

# YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE BETTER ABLE TO WORK IN TEAMS AND INTERACT POSITIVELY WITH OTHERS

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*Before, I basically wouldn't really talk to other people. I wouldn't try and make new friends I suppose because you have your friends. You just kind of stay with them... But this course has definitely pushed me to be more out with people and definitely try and make friends, basically. I hope to take that back when I go home. ”*

Natasha, age 15, at the end of her Skills for Life Award course in 2015

The way we interact with others and the quality of our relationships with those around us forms the basis for well-being and enables us to get on successfully in life.

People who are more socially connected to family, friends or community are happier, physically healthier and live longer than people who are less well connected<sup>4</sup>.

During our courses, young people are required to interact with people they don't know, help others out (for instance with carrying bags when they are struggling), speak up in a group, listen to each other and to their instructor, motivate each other and work out what to do when the team has different views. Through this experience, they gain a new perspective on people who are different to them, challenge assumptions they may have and appreciate the contribution that others can make.

PARTICIPANTS LIVE AND WORK WITH OTHERS

STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS ARE FORMED, CONTRIBUTING TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL SKILLS, SUCH AS TEAMWORK, COMMUNICATION, LEADERSHIP AND EMPATHY

PARTICIPANTS ARE BETTER ABLE TO WORK IN ENVIRONMENTS THAT REQUIRE THEM TO WORK ALONGSIDE OTHERS TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS

The Outward Bound Trust's Theory of Change



# COMMUNICATION, TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP



We used the Personal Development Scale to measure improvements in the communication, teamwork and leadership of young people who participated in our Education course. 91% of participants recorded an overall increase in their confidence to interact with others, whether working in a team (75%), presenting their ideas (65%) or being the leader of a team (65%).

When we followed up with students from one programme six months afterwards, 77% continued to score higher in how confident they felt interacting with others (58% in confidence to be the leader of a team and 50% in confidence to present their ideas). We found a similar lasting effect when we followed up with participants on our Skills for

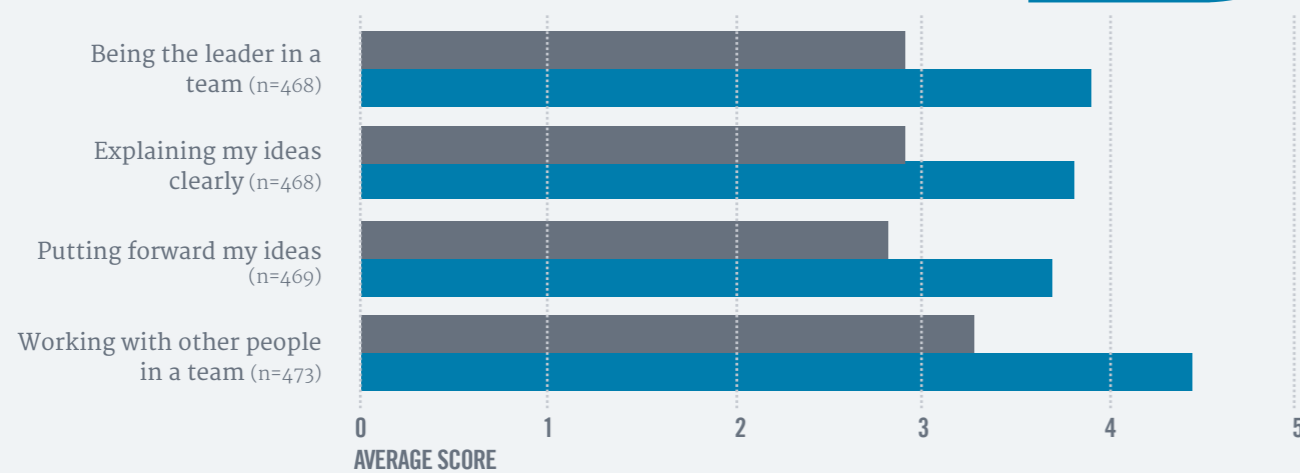
Life Award course: increases in confidence to explain ideas clearly and be the leader of a team were sustained twelve months on.

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When I got back, I did notice I'd be more confident, making friends and stuff. But then, in my schoolwork, if a teacher asked me, out of the blue, to answer a question, I felt like I could ... Like I won't be judged as much if I answered that question, whereas, before, I wouldn't have.”

Ruth, speaking in May 2016, three–five years after her course

## IMPROVEMENTS RECORDED IN YOUNG PEOPLE'S COMMUNICATION, TEAMWORK AND LEADERSHIP

Personal Development Scale: Communication, leadership and working with others



Rating scale: 1=Very unconfident; 2=Unconfident; 3=Neither confident nor unconfident; 4=Confident; 5=Very confident

Full results can be found in Additional Research, page 65, Figures 17 & 18

\* A retrospective pre-measure asks pupils once they have completed the course to reflect back on their starting level of confidence. This may differ from the actual pre-score they provided, after having practised their skills in a new and challenging environment, and realising that they are more or less confident than they previously thought.

**91%**  
OF STUDENTS SCORED HIGHER FOR CONFIDENCE TO INTERACT WITH OTHERS AT THE END OF THEIR COURSE 77% SCORED HIGHER SIX MONTHS ON

## FROM A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE



Our evaluations involving the parents of participants provide further evidence that young people are better able to communicate with others following their course. Parents and guardians have recorded improvements in how well their son or daughter presents and communicates ideas, as well as their consideration for the needs of others after completing the Skills for Life Award.

Prior to taking part 38% of parents reported that their son or daughter would very often or almost always present their ideas with confidence. Six to eight weeks after the course, this figure rose to 64%.

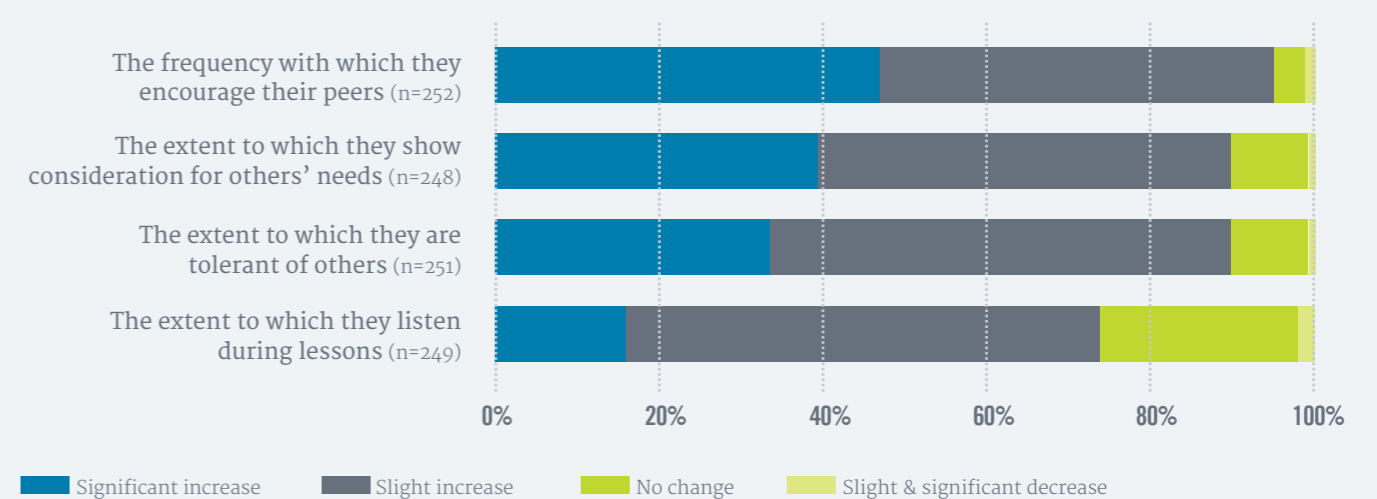
Similarly, prior to taking part 35% of parents reported that their son or daughter would very often or almost always explain their ideas clearly. Six – eight weeks after the course, this figure rose to 57%.

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We have found George listens to others more than he did. He seems more confident when talking about his day and what he has achieved. He has also started to discuss what is not working for him and will now ask for help rather than keeping to himself.”

Parent of George, age 18, who completed his Skills for Life Award course in 2016



## FROM A TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE CHANGES IN PUPILS' RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS REPORTED BY TEACHERS FOUR - SIX WEEKS ON FROM THEIR OUTWARD BOUND COURSE



Full results can be found in Additional Research, page 66, Figure 19.

## INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS AT XP SCHOOL DONCASTER



### INTRODUCTION

Since 2014, all students have attended a three-day Outward Bound course in Year 7 within two weeks of starting the school in order to build relationships both between students and with their teachers.

Relational Schools\*, an organisation that specialises in researching how relationships underpin how well students do in school, conducted a study into the relational health between individuals at XP Doncaster shortly after their Outward Bound course in September 2016. Relational health is defined by Relational Schools as *the distance in the relationship between two people or organisations*: a distance which determines how well each engages with the other's thinking, emotions and behaviours.

### EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Students in the school were asked to complete a questionnaire two weeks after the Outward Bound course. Results were compared against a national norm for relational health identified through Relational School's wider research.

### KEY FINDINGS

Overall, two weeks after their Outward Bound course, teachers and students at XP Doncaster demonstrated on average a +20% level of relational health compared to the national average.

Teachers scored their relationship with the students at 82% (20% higher than the norm). They had an exceptionally high level of knowledge of their students; a result which was driven by significantly higher scores for seeing students in 'a variety of situations' and 'with a variety of demands' compared with the national norm. As the Outward Bound course allows teachers to experience

students' behaviour in a wide variety of challenging situations, it is highly likely that the course is responsible for this result.

*"If you are going to make any difference to young people's lives you have got to know who they are, what makes them tick, what drives them, what upsets them, what makes them happy."* Teacher at XP School Doncaster

**Students scored their relationship with teachers at 67% (5% higher than the norm).**

They also scored very high on their knowledge of their teachers, in particular regarding how well they knew them in a variety of situations and the strong stability they felt in their relationships with them.

*"My teacher accepts me for who I am, and she's just going to be there for me whether I'm being annoying, upset or frustrated."* Student, XP School Doncaster

**Students scored their relationships with other students at 60% (8% higher than the norm).**

The biggest differences compared with the national norm were in the commonality they felt they shared with others. Significantly higher scores were reported in relation to the depth and synergy of their relationships with other students, and the sense of shared long-term vision.

*"We are going to have lots of friends and we are going to be able to help each other when things get tough."* Student, XP School Doncaster

To read the full report Building Quality Relationships through Expeditionary Learning please visit the Impact section of The Outward Bound Trust website at [www.outwardbound.org.uk/impact](http://www.outwardbound.org.uk/impact)

\*[www.relationalschools.org/](http://www.relationalschools.org/)