

impact

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

Idaho 4-H State Teen Association Convention (STAC) promotes youth thriving

AT A GLANCE

The 4-H teen convention is a high-quality youth development program that provides participants with the foundation they need to achieve long-term Positive Youth Development outcomes.

The Situation

Positive Youth Development (PYD) can profoundly impact the lives of youth. The 4-H Thriving Model is a research-based theory that shows the connections between elements of high-quality youth programs and Thriving Outcomes. For example, the elements of a high-quality program known as Developmental Context includes opportunities to explore Sparks, experience supportive peers and adults, and an environment that fosters a sense of belonging. These factors drive PYD outcomes like academic motivation and success, social competence, high personal standards, connection with others, personal responsibility, and contribution to others through leadership and civic engagement.

Our Response

STAC is a four-day, three-night event for teens on the University of Idaho campus. The program includes educational workshops and tours, on-campus living, community service projects, opportunities to develop leadership skills and build supportive relationships with peers and adults. STAC is planned by a steering committee of youth, 4-H professionals and volunteers throughout Idaho. Each general session is chaired by state 4-H officers who serve a one-year term upon



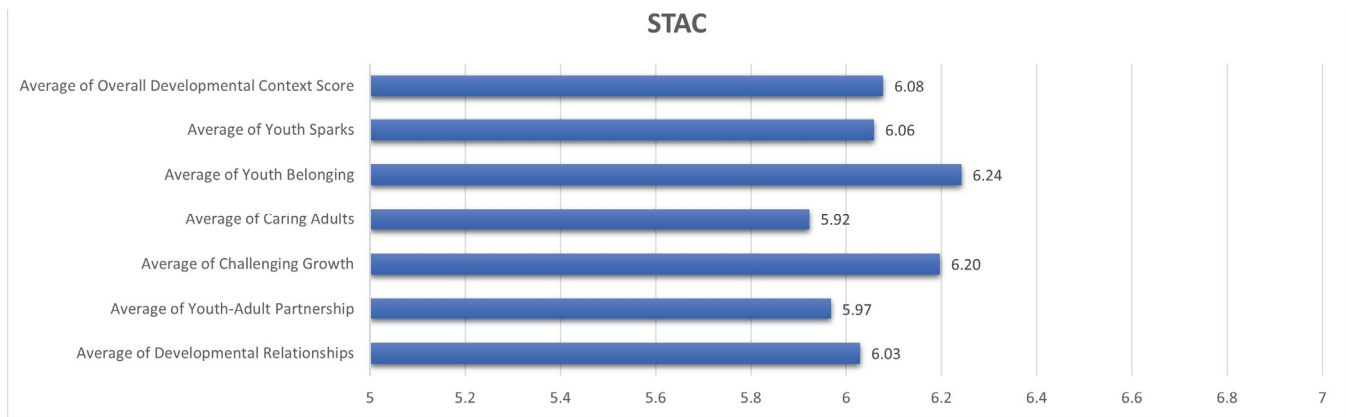
4-H health advocates taught their peers how to prepare nutritious recipes during a STAC workshop session.

their election at the conclusion of STAC. By supporting youth voice, youth-adult partnerships and providing a strong developmental context, STAC promotes Youth Thriving, which leads to critical developmental outcomes.

Program Outcomes

Program Quality is a measure of five components of Developmental Context:

1. Spark
2. Belonging
3. Caring Adults
4. Challenging Growth
5. Youth-Adult Partnership



All items are measured using a seven-point Likert type scale ranging from (one) “not true to me” to (seven) “very true of me.” The average overall Developmental Context score was 6.03 showing a strong Developmental Context and overall Program Quality. As a young person’s perception of Program Quality increases, so do their thriving outcomes. For every one-point increase in Program Quality, thriving increases by .38 points. 4-H programs are designed to put youth on a “thriving trajectory” defined by six outcomes:

1. Growth Mindset
2. Openness to Challenge and Discovery
3. Hopeful Purpose
4. Pro-social Orientation
5. Positive Emotionality
6. Goal Management

The workshops allow youth to discover and explore potential Sparks that may lead to career areas. Here are how some teens responded to their workshops:

- “I learned about genetics.”

- “I learned about the opportunities that are available at the U of I.”
- “Surround yourself with the right/good people. You matter!”
- “What ROTC has to offer.”
- “Our teacher was very helpful and made the class and relaxing.”

In response to something valuable they learned; youth responded:

- “Protecting our wilderness.”
- “The different (medical) fields.”
- “How to get into college and the importance.”
- “That I want to work with kids.”
- “How to make healthy food quickly.”
- “Supportive exploration.”
- “How to solder and make a strobe light.”
- “Career choices that I’m interested in.”

4-H youth development programs like the Idaho 4-H State Teen Association Convention are contributing to Youth Thriving.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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