

# Imagining the Outdoors



Georgina Steytler

# What we do

- Horse riding; trail biking; caving; bushwalking; trail running; canoeing; sailing; mountain biking; slacklining; rockclimbing; orienteering; surfing; 4WDing; rogaining; camping; challenge ropes courses; expeditions; fishing; kayaking; snorkelling; off road triathlons; pioneering ...

- Recreation
- Education
- Therapeutic
- Developmental
- Tourism
- Skill development
- Community engagement
- Spiritual development

volunteers, not for profits, schools, RTO's/ Universities, outdoor centres, SRO's, clubs, local government...





Sarah Pye

# What We Share

- A desire to **make a difference** in people's lives
- A belief in the **value** of outdoor activities and experiences to ... bring joy, build learning, help us learn, encourage relationships ...
- A **connection and respect** for the outdoor environments in which participate
- A preference to **deliver** what we do, well

Education  
Reform

Health  
Crisis

Budget  
Tightening

Risk  
Aversion

Social  
Norms

Our Story  
telling



Education Reform

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# Our Health Pathway

- Obesity levels for six-year-olds have doubled in the past decade; for 15-year-olds, they have trebled
- One in eight boys and one in 10 girls aged between 11 and 17 have a diagnosed mental health problem
- 97% of Australian kids aged 5- 14 watch TV or videos during their leisure time
- In Australia, 70% of males and 56% of females over the age of 18 are overweight or obese (ABS data, 2011-2012)



## Obesity cost hits \$58b a year

CATHY O'LEARY  
MEDICAL EDITOR

The obesity crisis is costing Australia a staggering \$58 billion a year, including almost \$6 billion in WA alone, with one in six people now obese and the number set to rise by almost another million by 2025, an alarming new report has warned.

Commissioned by Diabetes Australia, it also reveals a catastrophic flow-on effect in rates of type 2 diabetes, which rose an alarming 137 per cent in the past three years solely due to

growing waistlines, and has sparked calls for cash grants to replace the use of junk food in sporting and school fundraisers. The report, by Access Economics, estimates that 17.5 per cent or 3.71 million Australians are now obese, including 290,000 children and teenagers aged five to 19.

This was penalising the economy \$8.3 billion in direct financial costs and \$49.9 billion in lost wellbeing, or the years of healthy life lost through disability and premature death.

Obesity was blamed for an extra 242,000 Australians with type 2

diabetes, 644,843 with cardiovascular disease, 422,274 with osteoarthritis and more than 30,000 with bowel, breast, uterine or kidney cancer, since 2005.

Diabetes Australia national president Gary Deed said the figures were tragic and showed previous estimates of the size and cost of the crisis had been greatly understated.

"The obesity epidemic in Australia is having a direct and catastrophic influence on increasing the incidence of type 2 diabetes," he said. "We know that obesity and type 2 diabetes can be

prevented and we need to make fundamental changes in the way we live to arrest the escalating crisis."

Dr Deed said long-term planning on issues such as urban design and food labelling was urgently needed.

The findings coincide with a major obesity forum in Perth yesterday which called for measures including food regulation such as better labelling and a curb on the advertising and promotion of junk food.

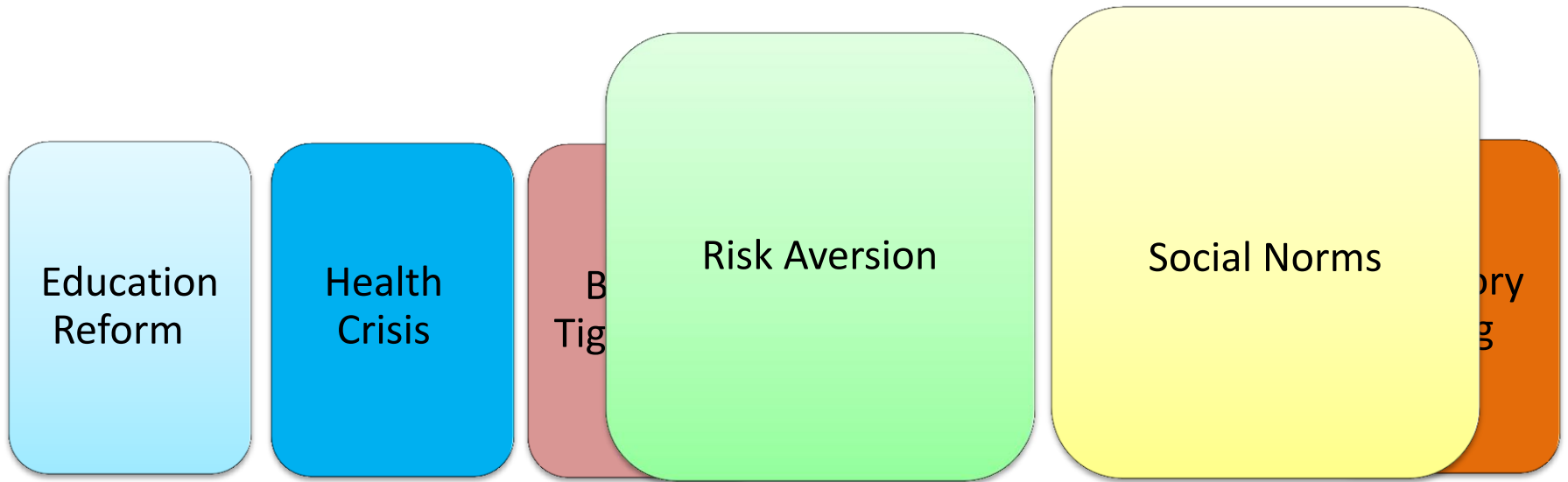
Organised by Curtin University and the Public Health Advocacy Institute of WA, it recommended initia-

tives such as free public transport every second Monday and including a lifestyle risk assessment in health checks for four-year-olds.

Institute director Mike Daube said the magnitude of the obesity problem was glaringly apparent.

The forum also proposed giving school parent groups and sports clubs up to \$5000 a year to replace junk food fundraisers.

Cancer Council WA director of education and research Terry Slevin said the groups did not like selling junk food but needed the money.



# Competing Values



Nature deficit disorder leads to “diminished use of the senses, attention disorders and higher rates of physical and emotional illnesses” (Louv, p.32)



We live in a ‘bubble-wrap’ society, one that is obsessed with reducing risk to the point of keeping us from doing a lot of things we want to do and/or need to do...

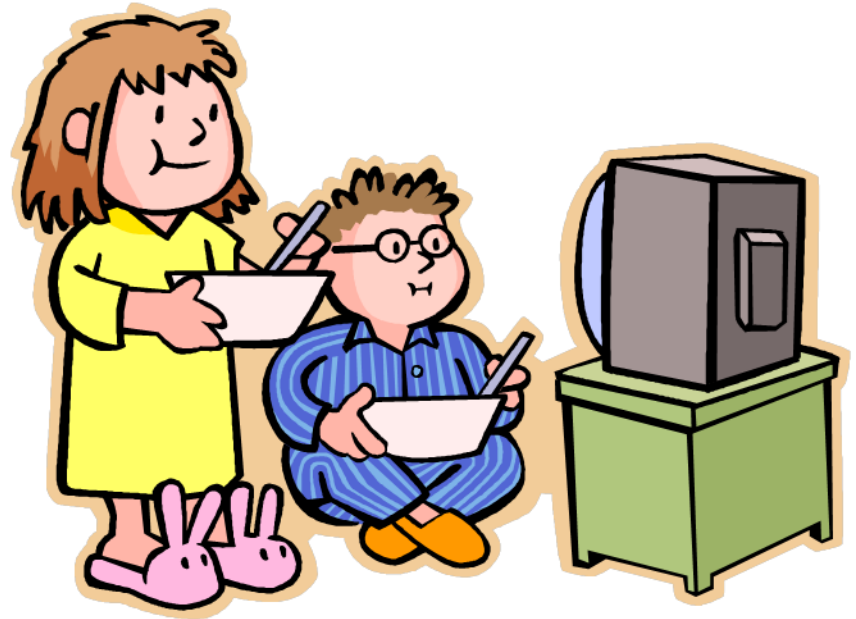
Unfortunately, the risk reduction and the restrictions are often a package deal.

*Dale Cozort, Author*



# Why Outdoors?

- ‘Today's youth spend just 4 - 7 minutes outside each day in unstructured outdoor play such as climbing trees, building forts, catching bugs. Yet they spend more than 7 hours each day in front of a screen’ (National Wildlife Federation, 2011)



1971, 80% of seven- and eight-year-olds walked to school, today fewer than 10% do so



Education  
Reform

Health  
Crisis

Budget  
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Risk  
Aversion

So  
No

Our Story telling



# Our 'Presence'

QORF 165  
Members



- 137 website



- 84 Facebook page



- 33 Twitter account

- Less than 15% meet modern web conventions
- Less than 30% - first page google search for their activity/s
- 40% have outdated or missing information on web
- 20% using facebook 'effectively'

# Opportunities ... or Our Strengths?



# Health & Wellness



## SEQ

- 1% drop in outdoor recreation participation:
  - **\$10 million annual** increase in health costs

## Australia

- If more people were physically active for 30 minutes a day:
  - **\$1.5 billion annual** health care savings



# Some identified benefits of Outdoor Recreation

Global Health Benefit	Specific Benefit
Physical Health	Stress reduction; improved cardio functioning; reduction of obesity; increased muscular strength
Mental Health	Stress reduction; improved stress management; enhanced mood; reduced depression; improved sense of wellness
Personal Development	Enhanced sense of self; self confidence, self esteem etc; improved sense of independence & autonomy; greater awareness; awareness of new life priorities; learning; develop problem solving skills
Social Development	Better social networks; greater social support; greater sense of community; capacity for interdependence and cooperation; development of trust in others
Community Benefits	Economic benefit; greater altruism; more participative society; greater productivity
Environmental Benefit	Enhanced sense of responsibility for the environment; awareness of environment as part of self not just a playground



# Building resilience



Christian Botella

# Some identified benefits of contact with Nature (from Maller et al, 2005)

Global Health Benefit	Specific
Physical	Stress reduction including lowering heart rate & blood pressure; Reduction in muscle tension; Increased levels of physical activities – reduction in heart disease risk factors & increase immune functioning.
Mental	Improved self awareness, esteem, concept, positively effected mood; reduction in negative feelings (anger, fear, frustration); better recovery from stress; alleviate symptoms of anxiety, depression; improved psychological health; restore concentration & attention
Spiritual	Feelings of peace, oneness, connection; reduced psychosis; reflection on personal values
Social	Sense of community, place, social ties; expanded social networks; enhanced social inclusion & cohesion; improved QOL & neighbourhood satisfaction





# A good life



Connection & Community



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# Biophilia



Evelyn Campbell

# EE/ LOTC/ Outdoor Play ..

- Research Results demonstrate:

- Students are more engaged
- Learning is deeper and retained longer
- Improved attendance and intrinsic motivation
- Reduced behavioural problems
- Builds confidence and leadership skills
- Enhanced learning outcomes

(e.g. Ballantyne, Packer & Everett, 2005; The English Council, 2013)



*“Uncertainty is inherent in adventure, bringing the possibility of adverse outcome but a young person's development should not be stifled by the need to consider the worst consequence of risk, without estimating its likelihood and balancing this against the possible benefits. The concept of 'risk/ benefit assessment' should be our guiding light.”*

(Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents, 2012)



# Opportunities



# Our Decisions

- Where are we heading?
- How can we get where we want to be?
- How do we take opportunities?
- Can we find a shared path and build on our collective strengths?



Maria Bowering



Dean Clarke



Reid Moran

# Useful References

NOTE: All attributed photos are entries from the QORF 'It's better outdoors' Photography Competition, sponsored by QPWS/ NPRSR.

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