

impact

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

4-H outreach to geographically dispersed military youth and families

AT A GLANCE

Idaho's 4-H military partnerships provide connectivity to opportunities and support to geographically dispersed military-connected youth and families.

The Situation

4-H provides quality life skills opportunities through a positive youth development framework. Programs build upon four essential elements ensuring that youth feel a sense of belonging, develop independence in both group and individual work, share with others in the community through generosity, and develop a sense of mastery that continues throughout life, practicing and sharing what they have learned. As military families move frequently and experience deployment and reintegration difficulties, 4-H provides predictable programming in a safe and nurturing environment for military-connected youth. Outreach to Military Kids (OMK), as part of University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development, provides programming and resource support to meet the unique needs of geographically dispersed military youth and their families through stresses of service and deployment.

Our Response

4-H provides youth opportunities to engage and connect with their communities and caring adults while developing healthy living, science, civic engagement and leadership skills. OMK provides resources in these areas and focuses 4-H education and professional development training for adults to support and



Gowen Field 4-H Day Camp 2020.

provide quality programming. We provide support to Gowen Field and geographically dispersed Air Force families.

Program Outcomes

Outcome #1: Connecting geographically dispersed military youth and families.

- A 2020 4-H Air Force summer day camp held at Gowen Field, Boise, engaged 40 youth and chaplain corps as critical partners. The three weeks of day camp focus areas included: STEM, Healthy Living and visual Arts. Youth were able to display art creations that utilized watercolor and drawing. Youth were able to participate in STEM activities involving plant, animal science, robotics, and

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STARBASE technology and coding activities. The youth learned the value of making healthy living choices and participated in physical exercise and healthy eating choices.

One statewide military-connected winter camp served 10-18-year-old military youth in partnership with Army Child and Youth Services. 4-H staff/volunteers delivered “Build Your Inner Trident” theme-based activities at Snow Bash 2020.

Outcome #2: Supporting geographically dispersed military youth and families.

- Idaho’s 4-H Outreach to Military Kids Facebook page regularly updates 4-H resources and opportunities. Virtual resources were provided to military families statewide via OMK Facebook and UI Extension 4-H Youth Development website. The current challenges of COVID-19 created obstacles in continuing 4-H opportunities for our families, volunteers and communities. To ease the sudden transition into a virtual format for 4-H programming, Idaho’s 4-H provided family resources to utilize as they continue 4-H learning

and engagement. This list is updated as resources are developed and shared. With over 100 projects in eight subject areas, there is something for almost everyone.

Despite the COVID challenge, Air Force military youth and families remained involved in 4-H clubs and fairs through in-person and virtual opportunities. Geographically dispersed military 4-H club enrollment and volunteerism remained strong in 2020. Air Force adult 4-H volunteers statewide were reported as 167 members delivering 2,400 hours of service.

The Future

Providing 4-H resources and support to our geographically dispersed Air Force connected youth and families is a priority in Idaho. University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development continues to provide awareness and connectivity to educational opportunities for all geographically dispersed military youth and families.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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