

# impact

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

## Junior golf program teaches lifetime physical activity skills

### AT A GLANCE

Lifetime sports which promote participation in physical activity can increase enjoyment in extra-curricular activities and decrease obesity rates in adolescents.

### The Situation

In Idaho County, 32% of adults (18 and older) are obese (body mass index of 30 or greater), 22% participate in no leisure-time physical activity outside of work, and 19% report having access to exercise opportunities (County Health Rankings, 2020). Idaho County is very rural (80.6% of the total population is rural) (County Health Rankings, 2021), so the need to engage youth within in the county in lifetime sports/activities is crucial to encourage lifelong physical and mental health.

### Our Response

In 2021, the local Golf and Country Club asked PICH (Partners Inspiring Community Health) to take over the Junior Golf program. PICH's mission is to promote health and wellness throughout the county through various educational events and programming. The PICH committee is comprised of business leaders/owners, community members, educators and commercial public relations workers who are focused on creating additional physical activity and lifetime sports experiences for our community youth.

The Junior Golf program has been organized and ran by the local Golf and Country Club for the past 30



Junior Golf participants working on their irons/drivers.

years (approximately), however their board of directors determined the program would benefit by asking the PICH committee to undertake the development, organization, fundraising and dissemination of the program. Junior Golf is offered for one full week during the month of July to youth ages 8-17. A group of PICH members, Golf and Country Club members and community members volunteer their time and areas of expertise during the golf camp. The youth participants learn course etiquette and rules of the game, putting/chipping/pitching skills, fairway irons and driver play and game strategy/play. Junior golfers work on skills and learning the game of golf during the first three days of the week, and then engage in game play out on the course the last two days. On the last day of Junior Golf, families are invited to come out and play

along with their kid(s), and a barbecue and awards program is held.

In the past three years, 158 youth, ages 8-17, have participated in the Junior Golf program.

### Program Outcomes

A survey was conducted with Junior Golf participants at the end of Junior Golf week to assess overall enjoyment, effectiveness, willingness to sustain activity and suggestions for improvement. 158 participants responded, ranging in ages 8-17. 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 Junior Golf week?
  - 5 (155), 4 (3)
- Did you learn new golf skills that you had not known before this week?
  - 5 (156), 4 (2)
- Would you participate in the lifetime activity of golf again?
  - 5 (158)

- Rate the effectiveness of your instructor(s) this week (did you feel like you learned enough to participate in this activity on your own)?
  - 5 (145), 4 (7), 3 (6)
- What suggestions would you like to see offered in the future during Junior Golf week?
  - More time playing on the golf course.
  - Learn from a golf pro.
  - Play with different ages.
  - Have targets out on the driving range.

### The Future

Members of the PICH committee are communicating with the University of Idaho Golf program to hire interns to help with future Junior Golf weeks.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Kirstin Jensen**, Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Idaho County • 208-983-2667 • [kdjensen@uidaho.edu](mailto:kdjensen@uidaho.edu)

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