



Outdoors NSW & ACT

Benefits of Outdoors Education

THE UNDENIABLE FACTS



**Forbes,
July 2018**

University of East Anglia

"Spending more time in green spaces was linked to reduced levels of the stress hormone cortisol, lower heart rate, reduced risk of coronary heart disease, lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol, reduced risk of type II diabetes, reduced all-cause mortality and death from heart disease....Among all the participants, on average, there was an increased likelihood of self-reporting one's health as "good.""

**Outdoor Youth Programs
Research Alliance
(OYPRA)**

Dec 2018

"the sharp rise in the youth anxiety and mental health challenges can be improved through participating in outdoor programs. In addition, the students improved confidence, self-efficacy and increased belief to achieve their goals after the participation in outdoor programs. Data that is incredibly hard to argue against and endorsed by leading universities including the Murdoch Childrens Research Institute."

**U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services
2018**

"Regular physical activity in childhood and adolescence improves strength and endurance, helps build healthy bones and muscles, helps control weight, improves cognitive function, reduces the risk of depression, and may improve cardiovascular health."

"Of those who participated...16% of students suffered higher levels of anxiety, however, were significantly less anxious after the 5-day outdoor program... 11% of students surveyed had low levels of self-efficacy; however, following a 5-day school camp, their confidence levels were significantly boosted."

**Murdoch Children's
Research Institute
Oct 2018**

OVER DECADES, MANY WORDS HAVE BEEN USED TO DESCRIBE THE BENEFITS OF "STRUCTURED OUTDOOR, CAMPS AND NATURE-BASED PROGRAMS".

CHARACTER TRAINING, SKILLS FOR LIFE, RESILIENCE TRAINING ARE SOME OF THESE, BUT IT IS THE EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH THAT PROVIDE PROOF INTO WHY WE NEED TO HAVE "MORE KIDS OUTDOORS MORE OFTEN".

Research shows Aussie camps boost mental health

October 14, 2018

A new study by the Outdoor Youth Programs Research Alliance (OYPRA) developed and conducted over nine years has shown camps and outdoor education programs can lead to improved mental health and wellbeing in young people. OYPRA is an alliance of researchers led by the Murdoch Children's Research Institute together with Australia's top universities, state governments, not-for-profit community organisations, and key representatives from the outdoor industry.

The world-first research of 335 Year 9 students (aged 14-16), which included a control group of students who did not participate on camp; found that those suffering from higher levels of anxiety were less anxious and more resilient after school camp. Furthermore, OYPRA's research found that students benefited from improved confidence after attending camp, particularly their self-efficacy: belief in their ability to achieve goals.

The research found:

- Of those who participated in the research program, 16 percent of students suffered higher levels of anxiety, however, were significantly less anxious after the 5-day outdoor program.
- OYPRA found that 11 percent of students surveyed had low levels of self-efficacy; however, following a 5-day school camp their confidence levels were significantly boosted.

The findings should assist policymakers in solving the issue of rising anxiety and mental illness in young Australians, with almost a quarter (22.8 percent) of young people aged 15 to 19 showing symptoms of probable serious mental illness according to Mission Australia, up from 18.7 percent five years ago.

More and more Australian children and teenagers are suffering mental health issues and battling low self-esteem, OYPRA's research confirms that camps offer a real solution in supporting healthy kids. Those who attend camps are challenged, get active, become immersed in nature, are guided by experienced outdoor leaders, and form stronger friendships all of which support improved mental health.

OYPRA hopes the important research will support policymakers achieve better outcomes in both health and education initiatives. As more technology is integrated into the education system and home life, there is a need now more than ever to balance the way young Australians learn by getting them outdoors.

Outdoor Youth Programs Research Alliance - OYPRA
The Outdoor Youth Programs Research Alliance (OYPRA)
is an Australian group looking at documenting the benefits
of outdoor programs for young people.

OUTDOOR EDUCATION IS NOT AN EXCURSION
ITS STRUCTURED LEARNING THAT BUILDS LIFE SKILLS
WWW.OUTDOORSNSWACT.ORG