



PARTNER PACKET



OUTWARD BOUND
CALIFORNIA

WELCOME!



Supporting you, supporting students

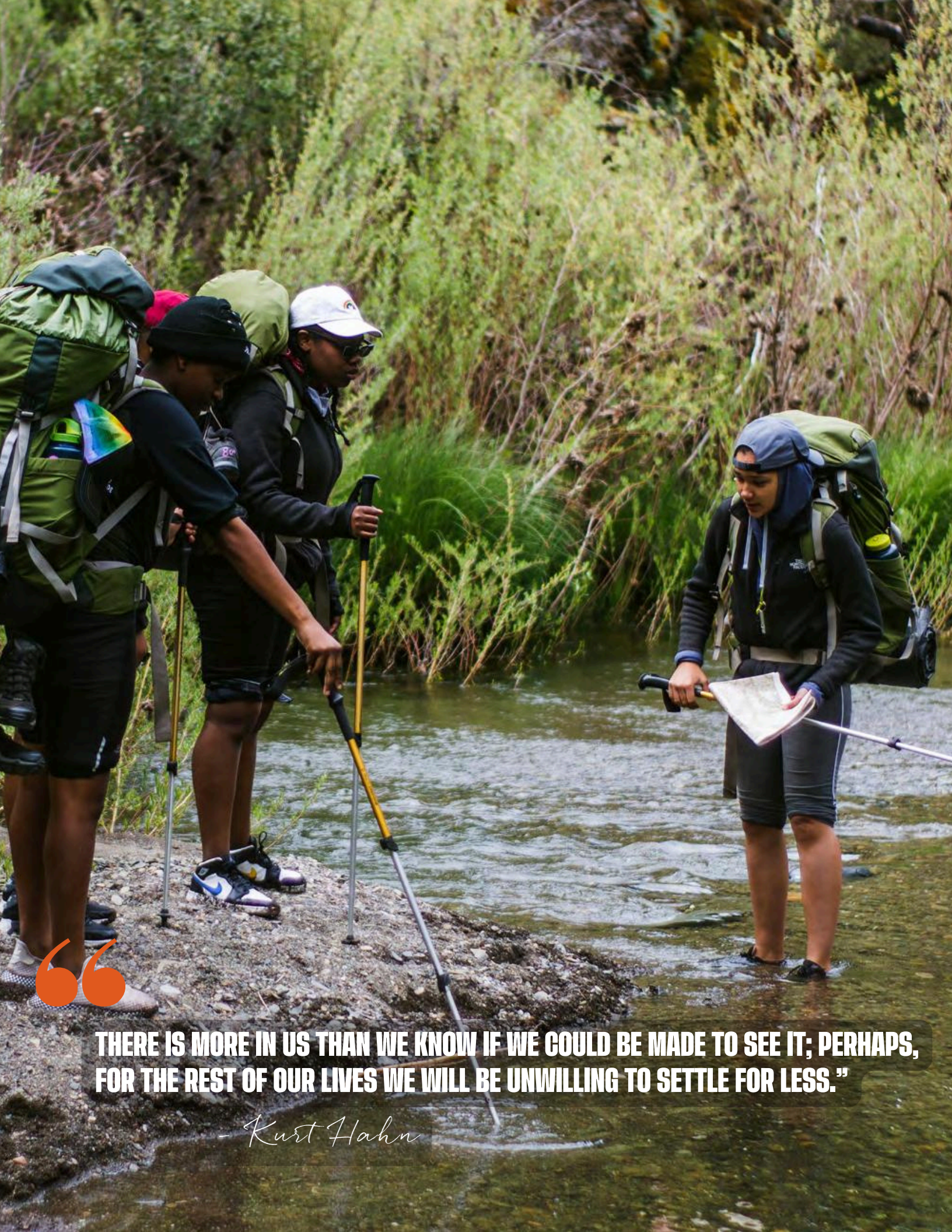
You are beginning a great adventure!

Your course will be an amazing experience! It's the opportunity to learn and grow in new and positive directions. It also gives you the opportunity to see your participants challenge themselves in a unique setting. We know this course is hard, but Outward Bound California is committed to the success of all participants. Use this packet to support students, their families, and school/organization leaders in preparing for course start.

This packet provides background on what makes OBCA a powerful experience, answers to common questions before a course begins and an overview of our educational approach. There is also a useful checklist that can keep you moving as your program approaches. If there is additional information you need, our staff is always willing to support.

Now, let's do this! Let's change lives through challenge and discovery!

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THERE IS MORE IN US THAN WE KNOW IF WE COULD BE MADE TO SEE IT; PERHAPS, FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES WE WILL BE UNWILLING TO SETTLE FOR LESS."

- Kurt Hahn

01

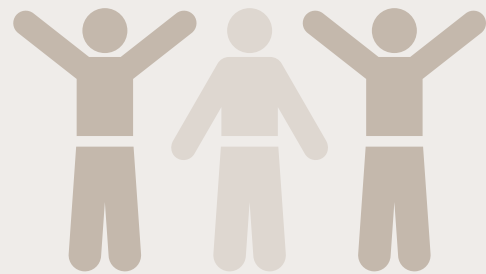
WHO ARE WE?

Outward Bound California is a non-profit educational organization and expedition school offering experiential learning programs that challenge participants to develop the skills and inner strengths needed to succeed in their schools, communities, and careers.

We work with participants 12 and up from all walks of life and backgrounds. We are dedicated to serving youth from under-resourced and under-represented communities while drawing on a legacy of high-quality and transformational programs developed by Outward Bound for over 80 years.

3,700

STUDENTS EXPERIENCE OBCA ANNUALLY



1 IN 2

STUDENTS
RECEIVE
SCHOLARSHIP AID

OREGON

CALIFORNIA

At Outward Bound California we take full advantage of our proximity to some of California's most diverse and breathtaking natural landscapes. Available course areas depend on group size and seasons. They include the Ropes Challenge Course is in John McLaren Park in San Francisco and overnight and single day programs available in the High Sierra and Joshua Tree.



NEVADA

- 1 San Francisco Ropes Course
- 2 Yosemite National Park
- 3 Minarets
- 4 Courtright Reservoir
- 5 Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks
- 6 Joshua Tree National Park



MEXICO

STUDENT JOURNEY

We provide a progression of different programs where students can join at the beginning and move through every type of experience or come to us at any point along the way. The goal is to offer an entry point program for every student, regardless of prior experience. With just one experience, or through the entire progression, participants develop important skills for success and a love of the outdoors they carry for the rest of their lives.



For our nonprofit, school and corporate partners, the most approachable program is the [Ropes Challenge Course](#). Located in San Francisco, it's a one day program that students attend with classmates and friends. For some, it's close enough to reach by foot! Concepts such as belonging, persistence, and physical confidence are introduced.

"I feel like I am a better leader and am able to step back in times of stress to think about what I need to do and what will generate the best outcome."

- Liam, age 15



For partners who feel energized on the ropes course and want more adventure, [there are overnight expeditions](#) in some of California's most iconic outdoor spaces. These provides a new level of challenge where students sleep overnight, carry heavy packs, and navigate their surroundings - not to mention the group dynamics that come up when the hiking gets hard! They still head out with classmates and a trusted teacher which helps build confidence early on in the programs.

Journal


Our 12+ week internship program in the High Sierra and apprenticeship program in the Bay Area create a pathway into the outdoor industry for people of color and LGBTQ+ identifying young adults. We offer in-depth training, skill building, student-led service projects and networking in the field. The goal of these programs is to prepare students for entry into instructional roles at Outward Bound or other youth-serving organizations.




INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT

"I notice that I tend to have a greater "seize the day" kind of attitude. I am taking more control over every day and the opportunities that come my way."

- Tyler, age 21

MULTI-WEEK PROGRAMS



Partners from the organizations we work with on the two previous programs nominate scholars to the Pinnacle Program and the Youth Leadership Corps (YLC), which are fully scholarshiped 2-week long programs in the High Sierra. Participants have a totally immersive experience on a longer format course with students they don't know from all over the state. Students are pushed farther out of their comfort zone with a longer course, new friends to make, more challenging terrain and opportunities to lead through the myriad of challenges the natural world and group travel presents.

OUR INSTRUCTORS

Outward Bound Instructors are experienced and qualified educators committed to the participants' well being and growth through their values, judgements, words, and actions. They set the industry standard in risk management, backcountry skills, group management and development. We rely on senior staff and industry experts to continue the tradition of professional and personal development through a series of trainings at the beginning of each program season.

Appropriate and thoughtful exposure to risk is an integral element of the educational process at Outward Bound. In our programs, participants take part in activities containing risks and discomfort. Our job is to train and support participants to identify, understand, and manage the risks they may encounter.

6:1

PARTICIPANT TO
INSTRUCTOR RATIO
FOR EXPEDITIONS

10:1

PARTICIPANT TO
INSTRUCTOR RATIO
ONE-DAY
PROGRAMS

80

INSTRUCTORS JOIN
US EACH YEAR TO
LEAD COURSES



***Trained
facilitators***

***Certified
Wilderness
First Aiders/
Responders***

***Experienced
risk managers***

***Passionate
outdoor
educators***

“AS INSTRUCTORS IT IS IMPORTANT TO CREATE A POSITIVE GROUP CULTURE. WE UNDERSTAND THAT SOME OF THE SMALL DETAILS THAT ARE PART OF BEING IN THE BACKCOUNTRY WILL NOT BE COMFORTABLE, BUT THE POINT ISN'T TO BE COMFORTABLE. THE POINT IS TO GROW. WHEN IT'S ALL OVER, YOU CAN LOOK BACK AND KNOW YOU DID IT. WHATEVER YOUR FUTURE CHALLENGES LOOK LIKE, AFTER YOU COMPLETE THE COURSE, YOU'LL KNOW YOU CAN HANDLE IT.”

- Holly Lehr, Lead Instructor

GROUP PROGRAMS

Group programs offer high impact experiences for youth, adults, and educators that develop leadership and character in a new and challenging environment.

We work with you to build programs that meet goals and transfer skills back to your school or organization. Prices vary with scholarship available for qualifying participants.



ROPES COURSE DAY
PARTICIPANTS: 6 - 40
LENGTH: 4 - 6 HRS

The Challenge Course is located in SF's John McLaren Park. We can accommodate small to large groups led by trained facilitators. The various low and high rope structures on course provides solo and team-building opportunities and focuses on balance, trust, communication, and teamwork.



ROCK CLIMBING DAY
PARTICIPANTS: 6 - 18
LENGTH: 6 HRS

Located in Joshua Tree National Park, climbing days include outdoor rock climbing and sometimes rappelling. Participants will learn how to use the climbing equipment safely and how to belay one another. This program is an opportunity for challenging personal limits, developing communication skills, creating new goals, and working as a team.

IMPORTANT - Please Review

Essential Eligibility Criteria & Course Activity Description

Find all general inherent and other risks the participant may encounter; the general requirements for participating in an Outward Bound California program; and specific activity descriptions on our website.

www.outwardbound.org/obca/essential-eligibility-criteria-expeditions/

Overnight Programs

Joshua Tree is available Nov - March and the High Sierra is available in summer months
Bring up to 40 participants in Joshua Tree, and up to 50 in the High Sierra
Overnight programs are 4+ Days



Groups will hike in and set up a basecamp at a central campsite where they'll stay for the duration of the course. From that location, students will participate in teambuilding challenges, day hike or summit a local mountain. Participants will gain experience in basic camp-craft such as building and sleeping under shelters and cooking in the backcountry. This course is great for first timers, younger students, or folks taking time to reflect. Challenge can be increased for a more experienced group.



In addition to the basecamp information, we offer one or more days of rock climbing for an added group challenge.



Traveling 3+ miles a day, participants will encounter epic views as they get deeper into the wilderness. They will set up a new campsite every night and challenge themselves by carrying all necessary belongings on their backs. Participants will gain skills like navigation, communication, and learn how to work together to achieve more.



We are committed to serving low-income, traditionally excluded populations, one in two of our students a full or partial scholarship. For community serving non-profits, we want to remove cost as a barrier. If you need financial assistance to attend course, please don't hesitate to reach out!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FOOD

Is food included in the fees?

Yes, food is provided for and is included in the fees for overnight programs. Please bring your lunch for day long programs.

What if a participant has specific dietary needs or restrictions?

OBCA can accommodate most dietary needs, allergies and restrictions with proper notice. Please communicate this with your Program Manager.

What will we eat?

Meals are simple, nutritious and field tested for packability. Students can expect simple meals such as beans, rice, spaghetti, curry, or quinoa stir-fry.

TRANSPORTATION

Does OBCA provide transportation services?

We do NOT provide transportation to/from your course start. If this is a barrier, contact us and we can connect you with potential options for transportation.

What time should we let our bus driver know to drop us off?

Communicate transportation plans with Program Manager for arrival/departure times. Typically we start course between 10am and 12pm on the first day and students depart at 12pm.

Single Days at Joshua Tree or the Ropes Course are 9am - 3pm.

GEAR

Do we need to buy new gear for the trip?

We provide all group gear like stoves, pans, etc. as well as backpacking backpacks, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, and rock climbing gear. When purchasing items, we recommend thrift stores to find cheaper options for fleeces, nylon clothing, wool socks, running shorts, and workout pants. Additionally, we also have many things to lend depending on the needs of the individuals such as clothing and boots. Your Program Manager will talk to you about specifics to ensure all individuals are properly outfitted for their course.

What do we pack?

Your Program Manager will provide a detailed packing list during the participant/parent meeting.

Can we bring phones and other electronics?

To keep the group present and immersed in the experience, we ask that participants leave all devices at home. Cameras (separate from a phone) are okay and encouraged!

HYGIENE

Will there be showers?

You can expect to get dirty on your course, but maintaining basic hygiene is an important part of wilderness travel. All students will be taught how to maintain hygiene in the backcountry. Showers aren't available on course.

MEDICAL FORMS

Do they need to be filled out by a doctor?

Most forms can be filled out by the parent/guardian. OBCA might need to follow up with doctors only if more information is needed.

Why are there so many forms?

Our Medical Forms are safety system at Outward Bound California. We rely on the information provided on these forms to prepare instructors to work with participants and meet specific needs.

Can we bring deodorant?

We discourage participants from bringing deodorant on course as it can create buildup and irritation on the skin and attract unwanted attention from bugs or critters.

Where do we go to the bathroom?

Depending on your course area, toilets may be available. In more remote environments, participants will learn to go outside. Instructors will teach proper hygiene and technique.

What if it rains?

We run rain or shine. Some activities may be altered for safety.

What do we do about water?

Drinking water is collected and treated from local sources in your course area.

SCHOLARSHIPS

How do we qualify for scholarships?

Scholarships vary and are based on participants' need. We offer tuition reduction to schools and nonprofit groups which work with low income populations based on the school or organization's reduced lunch percentage.

ENVIRONMENT

Will there be bugs/bears/snakes/critters?

In short: Yes! Spending time outside means you are living in someone else's natural habitat. Ropes courses will not encounter most of these.

PARTICIPATION

Who can come on the trip?

We let our partners decide who attends the OBCA course. It can be a homeroom, leadership group, or the first to sign up. [See essential eligibility requirements here.](#)

Can participants leave early if they need to?

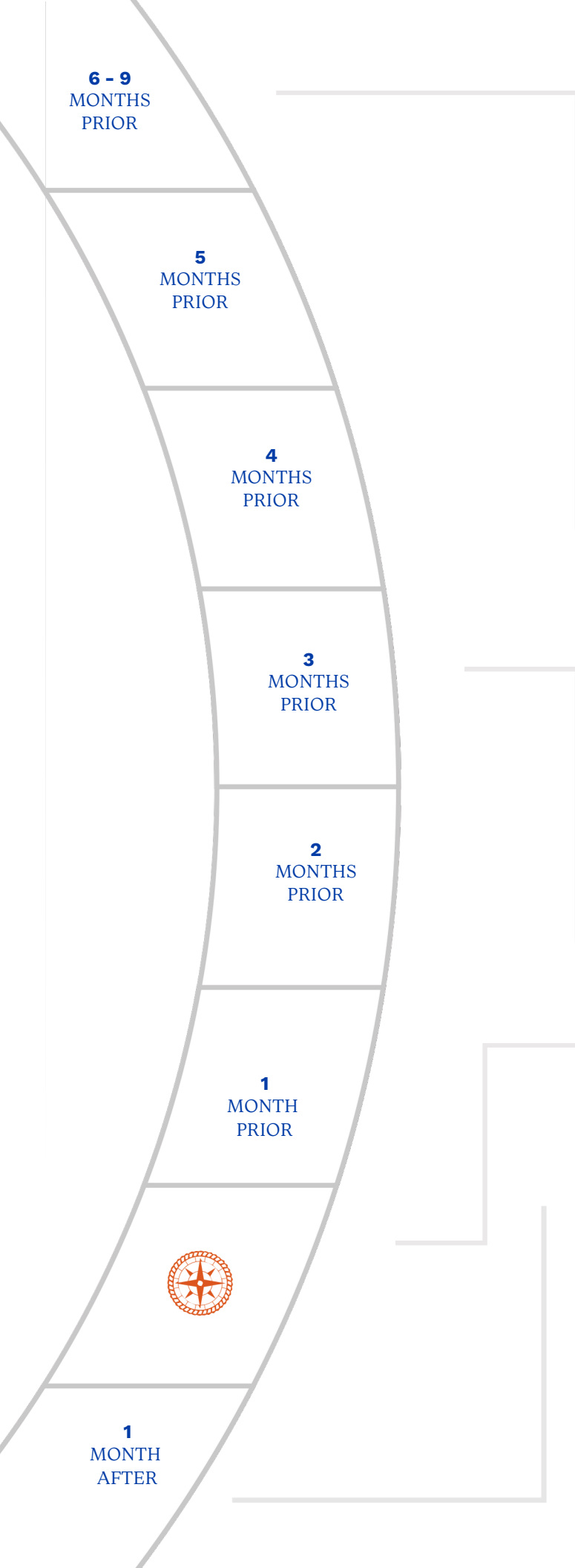
Unfortunately, it is difficult for participants to come and go from course once it has begun. We ask that participants commit to being a part of the entire experience. We have evacuation systems in place in case of injury or other events that necessitate leaving course early.

06

CHECKLIST

Get started





PHASE I – BOOKING & CONTRACTING*

- Book program
 - Confirm program logistics: # participants, # chaperones, times, location
 - Relay any special circumstances / request accommodations (ie. language, ability)
- Send contract to Outreach Coordinator along with deposit
- Note all paperwork deadlines

PHASE II- DESIGN

- Confirm group goals with Program Manager
- Set date for Family/Participant Pre-Course Meeting

PHASE III—FORMS

- Distribute Online Medical Forms and Liability Releases to all participants (consider collecting forms for a waitlist as well!)
- Assist with participant contact as needed during the follow-up screening process
- 4-6 Weeks prior to Course Start: Ensure all Medical Forms and Liability Releases have been submitted as outlined in Specifications Sheet. Paperwork tends to be the hardest step in this process. Please give yourself ample time to meet deadlines.

PHASE IV—DELIVERY

- Program start/end

PHASE V—FOLLOW-UP

- Debrief with Outreach and Program team about over-all experience
- Tag us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#)! We'll share photos from group camera if used.
- Contact Outreach Coordinator to book future courses and build on the experience!

*6-9 months out for Overnight, 3 months out for 1 Day Programs

MEASURING OUR IMPACT: SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN ACTION

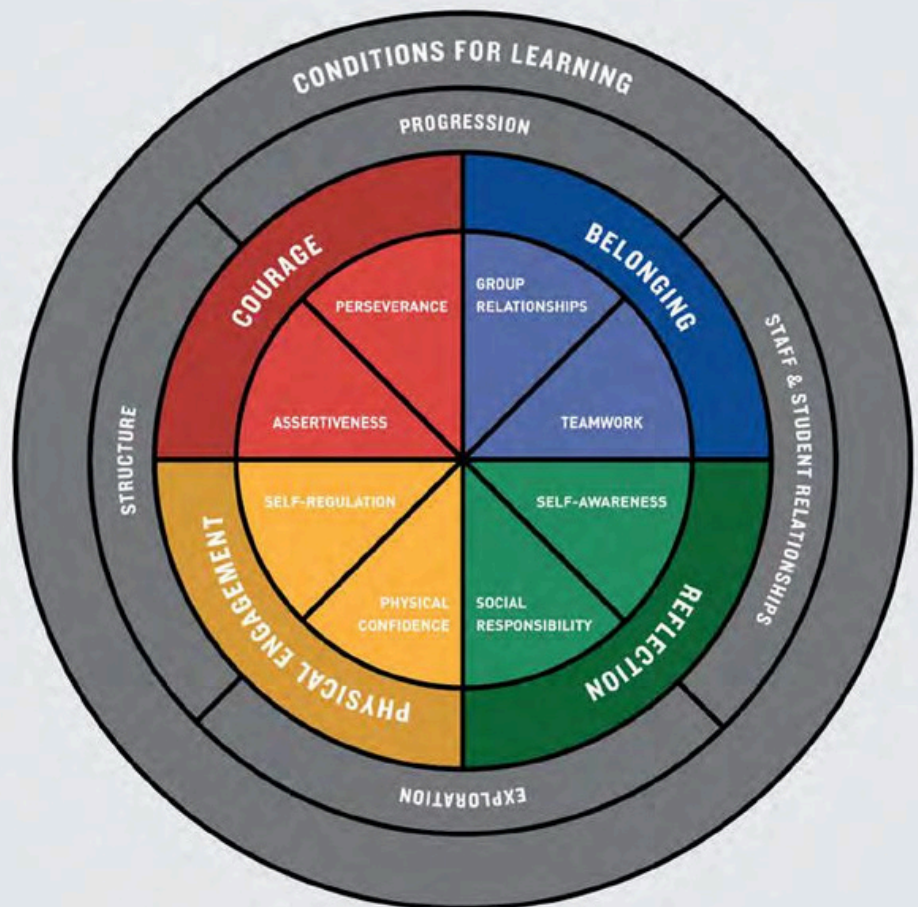
Outward Bound is at the center of a fundamental shift in the nation's educational paradigm. We are helping students become more engaged, compassionate, and confident. By teaching key social and emotional skills, our programs are helping students outgrow their comfort zones and learn to lead together.

The Outward Bound Domains of Thriving (DoT) combines our 60 year US history with the latest insight and research on social-emotional development.

The DoT highlights the four areas of human development that are impacted on an Outward Bound course: Courage, Belonging, Reflection, and Physical Engagement.

The Outward Bound Outcomes Survey (OBOS), designed and validated by the Partnerships for Education and Resilience (PEAR), measures student change in 12 areas critical to the development of these four domains. All students take the survey at the end of their course, and report on each area. We analyze the results and leverage the learnings to improve programming, staff training and ensure we are providing equitable outcomes for all students across race and gender.

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.



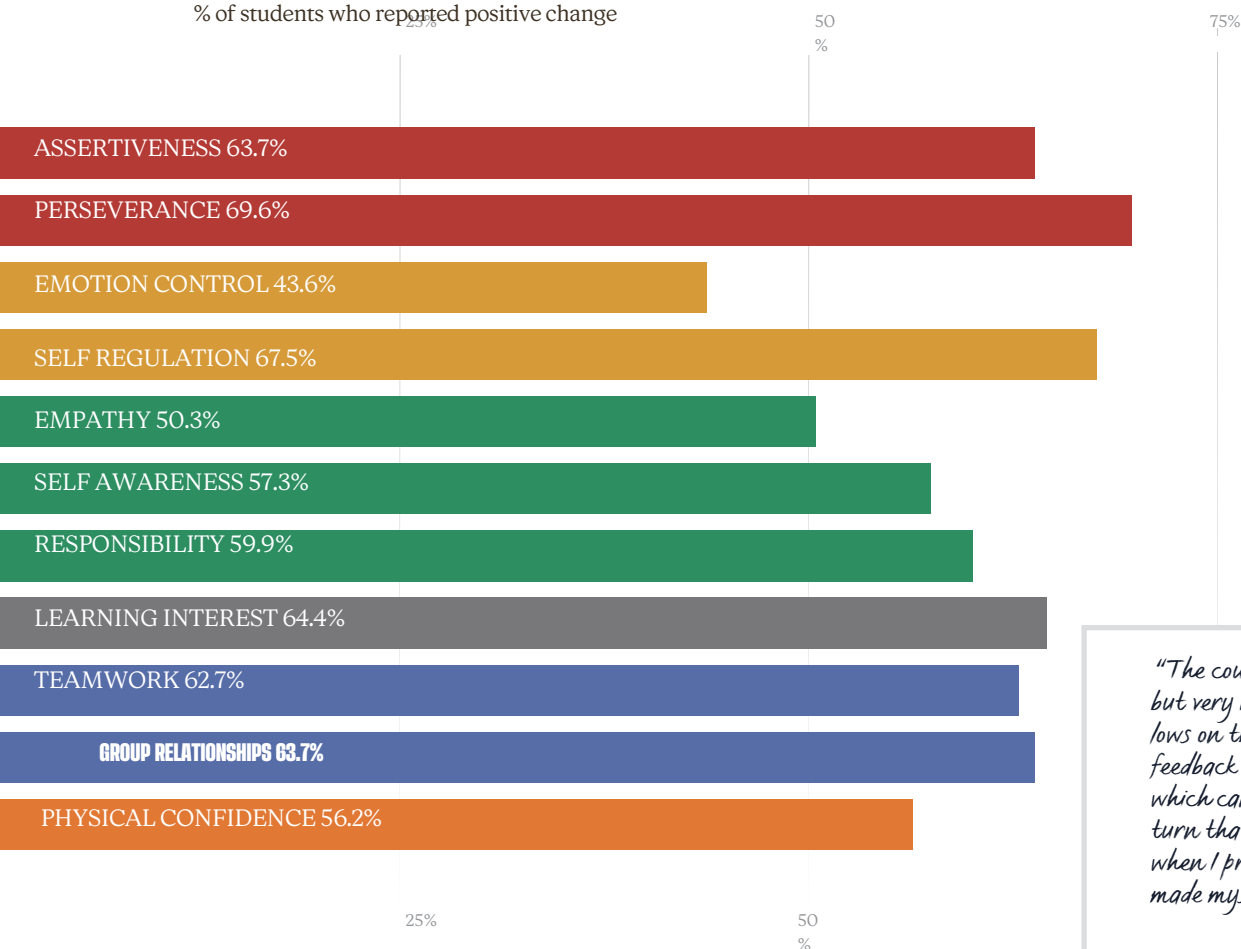
ALL MEASURED OUTCOMES SHOWED POSITIVE CHANGE

Behavioral change through experiential learning programs is incredibly hard to measure and even harder to prove results. We are proud to say in our

second year of deep analysis of this data, our results showed that students reported statistically significant positive change across all twelve measures on our overnight programs and all six measures on our ropes course one day programs. Additionally, there were no statistically significant differences between race/ethnicity groups on any of the 12 scales for either program type. There were interesting differences across gender, course length and age for our overnight programs.

OVERNIGHT PROGRAMS

% of students who reported positive change



READ MORE ABOUT DOT

here



"The course was a very challenging but very rewarding experience. The lows on the course included taking in feedback after long days on trail which can be hard, but I managed to turn that into a high later on course when I processed that feedback and made myself a better leader."

- Claire, age 16

Percent of Students Self Reporting Change Using the OBOS in 2021. Total of 366 surveys were completed.

Permission to use the Outward Bound Outcomes Survey (OBOS) was obtained from PEAR.

Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of Outward Bound California and do not necessarily reflect those of PEAR.





“I DEFINITELY LEARNED THE MEANING OF COMMUNITY AND REINFORCED THE VALUES MY MOM TAUGHT ME ONCE: RESPONSIBILITY AND RESPECT. I HAVE BECOME MORE AWARE OF MYSELF AND HOW VALUABLE I AM, REALIZING THERE’S NOT A LIMIT WHEN YOU SET A GOAL.”

- Miguel M., 15





CHANGING LIVES THROUGH CHALLENGE & DISCOVERY

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