SKILLS:

Evaluate current spending habits ☐
Create a successful spending plan ☐
Learn the difference between wants and needs ☐
Gain skills in figuring best buys based on price per unit ☐
Develop skills in creating spending goals ☐
Increase technology and online shopping skills ☐
Complete a Consumer Education service project ☐

LIFE SKILL-Responsibility

CONSUMER EDUCATION

Everyone is a consumer. We buy and shop for products each and every day. Savvy consumers are able to prioritize their needs and wants, shop for the best buys, and budget their money. Some of the new skills that you can learn in the 4-H Consumer Education project are listed on the left. Check your favorites and then work with your 4-H leaders and parents to make a 4-H project plan of what you want to do and learn this year.

Price Per Unit

Items come in different sizes and prices. Sometimes the larger economy-sized product is not really the better buy than the regular size of the same product brand. Savvy consumers know how to find the price per unit of a product. Knowing the price per unit of a product helps consumers compare the cost of various products in order to get the best buy. The price per unit of a particular product is easy to figure. Simply divide the total cost of the item by the units of the product (i.e. ounces, pounds, pieces, etc.) Here's an example:

One gallon of milk costs $2.39. There are 128 ounces in a gallon of milk.

$$2.39 \div 128 = \$0.018 \text{ per ounce}$$

Look at the following three items. Figure the price per unit on the following items. Then answer the questions below.

Question #1

A bottle of Brand A shampoo contains 15 ounces and costs $2.49. What is the price per unit of this product?

$ _0.166_ per unit

Question #2

A bag of name-brand cat food contains 18 ounces and costs $2.09. What is the price per unit of this product?

$ _0.116_ per unit

Question #3

A 2-liter bottle of soda contains 67 ounces and costs $1.69. What is the price per unit of this product?

$ _0.025_ per unit

Of the three products, which costs the least when comparing price per unit? __Soda__

Of the three products, which is the most expensive when comparing the price per unit? __Shampoo__

Service Ideas

Share your knowledge with others! Give a project demonstration about one aspect of consumer education.

Assist a younger member of your family in creating a personal spending plan.

Help a community soup kitchen, shelter or church by creating a comparison shopping list of food items based on price per unit.

Resources

School and public libraries
Consumer education manual
4-H project leader/groups

The following website was used to create this activity sheet. To learn more consumer education skills visit:
www.n4hccs.org

Don't forget! For more ideas and info, contact your local 4-H office.

Other Activities

4-H Demonstration

4-H Skill-a-thon

Visit your local grocery store. Compare the price (using price per unit) on 20 different products. What percent of the name brands were less expensive than the store brands? What percent were more expensive? Were sale items really the better bargain?

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When You Wish Upon a Star

We all have wishes ... things that we want to purchase and possess. The purchase of these possessions takes money ... sometimes more money than we possess. One way to get something that you want is to set a savings goal. A savings goal means that you are putting money away towards the specific purchase of an item. What are some things that you want and would like to set a savings goal?

MY WISH LIST	COSTS	NOW	LATER

1. In the first column in the table above, list the items that you would like to have.

2. In the second column in the table above, list the costs of the item.

3. In the third column, draw a happy face 🙂 for those items that you feel you can buy right now.

4. In the last column in the table above, make a check mark ✔ for those items that you will need to set a savings goal in order to obtain. For the purposes of this exercise, be sure that this is an item that you want to have within the next year.

4. Select one of the items that you would like to have within the next year. How much does it cost? How many months do you have to save money? How much will you have to save each month in order to have enough money to buy the product within the next year? Here's how to figure this amount:

Total Cost ÷ # of Months = $ _____ per month

Figure how much you will have to save in the space below:

Answers will vary based on personal values/choices. $ _____

Wants and Needs

Look at the following items. Circle the items that are necessary. ~~Draw a line~~ through the items that are not necessary needs.

MOVIE TICKETS
SHAMPOO
LUNCH
LATEST DVD
BIRTHDAY GIFT FOR FRIEND
OAKLEY SUNGLASSES
ART SUPPLIES FOR CLASS
UNIFORM FOR SCHOOL SPORTS
HAMBURGER AFTER SCHOOL
MUSIC CD

Answers will vary based on personal values/ choices.

Did you know ...?

It is your personal responsibility to protect yourself from criminals and predators on the Internet. It's important to remember that anyone can put anything on the Internet. Here are the basics that you need to know before shopping on the net:

Do not send info in emails that you don't want others to read.

Do not give out a phone number, address or picture of yourself. Give only an email address

Protect friends and family by keeping their info off the net.

Do not reply to a person or company that you do not know.

Look for security when you visit a web site online.

Protect your computer with an anti-virus program

Keep your passwords secret

Spending Habits

When you don't have enough money to purchase everything that you need and want, you have to prioritize. Prioritizing means that you are buying items that are needed before you buy those items that you want. Keeping a record of your expenses and grouping them into categories will show your current spending habits. Think back over your spending habits for the last month. Look at the categories listed in the table below. How much did you spend in each of these categories? Write your estimated total cost in the column. Then place a check mark in the column that describes whether this purchase was a need or a want.

CATEGORY	TOTAL COST	NEEDS	WANTS
Food	$		
Entertainment	$		
Clothing and Jewelry	$		
Grooming	$		
School Supplies	$		
Gifts	$		
Savings	$		
Other	$		

Answers will vary based on personal values/choices.

My Spending Plan

Create your plan by recording the amounts of money earned and received each month in the spaces provided. Next, estimate how much you plan to spend on each of the categories. Think about this carefully and consider what you have spent in the past and which items are truly needs and which are simply wants. Record the amount of money you plan to spend for each category in the spaces provided.

INCOME (money that is mine to spend)	AMOUNT
Allowance	$
Small Jobs	$
Gifts	$
Other	$
TOTAL MONTHLY INCOME	$
EXPENSES (spending)	AMOUNT
Food	$
Entertainment	$
Clothes	$
Grooming Items	$
School Supplies	$
Gifts	$
Savings Goal	$
Other	$
Total Monthly Expenses	$
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INCOME/EXPENSES	$

Answers will vary based on personal values/choices.

Consumer Education Board Game

NUMBER OF PLAYERS:
    1 or more players

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS
    Die or six scraps of paper (numbered 1 through 6)
    Marker (candy or coins)

OBJECT OF THE GAME:
    Use your consumer education knowledge to move through the game squares and reach the "finish" square before your opponent(s).

    If playing alone, count how many moves it takes to reach "finish." Then, play again. Can you finish in fewer moves?

INSTRUCTIONS:
    Each player puts his/her marker on the "start" square.

    Roll/draw a number to see who goes first.

    The player who rolls/draws the highest number goes first.

    Player 1 then rolls.

    Follow the directions on the squares. Note, not every square has directions.

    Answers to the questions are provided on the "Leader's Page."

Start

The web site you were shopping on offers privacy protection. Move ahead 2 spaces.

Figure the price/unit on a 64-ounce-item that cost $3.59 to move ahead 3 spaces.
$0.056 per unit.

List the category that you spent the least $ in last month. Then move ahead 1 space.
Answer will vary

The newest CD by your favorite rock group ... is this a want or a need?
Want

You listed your phone # on the Internet when ordering a gift. Move back 2 spaces.

You saved $5 this month using your new Spending Plan. Move ahead 2 spaces.

Supplies to make a volcano for your science project ... a want or a need?
Need

You refused to give out your address on a recent Internet purchase. Move ahead 3 spaces.

Answer will vary

An item cost $48. You want to buy the item in 6 mos. How much will you have to save each month?
$8 each month.

List the category that you spent the most $ in last month. Then move ahead 1 space.

Finish