

impact

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

4-H Soccer for Success builds healthy habits in youth

AT A GLANCE

Soccer for Success and Healthy Habits program help youth build personal and nutritional skills through a grant received by the University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development program.

The Situation

4-H worked with limited-resource youth in Canyon and Ada counties in partnership with a non-profit organization, housing authority, municipal recreation and an afterschool program. These partners expressed interest in 4-H offering a non-competitive soccer program for youth who do not have access to competitive leagues in the region due to cost and transportation barriers.

In Boise, NeighborWorks is a non-profit fair housing organization serving refugee youth and families. Boise Parks and Recreation directs an afterschool program for limited resource youth. 4-H has delivered several programs at Caldwell Housing Authority's Farmway Village since 2010. From these efforts, programming grew and led to the establishment of the Leadership 4-H club. In addition, 4-H has partnered with Sacajawea Elementary's 21st Century Community Learning Center afterschool program to deliver various programs such as health, art and STEM.

Our Response

The UI Extension 4-H Youth Development program received a grant from National 4-H Council in partnership with the Walmart Foundation to deliver Healthy



Soccer for Success youth and coaches at celebration event.

Habits nutrition education and Soccer for Success in Ada and Canyon counties.

Soccer for Success is an evidence-based soccer skills and nutrition program delivered over 12 weeks. Focuses include leadership and communication skills while learning basic soccer skills and game days. This non-competitive program encourages teamwork and leadership skills between peers and coaches while gaining soccer skills. Soccer for Success is a U.S. Soccer Foundation program where coaches are trained to teach Soccer for Success lessons, incorporate nutrition into each lesson and set up game days. In addition, 4-H and our university partner, Eat Smart Idaho, taught the 8 Healthy Habits lessons reinforcing the health aspects of the program.

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Soccer for Success was delivered at four sites to 100 youth by an Extension educator, college interns, AmeriCorps members and community partners. All the coaches were trained using the Soccer for Success curriculum and coaching strategies. Youth who completed the soccer program and 4-H Healthy Habits received a soccer ball, shin guards, water bottle, bag, a family take-home bag with healthy snack ingredients and a recipe book.

Program Outcomes

At the end of the program, 58 youth responded to a survey on nutrition knowledge, behavior change and physical activity indicators.

Table 1 shows the percentage of youth who are currently taking action. Table 2 shows the percentage of youth who plan to take action because of participating in Soccer for Success and 4-H Healthy Habits programs.

Sixty-six percent indicated that they pay attention to how active they are each day (Yes 44% and Usually 22%). After their experience, 64% plan to remain active (Yes) and 27% said they may (Maybe) stay active.

While 70% pay attention to how much water they drink, 81% plan to drink the recommended amount of water after the program and 54% plan to drink less sugary beverages.

Fifty-eight percent of the youth said they pay attention to how much fruit they eat and 56% pay attention to their vegetable consumption. After the program, 71% indicated that they plan to eat the recommended serving of vegetables and fruits.

An equally important aspect of the Soccer for Success and Healthy Habits programs is influencing family members with positive actions. Seventy-one percent learned about healthy food choices, 47% had given

their families' ideas for healthy snacks/meals and 53% planned to prepare a snack/meal with their families.

Table 1. Health and physical actions youth pay attention to each day.

| Each day I pay attention to: | Yes | Usually | Not really | No |
|---|-----|---------|------------|-----|
| How active I am | 44% | 22% | 19% | 15% |
| How much water I drink | 58% | 12& | 10% | 20% |
| How much fruit I eat | 29% | 29% | 22% | 20% |
| How many vegetables I eat | 34% | 22% | 21% | 22% |
| How to follow a recipe to make something to eat | 56% | 15% | 12% | 17% |

Table 2. Health and physical actions youth plan to take.

| I plan to: | Yes | Maybe | No |
|---|-----|-------|-----|
| Stay physically active | 64% | 27% | 8% |
| Drink recommended amount of water | 81% | 16% | 3% |
| Drink less sugary drinks | 54% | 37% | 8% |
| Eat the recommended amount of vegetables and fruits | 71% | 22% | 7% |
| Prepare healthy foods/snacks with my family | 53% | 27% | 20% |

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

Community partners and coaches: Sacajawea Elementary School; Boise Parks and Recreation, Whitney Community Center; NeighborWorks Boise, Northwest Pointe; Caldwell Housing Authority; Idaho Central Credit Union; Soccer for Success coaches: Ivan Gonzales, Diana Magdaleno, Yasmin Estrella. Special thanks to Stephanie Hamblin, 4-H admin. for data analysis.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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