



**OUTWARD BOUND  
CANADA**

# **Outward Bound Canada Impact Report**

May 2020

*Developed in partnership with*  
**BAIN & COMPANY** 



**OUTWARD BOUND  
CANADA**

# Who we are

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Outward Bound Canada is a pan-Canadian charity that believes in **the power of outdoor adventure education** to build skills in youth that **set them up for life-long success**

We were **founded over 50 years ago**, and have since **served over 150,000 individuals**

We are part of an **international network of 34 Outward Bound Schools** that was created in 1941





# Why we exist

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Today's youth are **lacking the critical social and emotional skills** needed to thrive at school, at work, and in their communities

Traditional education systems are often **confined to the classroom** and focus on **skills for jobs of the past**, an issue particularly pronounced for **underserved communities**

There is **inequitable access to Outdoor Adventure Education** based on, for example socio-economic, ethno-cultural and/or racial background

In our **increasingly complicated world**, youth don't have the space to **connect with themselves, with others, and with nature**

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**Together, these realities leave many youth ill prepared to overcome challenges or take advantage of opportunities throughout life**

# What we do

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## Provide outdoor adventure education to Canadian youth

Using **nature as our classroom**, we allow Canadian youth to **get away from their daily lives**, creating space to engage in **self-discovery** and experiential learning



## Employ a curriculum promoting personal growth

Expert guides lead participants through **novel, real-life challenges** requiring teamwork, collaboration, and perseverance; skills often **missed in the traditional classroom**



## Reduce the financial barriers to ensure many can benefit

OBC raises funds and strives to **ensure equitable access** to these life-changing educational programs, regardless of **socio-economic, ethno-cultural** and/or **racial background**

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Participants develop the interpersonal skills needed to succeed in school, work, and life:

- ▲ **Resiliency**
- ▲ **Leadership**
- ▲ **Connection to nature**
- ▲ **Belief in oneself**
- ▲ **Teamwork**

*and much more...*

# Outward Bound Canada's impact occurs in various stages...



## Post-program results

Participants develop as individuals throughout the program

## Sustained individual outcomes

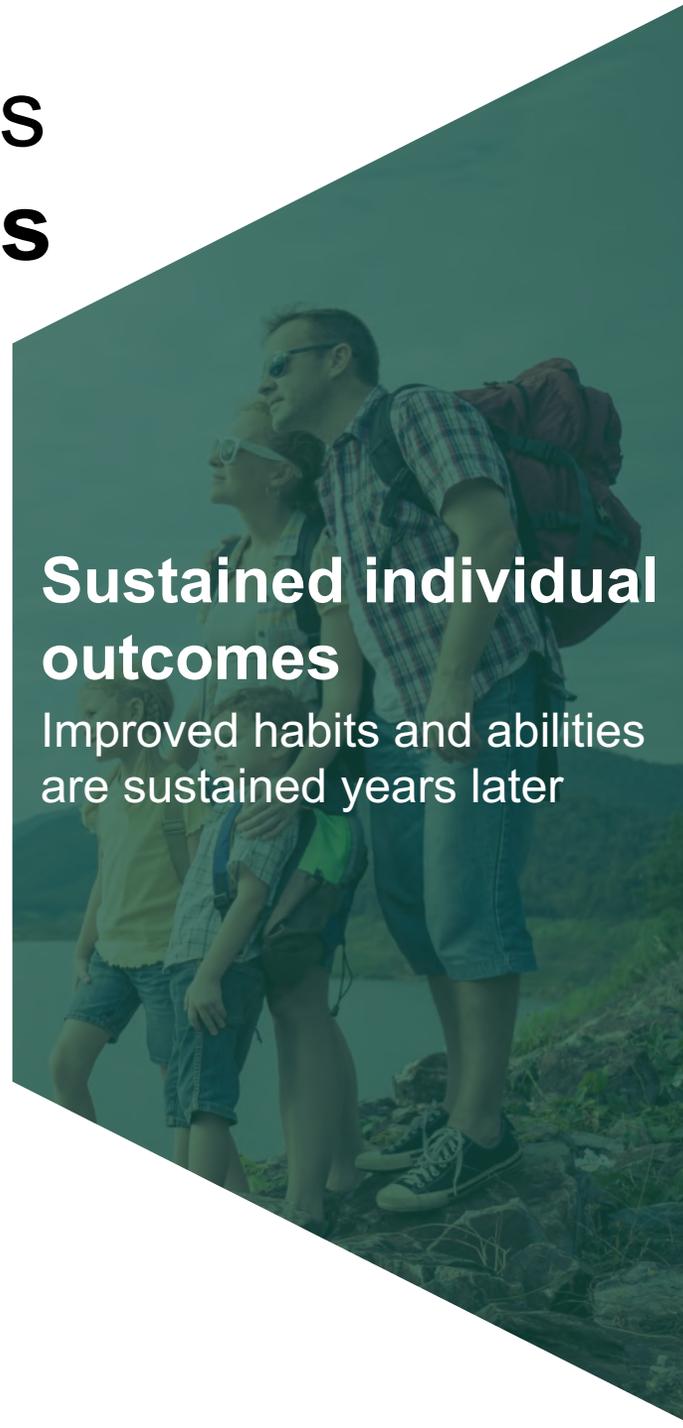
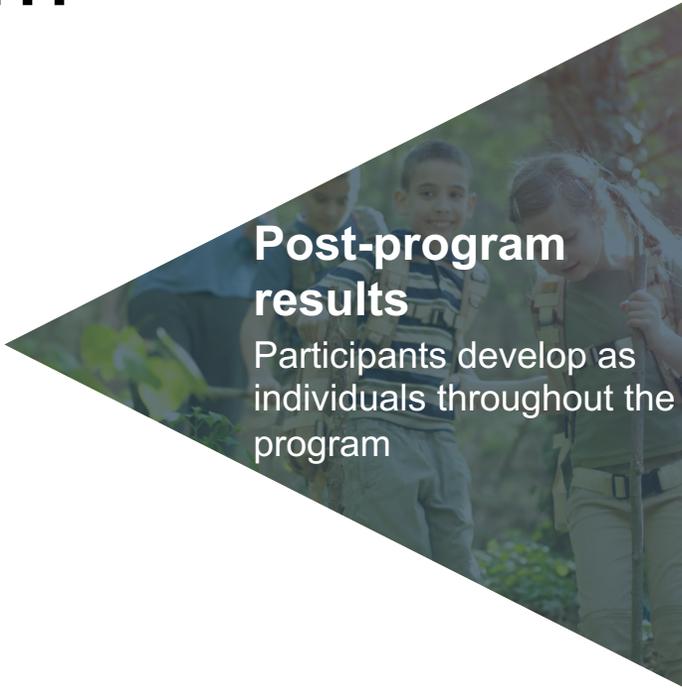
Improved habits and abilities are sustained years later

## Long-term societal impacts

Long-term direct and indirect benefits to society

...that grow over time

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# We tested **26** **different impact** **dimensions** across all stages

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Of participants indicated that Outward Bound Canada had a **strong impact** on them for **at least one dimension**

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Outward Bound Canada had a **strong impact** on at least **half of all participants** for 14 of the 26 dimensions evaluated

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- ◆ Teamwork
- ◆ Leadership
- ◆ Self-efficacy
- ◆ Physical activity
- ◆ Charitable giving
- ◆ Connection to nature
- ◆ Stress management
- ◆ Connection to others
- ◆ Community involvement

*And others*

# Outward Bound Canada leaves a lasting impact on participants' lives in 3 key areas



Improved sense of **resiliency**

**Greater control** over physical and mental health



**Building a generation of physically and mentally healthy citizens**

Greater **leadership skills** and social connectedness

More **confident, collaborative, and bold** team players



**Teaching the skills needed to succeed at school, work, and in life**

Stronger connection with **nature**

Higher **environmental consideration** throughout life



**Promoting greater levels of environmentalism**

# Physically and mentally healthy citizens



## Program results

More resilient individuals

65%

showed an increase in their **resiliency**

“ It has made me more resilient and willing to take on challenges. Youth Participant

“ I am better equipped to cope and navigate adversity. Youth Participant

## Individual outcomes

Greater control over physical and mental health

40%

indicated that they are much more prepared to **manage depression/anxiety**

55%

indicated that they are much more prepared to **manage stress**

80%

get at least 150 minutes of **exercise** per week

## Societal impacts

Lower risk of physical and mental illnesses in the future



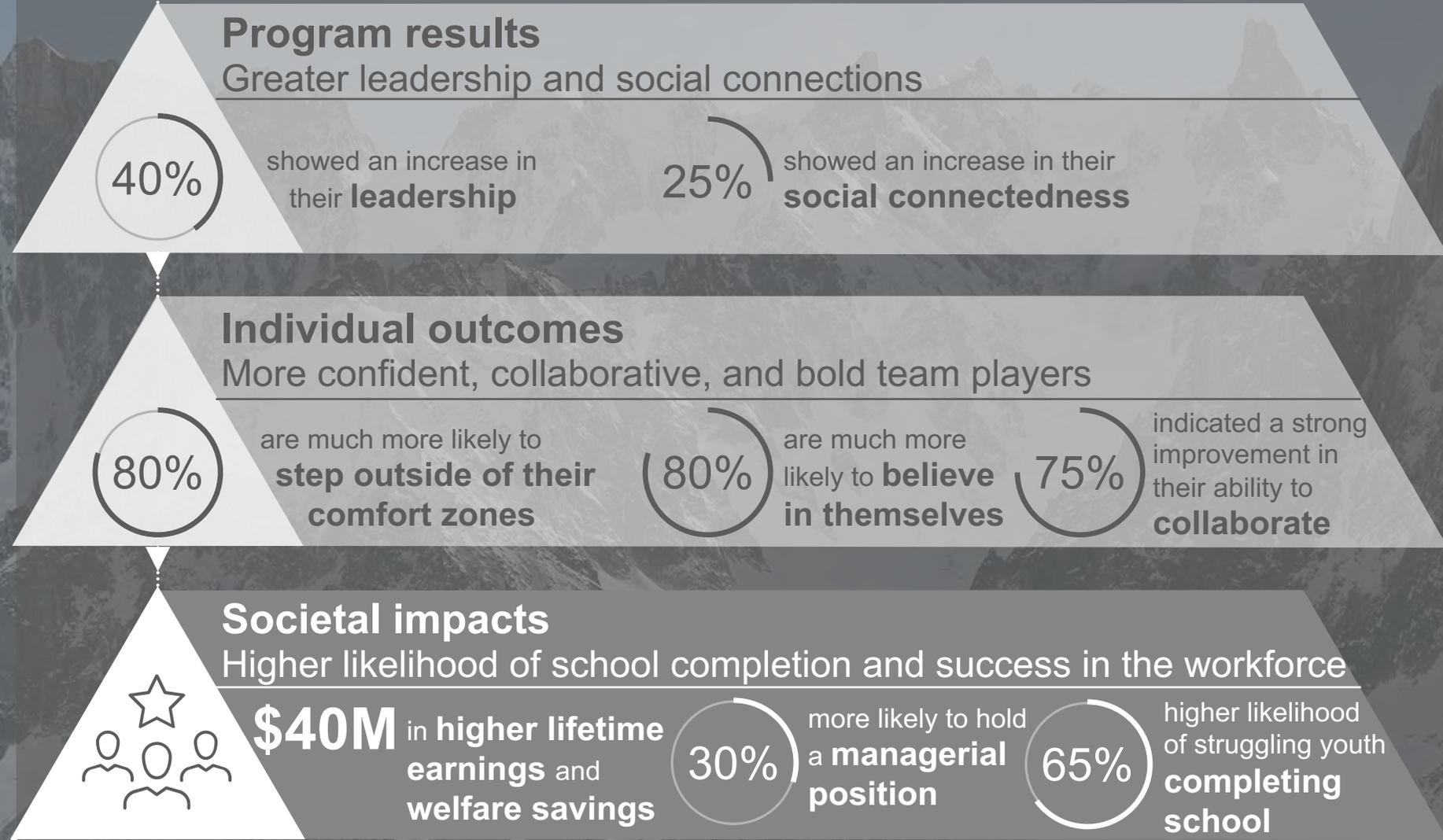
**\$4M**

saved in lifetime **mental and physical health costs**

**\$5M**

in **workplace productivity benefits** due to improved mental health

# Skills needed to succeed at school, work, and in life



# Promoting environmentalism



## Program results

Stronger connection with nature



showed a strong increase in their **connection to nature**

“ *I found a deep reverence and connection to nature, which I never had before.*  
Youth Participant

## Individual outcomes

Higher environmental consideration throughout life



showed a strong increase in their **environmental awareness**



are much more likely to **make eco-friendly choices**

## Societal impacts

Greater levels of pro-environmental behavior



Higher likelihood of **recycling** and other eco-friendly household behaviors

Higher likelihood of engaging in **environmental conservation efforts**

# Outward Bound Canada's societal impact is multiplied further, **indirectly impacting an additional ~30 individuals per participant**

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*I am now more **empathetic around my peers** which definitely has had a beneficial impact on them.*

**Friends**

“

*As a business leader, my OBC experience has helped me **mentor and motivate my teams** both professionally and in their personal lives.*

**Work/school**

**~30**

Individuals indirectly impacted, on average, per participant

**Family**

“

*My **two daughters** saw what I accomplished, and I instilled in them **that they can do anything they put their minds to**.*

**Community**

“

*After my OBC trip, I was **inspired to continue working in my community**. I've worked with NGO's and summer camps promoting youth development.*

# \$20K+

In lifetime benefits per participant

# \$1:13

Every \$1 donated to Outward Bound returns at least \$13 in value to society

# ~\$50M

In lifetime benefits contributed to society in 2019



Physically and mentally healthy citizens



Promoting environmentalism



Greater success at school, work, and in life

Long-term societal impacts

Sustained individual outcomes

Post-program results



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25% feel more socially connected

80% are much more likely to step outside of comfort zones



Reduced reliance on welfare



Lower physical and mental health costs

80% do 150+ min. of weekly exercise

65% develop greater resiliency

40% develop greater leadership

75% indicated a strong improvement in their ability to collaborate



Higher lifetime earnings



Improved workplace productivity

40% can much better manage anxiety or depression

85% feel more connected to nature

70% make more eco-friendly choices



Greater pro-environmental behavior

# Bain & Company analyzed Outward Bound Canada's impact using three **different yet related** methods...



Sustained individual outcomes

Long-term societal impacts

Post-program results

## Academic research analysis

- Consolidated leading academic studies to establish key benefits to society
- Only considered findings that were corroborated in multiple studies and focused on relevant sample populations

## Outward Bound Canada past-participant survey

- Surveyed individuals that participated in programs prior to 2017 to measure long-term impact (sample size of 152 participants)
- Results were analyzed in aggregate, and by controlling for different key factors (type of program, level of funding, years since trip, etc.)

## Outward Bound Canada participant questionnaire

- Consolidated 4 years of responses from participants in all programs (sample size of ~2,055 participants)
- Participants self-reported scores on key personal attributes considering their pre and post program self to understand change attributed to their expedition
  - Tested resiliency, leadership, social connectedness and compassion

**All data sources were rigorously corroborated to ensure confidence in conclusions**