harmless inanimate object, rather than other people or property. The chapter donated "stress balls" for use in the in-school suspension room, isolated classroom environment, and principals' and resource officers' offices. These donations emphasized the chapter's focus on anger management and violence prevention—and were so useful that the adults in each situation requested more!

## **“Break the Code of Silence” Sample Projects**

The Louisa Co. High, Mineral, Va., FCCLA chapter conducted a survey to ask how students would react if they knew an act of violence was likely. Of the respondents, 33% of girls and 36% of guys said they would not report what they knew. Another 50% of both genders said they might or might not. Concerned about these responses, the chapter held a Violence Awareness Week that included school TV announcements and a Silence Day. The week ended with a Promise Day, when students signed a pledge to break the “code of silence” in their school.

At Cross Creek High, Ga., the FCCLA chapter presented two weeks of activities that encouraged students to break the “code of silence.” One highlight was a chapter-organized assembly that featured a one-act play presented by the drama department. The chapter’s Blue Ribbon Panel then discussed why and how to report potential violence. Students, parents, and teachers later signed a STOP the Violence banner and pledge cards.

The Skyline High, Idaho Falls, Idaho, FCCLA chapter worked with the school’s conflict mediators, vice principal, and media center specialist to set up an anonymous tips box. Members designed the box, had it constructed by a woodworking class, and publicized that it was available. The box is located just outside the media center so students can drop in a note if they suspect violence will occur. The vice-principal and media center specialist check the box twice a day.

The Pickerington High, Ohio, FCCLA chapter raised student awareness of the need to report potential violence. The chapter publicized a new reporting Web site and 800# hotline set up by the school.

## **Bullying Prevention Sample Projects**

When Woodward High, Okla., FCCLA members surveyed fellow students, nearly half said bullying was a serious problem at the school. The chapter organized three assemblies that featured presentations by their Community Resource Leaders, as well as a nationally known speaker. (The local Chamber of Commerce funded the speaker’s fee!) They also gave presentations to second graders and shared related videos with grades 5-12. As a result of students’ concerns and the chapter’s efforts, the school district added a policy on harassment [bullying] to the student handbook.

At Mifflinburg Middle School, Penn., the FCCLA chapter showed the STOP the Violence video and presented a member-written skit at four assemblies for students in grades 5-8. The chapter also sponsored a poster contest, asked peers to sign “no harassment” pledge cards, and set up a “bully box” so students could anonymously report problems.

The John P Stevens High, Edison, N.J., FCCLA chapter’s “STOP the Bullying” project involved 550 sixth graders at two middle schools. FCCLA members presented three workshops for the younger students. The sessions included several STOP the Violence learning activities, including the violence continuum, violence definition posters, and a peer pledge. The school resource

officer spoke to sixth graders about resources to help young people solve problems without violence.

The Midvale High, Idaho, FCCLA chapter introduced a “Self-Control Patrol” to third and fourth graders. Members visited elementary classrooms to teach about bullying and its consequences. They helped youngsters understand what bullying is and what they can do about it.

When the West Forest Jr./Sr. High, Tionesta, Penn., FCCLA chapter surveyed upper elementary students, at least half of the younger students said they feel helpless to stop a bully. The chapter hosted a “Festival of Peace” to teach fourth, fifth, and sixth graders the skills they need to deal with bullies. (A local organization, Focus on Forest’s Future, contributed \$1,000 to fund the event.) Members set up learning stations with fun activities to teach the children about conflict resolution, negotiation, anger control, self-esteem, bullying prevention, and positive communication. During the overnight event, both members and younger students learned, laughed, and had fun.

For its bullying prevention program, the Enterprise High, Ore., FCCLA chapter used an anti-bullying curriculum provided by the school’s student assistance coordinator. The project kicked off with an assembly for grades 1-3. FCCLA members put on skits that involved masked superhero “STOP Man” showing ways to be kind. Teams of members then visited elementary classrooms and distributed STOP bracelets to remind the youngsters to be kind. The chapter also sponsored a week-long “Stop, Think Twice, Be Kind” contest at the elementary school. Teachers were given apple cut-outs. Whenever a teacher observed a child being kind, he or she placed an apple with the student’s name on a giant paper tree. By the end of the week, the tree was so full of apples that the chapter rewarded all 97 elementary students with a party.

### **Conflict Resolution Sample Projects**

FCCLA members at Rockbridge Middle School, Fairfield, Va., set out to teach their peers how to resolve conflicts in a positive manner. The chapter kicked off its project by challenging students to create posters that illustrated nonviolent problem solving. Winning contest entries were framed and hung in the local hospital for six weeks. Members then presented conflict resolution learning activities during teacher advisories each day during February. Later, the chapter hosted a party for every student who signed a conflict resolution pledge and did not get a discipline referral for two months.

The Pryor High, Okla., FCCLA chapter used the CHARACTER COUNTS! program to provide positive reinforcement for positive interactions. The chapter presented information on the local cable channel, sponsored a poster contest, asked peers to sign a wall-size good character pledge, and worked with local 4-H clubs and Head Start students. The Optimists club asked them to speak after seeing their project on TV.

As part of a widespread campaign to spread the word about youth violence prevention, Riverheads High, Staunton, Va., FCCLA members handed out wallet cards with steps to resolve conflicts. They reminded young people they could choose to solve problems without violence.

The Holyoke High, Colo., FCCLA chapter invited junior high students to write essays about conflicts they had seen or experienced. Then, members trained their junior high peers in conflict resolution. The training included role plays based on students' essays, along with a discussion of peaceful solutions for each situation.

### **Peer Mediation Sample Projects**

The Selah High, Wash., FCCLA chapter and its Community Resource Leaders established a peer mediation program at their school. Members identified a peer mediation curriculum and obtained necessary approvals for a program. They recruited mediators and arranged for training. A student committee that included FCCLA members determined the role of peer mediators in the school.

At Page County High, Shenandoah, Va., FCCLA members presented peer mediation workshops to fellow Family and Consumer Sciences students.

### **Respecting Differences Sample Projects**

FCCLA members at McAlester High, Okla., were concerned that students in their school segregated into groups that didn't mix much. Members created brochures and tabletop displays about surviving cliques. They wrote and presented skits about how to handle misunderstandings that can result from individual differences. The chapter also presented workshops at a county health fair for seventh graders, trained freshmen to be part of STOP the Violence, and created videos on respecting differences for the Board of Education and students. In addition, they informed fellow students about school organizations (like FCCLA!) that would give them a chance to belong and take positive action.

The Jeff Davis High, Hazlehurst, Ga., FCCLA chapter taught first and second graders about respecting differences, getting along with others, and practicing good manners. The elementary school reported 30 percent fewer discipline referrals the following week.

"No curriculum area in our school focuses on respecting yourself and others," report leaders of the Fulda High, Minn., Sr. FLA/FCCLA chapter. The chapter stepped in to fill the gap. During a three-hour "Respect Retreat," the FCCLA chapter, student council, and National Honor Society taught 100 seventh and eighth graders. The Friday afternoon program featured presentations by the chapter's Community Resource Leaders, plus hands-on activities focused on teamwork, trust building, conflict resolution, and communication.

Many of the people the Mynderse Academy Senior High, Seneca Falls, N.Y., FCCLA chapter interviewed for its STOP the Violence Local Snapshot expressed concern that ignoring small acts of violence can lead to larger acts of violence. The chapter decided to focus younger students' attention on the importance of recognizing violence and respecting differences. FCCLA members visited two seventh grade classrooms. During their presentations, they had students define violence and shared information about hate crimes. Members worked with their young peers to make posters that encouraged others to respect differences and resist violence.

The Selah High, Wash., FCCLA chapter worked to change eighth graders' attitudes about cliques and respecting others. During a training session, members gave each eighth grade participant a puzzle piece that described a type of difference that could lead to teasing from their peers. Students had to find other people with corresponding pieces and put together their puzzle. When the pieces came together, the back of the puzzle read, "Respect Differences." FCCLA members used the puzzle activity to launch a discussion about the need to respect differences and treat others kindly.

"Mix It Up @ Lunch Day" was a new component in the Fairbury High, Nebr., FCCLA chapter's STOP the Violence Week. During the school's two lunch periods, FCCLA members paired off students with other students they did not usually hang out with. Chapter leaders report on its success: "for the first time, many students broke out of the cliques they had been accustomed to and spent the lunch period with a different group of people." (For guidelines on launching a "Mix It Up @ Lunch" effort at your school, see [www.tolerance.org/teens/.](http://www.tolerance.org/teens/))

### **Unwanted Touching and Dating Violence Sample Projects**

FCCLA members at Chapel Hill High, Ga., decided to focus on dating violence after learning about domestic violence in a family and consumer sciences (FACS) class. They created posters for the school hallway, along with informative "take one" brochures. The chapter hosted an assembly for FACS, health occupations, and public safety students. A woman whose daughter was a violence victim shared tips for how students could recognize, prevent, and respond to violence in their relationships. Project funds were provided by the county board of health. A local grocery store donated a continental breakfast for the highest-contributing class, and a t-shirt company reduced its prices on chapter STOP the Violence shirts in return for having its name printed on them.

The Highmore High, S.Dak., FCCLA chapter sponsored a workshop on dating violence for high school juniors and seniors. The director of a local domestic violence shelter covered the topic in interactive sessions on two days.

After a regional survey showed that one-third of local 14- to 17-year-old girls knew someone who had been physically or sexually abused by a dating partner, FCCLA chapters at Essex High, Tappahannock, Va., chose unwanted touching as their project area. Members promoted essay and poster contests for Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Awareness Month in October. Members used the winning student essay to create a skit on dating violence. Members took first prize for presenting their skit at a regional youth leadership conference.

The Page County High, Shenandoah, Va., FCCLA chapter sponsored a "Date and Sexual Violence Awareness Week" in September. On Monday, the chapter gave "Love Shouldn't Hurt" ribbons and pencils to 450 students who signed a "Dater's Bill of Rights." The following days featured related videos, learning activities, and speakers in Family and Consumer Sciences classes. In the following weeks, chapter members continued to educate their peers and the community with public service announcements, posters, and a traveling display.

FCCLA members at Elgin/New Leipzig High, N.Dak., taught the ninth grade Family and Consumer Sciences class and eighth grade health class about date rape. Their PowerPoint® presentation covered date rape effects, causes, who's at risk, and what to do when encountered with a potentially dangerous situation. After the slide show, members encouraged discussion and quizzed students about what they had learned.

### **Verbal Violence Prevention Sample Projects**

“ From the Local Snapshot, we found that students were not aware of the violence that verbal abuse can cause,” reports the Evans High, Ga., FCCLA chapter. Members organized a STOP the Violence Week during FCCLA Week. Videos and lessons related to verbal violence were presented in classes. During lunchtime, students signed pledges to “Erase Verbal Violence.” The 976 students who signed (almost 60% of the student body) received erasers to remind them of their commitment.

At Eureka Jr. Sr. High, Kans., the FCCLA chapter and student council worked together to teach elementary students about the power of words. The chapter received a grant from the Kansas State Board of Education to create and present lessons for all six elementary grades. Members arranged for a speaker to discuss verbal violence with high school students during FCCLA Week.

The LaMonte High, Mo., FCCLA chapter discovered verbal violence was a concern of both their peers and the chapter's Community Resource Leaders. Members organized related assemblies for three grade groupings, as well as in-service training for teachers. The high school students' presentation included a play, while grades 5-8 focused on how to manage their anger and grades K-4 learned about respect.

Members of the Selah High, Wash., FCCLA chapter wrote a skit to show middle-level students how to use kind words to stop fights.

At McClave High, Colo., 30% of students and staff said they encounter verbal violence every day at school. The FCCLA chapter set up an assembly to address the problem with sixth through twelfth graders. The program included a chapter-created slide presentation on the problem, followed by a panel of speakers who also answered questions from students.

FCCLA members at McAlester High, Okla., were concerned that students in their school segregated into groups that didn't mix much. The chapter set out to raise awareness and increase respect for differences among people. Members created brochures and tabletop displays about surviving cliques. They wrote and presented skits about how to handle misunderstandings that can result from individual differences. The chapter also presented workshops at a county health fair for seventh graders, trained freshmen to be part of STOP the Violence, and created videos on respecting differences for the Board of Education and students. In addition, they informed fellow students about school organizations (like FCCLA!) that would give them a chance to belong and take positive action.

## Youth Violence Prevention Awareness Sample Projects

The Oklahoma Union, South Coffeyville, Okla., FCCLA chapter raised violence prevention awareness for students in all grade levels. Grades pre-K through 1 made hand-shaped cut-outs and promised to solve problems peacefully. Members presented interactive skits to students in grades two through five and sponsored a poster contest for fourth and fifth graders. For grades seven and eight, the chapter put on a play to illustrate the loss of young people through violence. High school students completed a variety of STOP the Violence learning activities, and the chapter hosted a presentation by its Community Resource Leaders as a Blue Ribbon Panel.

A *STOP the Violence* assembly sponsored by the E.C. Glass High, Lynchburg, Va., FCCLA chapter involved the mayor, police chief, and a poetic reading. The keynote speaker was a local father whose son is serving life in prison without parole for shooting two peers. After the assembly, students could pick up related information from local agencies interested in youth violence prevention, such as domestic violence shelters, forensic nurses, and the YWCA.

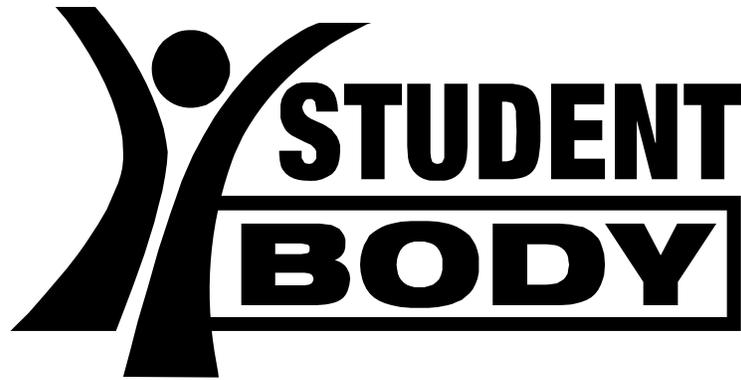
To raise awareness of violence prevention, the Northwestern Lehigh High, New Tripoli, Penn., FCCLA chapter set up a coffeehouse in the school auditorium. Throughout the evening, students presented artwork, songs, and poetry that promoted peace, acceptance, and diversity.

The FCCLA chapter at Abelardo Diaz Alfaro High, Toa Alta, Puerto Rico, took to the streets with a *STOP the Violence* community march. The chapter also raised violence prevention awareness with surveys, lessons for students, and workshops for parents.

The Gate City High, Va., FCCLA chapter held a “Black Ribbon Week.” Each day, six students wore black ribbons to represent the six U.S. young people killed each day because of youth violence. The 30 students with black ribbons gathered on stage during an end-of-the-week assembly. FCCLA members explained STOP the Violence and encouraged their peers to help recognize, report, and reduce youth violence.

As part of the James River High, Midlothian, Va., chapter’s “Links for Peace” project, members started one day with 20 helium-filled balloons that had 3" x 5" cards attached. The balloons represented the hope of nonviolence, and each balloon changed hands at least 10 times during the school day. Each balloon recipient wrote a peace-related message on the card before passing it on.

The Highmore High, S.Dak., FCCLA chapter served coffee and showed the *STOP the Violence* video during halftimes and between the JV and varsity games.



## Student Body Project Ideas

There are many different projects that fit Student Body. The projects that follow are ideas only. Members do not need to limit themselves to the projects on this list. Please note that all FCCLA national programs are subject to change. See [www.fcclainc.org](http://www.fcclainc.org) for current information.

### "Eat Right" Project Ideas

- Encourage families to eat a variety of healthy foods (one key to good nutrition!) by distributing a grocery shopping list organized within the USDA Food Guide Pyramid. Start with a "Healthy Shopping List Template", then fill in specific items.
- Encourage young people to drink water as a way to control weight, maintain healthy skin, and stay well. Make sure school vending machines offer bottled water as a choice. Encourage the athletic department to install a water cooler or drinking fountain in the exercise room. Post information about water's health benefits nearby.
- Hold a "Tastes Great—Eat Right" nutritious snacks contest. Invite young people to submit the recipe for their favorite nutritious snack. Identify the 10 most nutritious entries, then have those youth prepare their snacks for judges to select the three most tasty choices. Announce the winners at a "tasting event" for all students, complete with samples of the winning snacks. Distribute the top 10 recipes, along with tips for nutritious snacking.
- Teach upper elementary children the basics of food safety, like washing hands, rinsing fruits and vegetables, cleaning work surfaces, etc. Demonstrate problem situations and good practices and give the kids a chance to practice while preparing a simple snack. Encourage the youngsters to follow food safety procedures when preparing snacks and helping with meals at home.
- Inform athletes that good nutrition can improve their performance. Start by distributing questionnaires asking the current season's athletes about their eating habits. Explore what nutrition myths they have picked up. Schedule a series of sessions, just before sports practices, that explain how to eat right for that sport. Arrange for a health professional to talk with the players. Provide nutritious snacks and drinks after practice once a week.
- Start a "Never Say No to Breakfast" campaign. Set up displays inside the school's entrance highlighting the many breakfast food possibilities. Hold food tastings and some short cooking lessons. Have a nutritionist explain the importance of breakfast. Distribute

a "Never Say No to Breakfast! Handout". End the campaign with a free breakfast celebration in the school cafeteria.

- Educate young people about the dangers and warning signs of eating disorders. Distribute a "Warning Signs of Eating Disorders Flyer". Provide information about where young people can seek help if they believe they or a friend may have an eating disorder. Warn them about dangerous Web sites that actually encourage and promote eating disorders as a "lifestyle."
- Have a "NutriDay" at school. Ask the cafeteria to serve no sweets or soft drinks. Close off "junk food" and soda vending machines. Offer a nutritious snack break at mid-morning. Ask students to donate the money they would have spent on low-nutrition snacks that day to a local agency that feeds hungry people, such as a food pantry or homeless shelter.
- Publish a book of healthy recipes that use only ingredients that may be purchased with food stamps. Ask Cooperative Extension agents, social service agencies, and food pantries to distribute them to families in need. Also conduct a food drive to collect nutritious, nonperishable foods to stock a local food pantry.
- Collect newspaper, newsletter, and magazine articles related to dietary supplements, like vitamins, herbal remedies, "energy boosters," etc. (Ask Family and Consumer Sciences teachers, health professionals, and family members to help collect articles.) Organize the collection according to the specific type of supplement it covers. Use critical thinking skills to analyze the related articles. Do the articles agree? Which information comes from the most reliable sources? What do the articles recommend about using supplements? Create a bulletin board that shares accurate information about two or three supplements that might be most "tempting" to young people.
- Sponsor a seminar for students who are following or considering a vegetarian diet. Provide a "Vegetarian Food Guide Pyramid" and tips for healthy eating as a vegetarian. Explain different kinds of vegetarianism—many vegetarians do eat fish, eggs, and dairy products. Invite participants to return for a "veggie potluck" two weeks later. Discuss the nutritional strengths and weaknesses of the foods participants bring to that lunch or dinner.
- Promote the importance of consuming enough calcium, especially among young women. (Only 19% of adolescent girls consume enough calcium each day. That can lead to serious health problems, including osteoporosis.) Set up a morning snack bar that sells calcium-rich foods like milk, cheese, yogurt, fortified orange juice, etc. Offer free tastes of different kinds of calcium-rich foods. Distribute tips on how young people build bones with calcium and exercise.

### **Student Body "Be Fit" Project Ideas**

- Sponsor a walk-a-thon, dance-a-thon, or exercise-a-thon to raise money for a worthy, health-related cause. Look for youth and adult partners to help organize and publicize the event. Ask local stores to donate nutritious snacks and water for the participants.
- Present fitness sessions at an after-school program for younger students. Lead fun fitness activities, and explain the benefits of exercise at all ages. Teach the children to always use safety equipment, like helmets and pads, when they exercise.

- Organize a walking club for the community's seniors. Write newspaper articles publicizing the club, and hang posters in senior villages, doctors' offices, stores, churches, and hospitals. List a name and telephone number to contact for further information. Set a time when everyone will meet to walk or split up into smaller groups. Walk with participants at least once a month to evaluate how they benefit from the club. Provide special incentives, rewards, and celebrations.
- Investigate whether there are enough places where local youth can pursue fitness goals without spending lots of money. If not, find out whether nearby health clubs would donate used equipment to set up an exercise room at a community center, YMCA/YWCA, church, or other facility. (The American Council on Exercise has a program called "Operation FitKids" that promotes such donations. For information, log on to <http://www.acefitness.org/ofk/default.aspx>.)
- Take a schoolwide survey to explore young people's attitudes about their weight, fitness level, and body image. Write an article that summarizes results for the school paper. Use the results to identify topics about which local youth need more information. Create a Web page, posters, displays, and flyers to educate peers about those topics. (For example, if the topic is body image, use the "It's What's Inside That Counts! Body Image Tips" from the Get Connected... CD-ROM to promote healthy attitudes.)
- Research what types of exercise injuries are most common among local youth by talking to sports coaches, health club trainers, and medical professionals. Gather accurate information about how young people can avoid exercise injuries. Present five-minute "clinics" to teach related skills during lunch periods, before sports practices, at the mall, and in other places young people gather.
- Organize a fashion show spoof to promote use of exercise safety equipment. Recruit popular athletes to model the "latest fashions" in helmets, pads, mouth guards, wrist guards, etc. Ask local businesses to donate safety equipment door prizes. Distribute information about how young people can avoid exercise injuries.
- The percentage of children and adolescents who are obese has nearly tripled since 1980, and many experts are concerned about the health consequences for these young people. Gather information about youth obesity, then draw attention to related health problems. Be careful! It is important that you not "target" overweight youth or make them feel badly about themselves. (Two resources to consult are [www.bodypositive.com/childwt.htm](http://www.bodypositive.com/childwt.htm) and the nutrition section of <http://www.brightfutures.org/>.) It is also important that your efforts don't encourage normal-weight youth to start dieting. Probably the best way to address teen obesity is to get everyone moving with a fun fitness campaign. You might also create a Web page that local young people can consult. Link to a tool (such as [www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/bmicalc.htm](http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/bmicalc.htm)) that allows them to privately estimate their body mass index. Provide tips on how to lower it, if necessary, into the "normal" range through healthful eating and exercise.
- Encourage families to "Be Fit" together. Hold a "Family Fun Night," when families can try a variety of fitness activities, like rollerblading, lifting weights, biking, cross-country skiing, or fitness walking. Distribute a list of "20 Free Fitness Activities" from the Get Connected... CD-ROM. Challenge families to keep track of their joint exercise times. Offer a prize for the family that finds the most time for fitness during the following month.

- About six weeks before the winter holidays or graduation, survey students about fitness products (like racquets, shoes, exercise machines, videotapes, etc.) that are on their gift "wish lists." Research the three most popular items. Investigate what each product claims to do, whether it really does that, how safe it is, and how much it costs. Create a bulletin board for each type of fitness product. Share your research, and suggest places where gift-givers might buy the product, along with less costly and/or more effective alternatives. Also summarize the information for a local newspaper article and have it published in time for gift shopping.
- Present a daily "Fitness Burst" during particularly stressful times at school, like finals or standardized tests. Via the school's television system and/or with FCCLA members in each homeroom, lead students through a one-minute exercise, like marching in place, stretching, or dancing. Explain that regular exercise helps people manage stress and emotions.

### **Student Body "Make Healthy Choices" Project Ideas**

- Encourage peers to be tobacco-free. Obtain youth-oriented promotional materials from organizations. Promote messages like "Don't Let Your Health Go Up in Smoke" and "Quit the Spit" through posters, announcements, school TV ads, and more.
- Partner with local fast food and full-service restaurants to encourage young people and families to identify their "antidrugs"—things that are important enough to keep them away from tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs. Create table tents or tray liners that promote the idea of "antidrugs" and that encourage families to discuss their attitudes about substance use. Include several examples of "antidrugs," along with the Web site—<http://www.whatsyourantidrug.com/>—where people can learn more, register their "antidrugs," and read others' stories. Provide forms and a drop-in box for people to name their "antidrugs." Ask each restaurant to donate a prize (like a free dessert or appetizer) for one or more people who submit forms, drawn at random after a month. Have the list of prizes, winners, and their "antidrugs" published in the local newspaper.
- Be part of the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign by working with local radio stations to air "Drug Prevention PSAs". Then, expand your efforts with other drug prevention messages in print and on the air.
- Address one of the most common health problems among young people: lack of sleep! Launch a campaign to inform peers about the importance of getting enough sleep. Distribute the "Fight Fatigue Flyer" from the Get Connected... CD-ROM with tips on how to find more time for sleep and how to sleep better. Declare a "Fight Fatigue" week, and ask FCCLA members to commit to getting eight hours of sleep per night for the week. Collect reports about how this affected members' abilities to stay alert, maintain energy, and get more done. Submit some of the positive testimonials to be published in the school newspaper.
- Organize the school's observance of a national substance abuse prevention event, such as Red Ribbon Week in October or the Great American Smoke-Out in November. Obtain information and materials from a related organization. Work with other school organizations and staff to coordinate plans for special activities, like official proclamations, essay or poster contests, announcements, workshops, and assemblies. Ask the local newspaper to cover the week's events.

- Sponsor a "Positive Partners" program. The idea is to pair up young people and have them encourage and help each other make positive choices. Start with a workshop that helps partner pairs get to know each other and set goals for positive living (such as staying away from tobacco, alcohol and other drugs; managing stress; practicing good character; etc.). Ask each pair to "get together" (in person or via e-mail) at least once a week to discuss successes and challenges related to the goal. Hold a monthly Positive Partners activity to celebrate successes and teach participants about healthy lifestyle choices.
- Teach peers how to manage stress. Visit Family and Consumer Sciences classes to present a "Stress Busters" lesson. Give students the opportunity to identify things that stress them out. Then, provide ideas for ways to handle the stress. Distribute a "Stress Busters Handout".
- Focus on healthy lifestyle choices during FCCLA Week in February. Choose a different focus for each day of the week—healthy eating, fitness activities, "antidrugs," positive attitudes, etc. Include related quotes and statistics on the day's daily printed, spoken, and/or televised announcements. Hold related contests and workshops. Close the week with a fun event.
- Organize a community summit for local organizations, agencies, and individuals interested in promoting healthy lifestyle choices among young people. (Make sure young people are included as full participants!) Present information the FCCLA chapter has gathered related to local young people's eating, fitness, and healthy lifestyle choices. Ask each participating group to share its related goals and programs. Arrange for a respected community leader to lead a discussion of how the groups can work together to help local youth eat right, be fit, and make healthy choices. Ask local newspapers and cable TV stations to cover the summit and report on its recommendations and future plans.
- Set up a Student Body page on your FCCLA chapter's or school's Web site. Present reasons local young people need to eat right, be fit, and make healthy choices. Include links to Web sites where youth can find related information, games, and chat rooms. Submit a "review" of one linked Web site for each issue of the school paper.
- Create monthly displays for national health observances. Obtain and distribute related materials for young people.



## Early Childhood, Education, and Services Project Ideas

### INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

#### *"Because You and I Say So"*

The goal of this project is to learn positive ways to resolve conflicts with children. First, list examples of when children and workers disagree. Research problem-solving strategies used with children. Try different strategies on the job. Evaluate what works best. Report what you learned to your supervisor. Teach strategies to co-workers.

#### *"Intercultural Interactions"*

The goal of this project is to build strong relationships with people of other cultures. Learn about the cultures of children who are cared for where you work. Look in books and on the Internet. Talk to teachers and other workers. Find out about adult-child relationships in other cultures. Think of ways to use this information where you work. Respect cultural traditions when you interact with parents and children. Share what you learn with your co-workers.

- Research and practice qualities that make parents trust child care workers.
- Observe how personality styles influence interactions.
- Organize child-parent activities to build positive family relationships.
- Combat child abuse by teaching anger management to adults.

### MANAGEMENT SKILLS

#### *"High Expectations"*

The goal of this project is to develop high ethical standards. First, find out about organizations for people who work with children. Contact the organizations. Ask for a copy of their statement of ethics and/or professional standards. Compare the statements and standards. Make a statement of ethics for your career. Put it on a poster or plaque. Share your statement with your supervisor and fellow students.

#### *"Technology Improvements"*

The goal of this project is to improve use of technology on the job. Study how computers are used at your work site. They might be used to teach and entertain children, create bills, maintain

records, track employee work time, and more. Research one way computers could be used but are not. Visit other work sites. Talk to a computer teacher. Report your findings to your supervisor. Recommend whether or not your employer should start to use computers this way.

- Meet with your supervisor to ask for constructive criticism.
- Plan how to make the most of your time on the job.
- Recommend improvements for a church nursery.
- Organize co-workers to volunteer for an event that helps children.

## **ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS**

### ***"Local Needs"***

The goal of this project is to learn about market research. You conduct surveys and interviews to analyze if additional child care is needed in your community. Research information about the number of children who need care, what kind of care, what care is now available and how much families will pay. Summarize your findings in a report to your adviser. Evaluate whether a new child care business could make a profit. Write a press release and send it to the local newspaper.

### ***"Planning for Success"***

The goal of this project is to learn how to create a business plan. Find a child care service that does not have a business plan. It might be a nonprofit service or a small in-home business. Research information for its business plan. Write a draft of the plan. Share it with your adviser, supervisor, and its end user. Make changes. Give the finished plan to the service or business that could use it.

- Teach in-home care providers about related laws.
- Review emergency plans and train co-workers to know what to do.
- Spend unpaid time "shadowing" administrators as they handle financial aspects of a child care business.
- Research the feasibility of adding sick-child care or some other new program.