

impact

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

Boys and girls club builds cooking skills with support from community partners

AT A GLANCE

University of Idaho Extension, AmeriCorps, St. Lukes of Magic Valley and Jerome Boys and Girls Club collaborate to provide Jerome County youth the opportunity to develop basic cooking skills.

The Situation

While the trend to dine out continues to grow with 43% of people preferring to dine out at a restaurant, 57% of people prefer ordering take out or choosing delivery options. There are factors that lead people to choose not to cook at home which can include time constraints, lack of interest, or lack of basic cooking skills. Of particular interest is the loss of the habit of cooking at home. Families would like their children to participate in more meal preparation, but again time constraints make this process difficult as well as the potential for a mess that can occur. Studies show that meals prepared at home contain more fruit and vegetables and tend to be healthier.

Our Response

To provide Jerome Boys and Girls Club youth with an opportunity to gain basic cooking skills, the University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development partnered with AmeriCorps of Idaho and St. Lukes of Magic Valley. The AmeriCorps volunteer was funded by University of Idaho Extension and teamed with the family and consumer sciences Extension educator in working with fourth and fifth grade Jerome Boys and Girls Club members. The AmeriCorps volunteer also provided additional summer science, technology, engineering, art



Jerome Boys and Girls Club members practice measuring dry and liquid ingredients.

and math (STEAM) programming for kindergarten through third grade club members.

Funding from St. Lukes of Magic Valley purchased food items and cooking supplies for eight cooking sessions held on Wednesday mornings for two and half hours. This amount of time allowed youth to practice new cooking skills, prepare two recipes, present their product and enjoy the food. At the end of the summer, each youth received a cooking kit to encourage cooking at home.

Program Outcomes

A total of 14 youth participated over the summer and were comprised of nine girls and five boys. An average of 12 youth attended each session. Shown in Table 1,

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pre and post surveys were used to collect information on changes in cooking skill knowledge of youth.

Table 1. Cooking skill knowledge pre and post eight session cooking class

I know how to:	Pre N(%) N = 12	Post N(%) N = 7
Avoid spreading germs while cooking	33%	100%
Safely use a knife and cutting board	17%	100%
Accurately measuring liquid and dry ingredients	36%	90%
Follow a recipe	33%	80%

The club members' favorite summer recipe was bean burritos. The youth made whole tortillas from scratch, combined their own seasonings, prepared the refried bean filling and used an air fryer to cook burritos.

The Future

With continued support from community partners, planning is underway to provide 4-H programming at the Jerome Boys and Girls Club during the 2024-2025 academic year and summer sessions.

These programs will include:

- Implementing an after school 4-H Special Interest (SPIN) Club to third through fifth grade members with a focus on science, technology, engineering, art and math (STEAM). Projects will be displayed at the 2025 Jerome County Fair.
- Providing 4-H STEAM activities for all interested Boys and Girls Club youth during after school and summer programming.

- Implementing a summer 4-H Cooking Club for fourth and fifth grade members. The Teen Cuisine curriculum will provide skill-based lessons in nutrition, food preparation, food safety and physical activity to promote optimal health in teens. A poster board demonstrating club members' cooking projects will be displayed at the 2025 Jerome County Fair.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

- University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development
- AmeriCorps for Idaho
- Boys & Girls Clubs of Magic Valley
- St Luke's Magic Valley Medical Center



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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