



# Exploring 4-H at Home

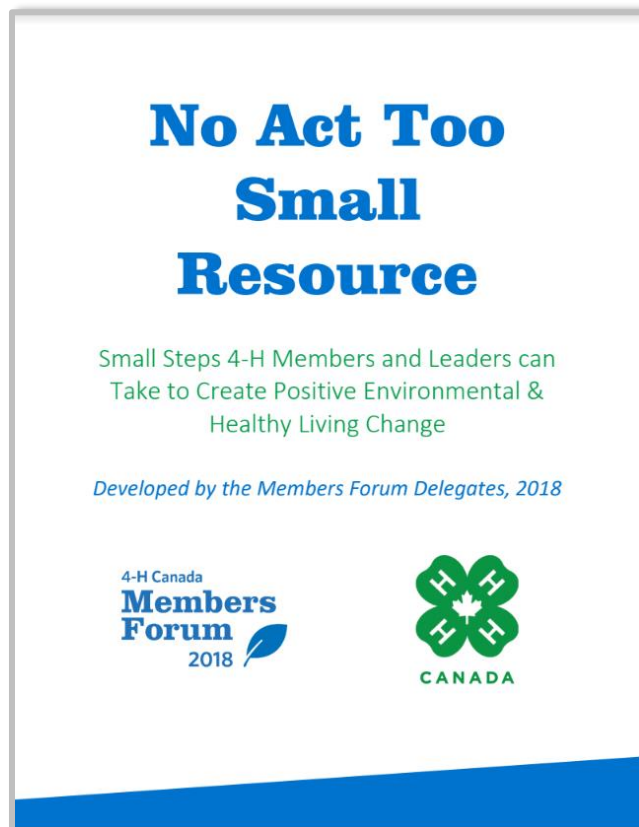


Environment & Healthy  
Living

**Pillar:** Community Engagement and Communications

**Resource:** No Act Too Small

**Activity:** Small Acts (Environment & Healthy Living)



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## Introduction

Are you being a responsible citizen by creating positive change? If you're not, the smallest of acts can create a positive outcome. The small acts of a citizen, or a 4-H club will lead to a healthier, more sustainable community within their communities, provinces, nations and the world. A small act can be defined as an action easily taken by an individual, which can be multiplied into something greater.

Small acts are "actions" which can help to create and further real change in the world. These actions are ones which, when multiplied by others doing the same (or alternative positives), will generate great changes upon many levels. They will build up over time to reverse the negative trends and impacts. From the general small acts listed within this introduction, which can apply to all issues that one might face, as well as those more specific ones which are further into this resource, **you** can work at problems which affect, concern or interest you.

General small acts aren't tied to just the Environment & Healthy Living, but make change, no matter where your interest lies. This can come in a number of different forms. Voting and writing letters to your local political representatives (municipal, provincial, federal) can be excellent ways to start. You may decide to become an advocate or educator. No matter how you decide to make change, remember to evaluate your actions and the large impact a small act can have. Lead by example and be a role model because others will follow in our footsteps!

Healthy living is mostly summarized in five categories: self-care, exercise, healthy eating, relationships, and mental health. All these categories matter at personal, club, community, provincial/ national and international levels. For example, self-care on a personal level could look like getting more sleep. A general act of this would be to sleep longer or go to bed earlier, but usually people ignore this general advice. Instead, a small act of putting your technology on the other side of the room or getting an app on your phone to shut off all apps at a certain time would ensure that you get the sleep you need.

The health and sustainability of the environment is an issue which seems daunting. Positive change can be achieved though, even through actions which are accomplished by oneself. Small acts which **you** can work at will help you, as well as your clubs, community, province/nation and the world. These acts are just small ones, which are practically as simple as doing nothing at all, as many can be achieved in minutes. For example, in order to help the environment and use less energy, you can simply turn the lights off when you leave a room. This practically minuscule action is one which one person might think is nothing, and could never help due to its size. But, when many people do as so, then great positive change can, and will, be achieved.

The options we have listed are just some of the ideas that the delegates of the 2018 member forum had came up with. Even with all of the brainstorming we did, there are still many more small acts a person can perform. So, we encourage you to read these suggestions, try out some small acts, and keep exploring for many more topics or options that would cause a positive ripple effect in your life, club, community, province/ nation, and the world. As we know, a healthier environment leads to healthier people, and these small acts are a way to make this a reality!

# Environment

## Personal

1. Turn Lights Off
  - Reduced power bill
  - Encourages exercise by turning lights off to avoid the darkness
  - Reduced personal carbon footprint
2. Composting
  - Reduced cost of garbage disposal - different in every province, with possibly reduced taxes
  - Free fertilizer
  - Positive lifestyle change
  - Encourages less food waste in the home
3. Reduce, reuse, recycle
  - Reimbursement for cans and bottles
  - Less garbage
  - Investing in reusable products and containers
  - Lifestyle change
4. Buying Local
  - Fresher produce for family
  - You know where food is from
  - Less packaging and travel
  - Supporting the community
5. Carpool
  - Reduced carbon footprint
  - Pay less on gas
  - Carpool lane - less traffic and faster (depending on the province)
  - Less time behind the wheel - less people tired driving

**Which small act will you personally take on?**

# Healthy Living

## Personal

1. Making a shopping list before you go shopping.
  - Can allow you to keep focused on what you need to buy. Not only will it keep you away from unhealthy snacks, but it also helps you budget and save time while shopping.
  - May help with meal planning, reducing food waste, and stress, as you know what you need you won't forget anything. It is also easier to distinguish between needs vs. wants.
  - Teaches discipline - the feeling of fulfillment in knowing you were able to resist urges to buy certain unhealthy products.
  - Apps: Shoplist, Grocery List Checklist
2. Setting goals for yourself/rewarding yourself.
  - Can measure what you have accomplished and will provide direction for future tasks. Goals will help motivate you to continue working, and rewards will motivate you to continue working hard to achieve your goals.
  - Is an effective use of time, and gives you a sense of purpose. Make a journal and stick to it.
  - Provides the satisfaction of achieving your goals.
  - Apps: Reminders, Purpose Color, Habit Tracker
3. Being open to meeting new people:
  - Will help you develop strong connections and make new friends.
  - Boosts happiness and reduces stress.
  - Provides a network of support.
  - Can provide guidance.
  - They can hold you accountable (e.g.: exercise buddy, school work buddy, etc.)
4. Making an active routine:
  - Can boost energy, stimulate your brain, and help in creating new positive memories.
  - Can help destress and decrease feelings of depression.
  - Reduces risks of chronic diseases, such as type 2 diabetes and hypertension, and cardiovascular disease.
  - Helps you keep track of your exercise.
  - Helps with relaxation and improves sleep quality.
  - Choosing to walk instead of driving, taking the stairs instead of elevator, etc.
  - Apps: Fitbit, generic app on most smartphones
6. Sleeping more:
  - Lowers stress, improves memory, maintains weight, and helps you be more productive throughout the day.
  - Reduces risks of chronic disease, keeps your heart healthy, and improves your immune system.
  - Try to aim for at least 8 hours of sleep per night.
  - Track your sleep, set goals.
  - Reduce phone usage before bed to help improve sleep quality.

**Which small act will you personally take on?**