

# IMPACT

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Extension

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## Extreme Adventure Club introduces life-long activities to youth

### AT A GLANCE

Life-long activities which promote participation in physical activity can increase enjoyment in extra-curricular activities, and decrease obesity rates in adolescents.

### The Situation

Childhood obesity has been universally established as among the most critical issues in the United States. During the past two decades children have gotten heavier and heavier according to the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES, 2012). Rates of participation in physical education programs amongst youth has been decreasing steadily over the past few decades. (YRBSS, CDC, 2013). Obesity rates in 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 16.9 percent of children ages 2-19 are obese and 14.9 percent are overweight.

### Our Response

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. Initially this group sponsored the Annual Biggest Loser Challenge (2008-2014) for adults within the community which was extremely affective for the years it ran.

As childhood obesity rates have continued to increase, the University of Idaho has declared it a critical issue that needs to be addressed. There exist a number of after school sports programs offered for



Participants enjoying the snowshoeing adventure.

area youth, however, these programs 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 and spring to children ages 8-18 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. Some of the activities that have been and will be offered are: nutritional cooking, disc golf, bowling, snowshoeing, kayaking, fly fishing, bike safety and maintenance, kite building/flying, Geocaching, dance aerobics and smoothie creations.

In addition, the local elementary/middle school physical education teacher has agreed to present cur-

riculum within their classes that coincide with the EAC activities to aide in the educational role of each specific activity.

The ultimate goal of the EAC is to promote activities that are fun and geared toward getting children 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 questionnaire was designed to survey EAC participants to assess overall enjoyment, effectiveness, willingness to sustain activity and suggestions for additional activities. 85 participants responded, ranging in age 8-15. The following are a summary of questions and survey percentages (Survey was measured on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being completely disagree, and 5 being complete agree.):

1. Did you enjoy your adventure today?
  - 5 (80), 4 (3), 2 (2)
2. Did you learn a new lifetime activity today?
  - 5 (70), 4 (2), 2 (10), 1 (3)
3. Would this lifetime activity be one that you would continue to do in the future?
  - 5 (84), 4 (1)
4. Please rate the effectiveness of your instructor today (did you feel like you learned enough to participate in the activity on your own)?
  - 5 (80), 4 (3), 2 (2)
5. What would you like to learn about this activity that you did not learn during today's adventure?
  - Nutritional Cooking – "learn to slice my own veggies"; "prepare better lunches for school"; "make a quick and good snack for my little sister and brother"
  - Snowshoeing – "jump off jumps!"; "make your own trails"
  - Geocaching – "compete against others all over the world"
  - Kayaking – "go down rapids!"; "ride a paddle-board"
  - Fly Fishing – "do this in a river"; "make your own fly ties"

6. What other adventures would you like to see offered for the next round of Extreme Adventure Club?

- Archery
- Motocross
- Orienteering
- Swimming
- Golfing
- Obstacle course challenge
- Rock climbing

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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