

impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

Partners inspiring community health (PICH)

AT A GLANCE

Gathering community partners to better reach the public — youth — to offer additional healthy lifestyle programming.

The Situation

Rates of participation in physical education programs, and levels of physical activity (PA) amongst youth has been decreasing steadily over the past few decades. Increasing levels of overweight/obese children, ages 2-19, are one indicator of the growing epidemic stemming in part from a lack of physical activity both in and outside of school. Currently 19.3% of children, ages 2-19, are obese, and 16.1% are overweight (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018). The global pandemic COVID-19 has affected all ages, increasing the need for additional physical activity programming that could reach more people in a safe and effective way.

Our Response

In 2008 a group of business leaders/owners, community public relations workers, and educators formed a committee, Partners Inspiring Community Health (PICH) with a mission to promote health and wellness throughout the community through various education events/programs and presentations. Over time the committee members have changed slightly adding a few local residents and parents who are concerned about the lack of recreational and physical activity options for our community youth.



Outdoor events like Junior Golf are very popular.

There exists a number of after school sports programs offered for area youth, however, as these programs are ran through the school district, they all charge for participation. Hence, in 2014 PICH created and established the Extreme Adventure Club (EAC). The EAC offers a minimum of one program per month (usually on a Saturday) during winter, spring and more recently summer, to children ages 8-14 whereby they can learn about and actively participate in a healthy lifestyle activity. All activities are offered free of charge to any number of children who wish to attend and may include a healthy snack/lunch depending on the length of activity. All participants receive a t-shirt, and depending on cost, sometimes have received equipment. EAC just finished its eighth year, and even though all activities were canceled in 2020 due to COVID-19,

participation was back up to full capacity this past year. Some of the activities that have been and will be offered include golf, hiking, nutritional cooking, disc golf, bowling, snowshoeing, kayaking, fly fishing, bike safety and maintenance, kite building/flying, Geocaching, dance aerobics and smoothie creations.

At the beginning of each year, the committee members of Partners Inspiring Community Health evaluate the previous year's events, and make changes as deemed necessary. We also continue to welcome additional committee members who might represent different sectors within the community to provide a diverse leadership. The ultimate goal of the Extreme Adventure Club continues to be: To promote healthy lifestyle activities that are fun and geared toward getting youth away from their normal inactive routines, to inspire them to be involved in new activities that can be learned, enjoyed and potentially experienced throughout life.

Program Outcomes

A survey is conducted with Extreme Adventure Club participants after each activity to assess overall enjoyment, effectiveness, willingness to sustain activity and suggestions for additional activities. One-hundred forty-two participants responded, ranging in age 8-15. The following are a summary of questions and survey percentages (Survey was measured on a scale of one to

five with one being completely disagree, and five being completely agree.):

Did you enjoy your adventure today?

- 5 (140), 4 (2)

Did you learn a new lifetime activity today?

- 5 (96), 4 (23), 3 (15), 1 (8)

Would you participate in this lifetime activity again?

- 5 (138), 4 (2), 2 (2)

Rate the effectiveness of your instructor today (did you feel like you learned enough to participate in this activity on your own)?

- 5 (135), 4 (5), 3 (2)

What other adventures/activities would you like to see offered in the future from the Extreme Adventure Club?

- Swimming
- Archery
- Rock climbing
- Rock collecting
- Birdhouse building
- Bird watching

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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