

# impact

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## New 4-H volunteer orientation materials provide consistency for statewide delivery

### AT A GLANCE

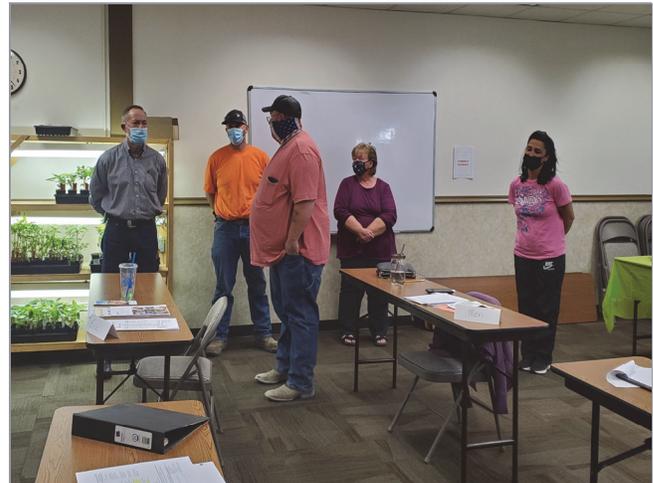
New volunteer orientation teaching materials and resources are accessible to all county 4-H programs statewide, providing consistent, high-quality orientation.

### The Situation

University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development requires that all volunteers complete an application and certification process before working with youth. Part of the 4-H volunteer certification process includes an orientation conducted through the county program, although state policy does not define the orientation elements. Many counties have created a volunteer orientation to meet their needs, although there is inconsistency in the scope of content and delivery from one county to the next. To assure a quality, a uniform orientation that will help 4-H volunteers be successful in their role of carrying out positive youth development, a team of 4-H professionals developed a high-quality New 4-H Volunteer Orientation. All teaching materials and resources are available to county 4-H professionals statewide.

### Our Response

A team of Ada and Canyon counties 4-H professionals and the southern district regional 4-H educator created a New 4-H Volunteer Orientation. To determine the agenda, the team reviewed existing trainings required in the volunteer application process to avoid duplication of orientation topics. They also reviewed existing orientation agendas from both counties to



New 4-H volunteers discussing youth-adult partnerships during an opinion continuum activity at orientation.

determine priority topics. Current and new research-based resources were combined to create consistent onboarding training. Once a draft agenda was created, a variety of experiential activities were resourced or created to teach key concepts. It was critical to the team to assure that the orientation was comprehensive, modeled experiential learning and valued the volunteer's time.

The New 4-H Volunteer Orientation materials were piloted in both Ada and Canyon counties in-person and virtually. Adjustments were made to the lesson plan, and adaptations needed for virtual delivery were noted. A demand for the orientation materials emerged statewide and the team adjusted the materials for statewide use. The team designed a three-hour

training with materials tailored by each county to meet their needs. 4-H faculty and staff can access the materials on the password-protected employee resource page of the state's 4-H youth development website.

### Program Outcomes

A toolkit of over 25 orientation documents and resources has been developed or resourced and posted to the 4-H professionals shared website. This toolkit includes all files and lesson descriptions developed for the training. Lessons and activities were designed to be hands-on and engaging. Using these methodologies was intentional to model how 4-H volunteers should teach as they work with youth. Topics covered in the New 4-H Volunteer Orientation include positive youth development, risk management, 4-H policies and procedures, planning club meetings, project management, record books and oral presentations. The provided lesson plan outlines all materials, methods, resources and learning objectives for the training.

Two webinars were created and presented for 4-H professionals to learn how to use the materials, best practices for delivering the orientation and general tips for a successful New 4-H Volunteer Orientation. Fifty-two 4-H professionals attended the webinars.

### Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

The 4-H professionals from Ada and Canyon counties and University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development who developed and resourced the New 4-H Volunteer Orientation toolkit materials include Carrie Johnson Clarich, Tina Holmquist, Kara Jenkins, Sendy Martinez, Nancy Shelstad and Allen Taggart. Thank you to Debbie Lowber for her contributions to the materials and piloting the program with the Canyon County team. Thank you to Donna Schwarting for reviewing the final products.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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