

Outdoor recreation program thrives with state and federal partnership

AT A GLANCE

State and federal partnerships expand local youth program geared towards introducing new outdoor activities and increasing levels of physical activity and knowledge of recreational opportunities.

The Situation

Rates of participation in physical education programs offered in K-12 and outside of school have been decreasing steadily over the past few decades, resulting in lower levels of physical activity, and increasing levels of overweight/obese youth. The 2024 State of Obesity Report found 19.7% of U.S. youth were obese, with Idaho's obesity rate at 27.5%. Idaho County's Extension educator, along with community partners identified the need to provide additional physical activity programming that could reach more youth in a safe and effective way.

Our Response

University of Idaho Extension educator, Kirstin Jensen, partnered with local business owners, community members, state and federal agencies and K-12 educators to form a committee, Partners Inspiring Community Health (PICH) with a mission to promote health and wellness through various educational and healthy lifestyle events. The Extreme Adventure Club (EAC) offers a minimum of one program per month to local youth, ages 8-14, where they can learn about and actively participate in different healthy lifestyle activities. The majority of activities/events are offered free of



Extreme Adventure Club participants on the Salmon River with Bureau of Land Management guides.

charge to any number of youth who wish to participate. Programming is chosen based on availability of local business venues, community volunteers, and state and federal agency availability. Outdoor recreational and skill-building events included snow/winter survival skills, snowshoeing, hiking, fishing, rafting, First Responders training, healthy food preparation, bike safety and maintenance, and wilderness survival. The EAC is funded solely by donations, internal and external grants, and small programming fees.

Program Outcomes

Over the past ten years that EAC has been offered, hundreds of youth have participated in healthy lifestyle events geared toward introducing new activities that increase levels of physical activity and knowledge

of local recreational opportunities. By providing young people with the chance to engage in outdoor activities, EAC aims to foster a love for nature, teamwork, and physical fitness. With the expertise and dedication of the different local state and federal employees, a variety of recreational opportunities have been offered to area youth promoting physical health, mental well-being and social connections.

In 2025 a successful eight EAC events (20-95 kids attended events) were planned and organized. Post-surveys are conducted after each event to assess overall enjoyment, effectiveness, and willingness to sustain activity and suggestions for future activities. Surveys are measured on a scale of one-five with one = completely disagree, and five = completely agree ($n=235$).

Extreme Adventure Club Post-Survey

Question	Completely agree (5)	Agree (4)	No opinion (3)	Disagree (2)	Completely disagree (1)
Did you enjoy your event today?	99%	1%			
Did you learn a new life-time activity today?	85%	7%	6%	2%	
Would you participate in this lifetime activity again?	97%	2%	1%		

Rate the effectiveness of your instructor(s) today – Did you feel like you learned enough to participate on your own?	85%	11%	2%	2%	
What other activities/ adventures would you like to see offered by EAC?	- Mountain biking - Camping - Fly fishing - Backpacking - Kayaking				

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho County Sherriff, City of Grangeville Police and Fire, Syringa General Hospital Emergency Response Team

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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