

Results: Canadian Summer Camp Research Project



Canadian Camping Association
Association des camps du Canada

University of
Waterloo



Social Integration and Citizenship

Does camp help children build stronger social networks?



Social skills, fast friends, belonging & support

Social Integration and Citizenship

**Percentage of camper population
showing positive growth**



65%

Social Integration and Citizenship

“YES” - kids learn and grow with regard to social connections

Male campers may require more support in this area

Younger campers may not be ready for certain social skills and abilities



Environmental Awareness and Responsibility

Can camp change how campers relate to the environment and their impact on it?



Environmental Awareness and Responsibility

**Percentage of camper population
showing positive growth**



52%

Environmental Awareness and Responsibility

“YES” - camp helps teach and promote environmentally friendly lifestyles.

Female campers scored higher in both awareness and rate of improvement.

Directors should look towards ways for improving environmental programs for boys



Environmental Awareness and Responsibility

School curriculum, the media and public service events have been doing much to improve the environmental awareness of youth.

This may account for the high overall awareness score and small degree of change as noted within the study.



Attitudes Towards Physical Activity

Does camp help promote and encourage healthy active lifestyles?



Attitudes Towards Physical Activity

**Percentage of camper population
showing positive growth**



61%

Attitudes Towards Physical Activity



“YES” - camp does improve camper’s attitudes towards physical activity regardless of gender.

SIGNIFICANT FINDING – camp supports physically active choices beyond the early running, jumping and chasing stage.

Attitudes Towards Physical Activity



HOWEVER - Similar scores for new and returning campers indicated improvement may not extend beyond the camp program. Reasons may be lack of access to activities, support or environment. Further research is suggested.

Emotional Intelligence

Can camp help children identify and positively deal with their own emotions and the emotions of others?



Emotional Intelligence

**Percentage of camper population
showing positive growth**



69%

“YES” - the highest rate of positive growth was found in this area. Although girls scored higher, both genders are able to grow emotionally within the camp setting.

Emotional Intelligence



Additionally, results indicate that the impact of camp on emotional intelligence does not change as children mature.

Personal Development & Self-Confidence

Do children grow in terms of personal development and self-confidence at camp?



Personal Development & Self-Confidence

**Percentage of camper population
showing positive growth**



67%

“Yes” – camp fosters independence and self-confidence. Similar average scores were found for both genders – however girls showed a significant increase over time.

Personal Development & Self-Confidence: Age



Higher scores and rates for older campers matches natural maturity levels. Different rates of development for genders requires further study. However, campers were found to retain these attributes from year to year.

Conclusions and Recommendations: Gender

Although camp promoted change in all 5 areas specific sub-groups showed more change in some areas. This may have implications for future programming.

Females showed greater positive changes in the areas of social integration, environmental awareness, emotional intelligence and personal development.

Males showed greater positive change in attitudes towards physical activity.

Conclusions and Recommendations: Age

Overall, older campers tend to experience greater levels of change in all 5 areas.

This may be accounted for because of greater maturity and social experience.

However, all 4 age groups experienced significant change during camp.

Conclusions and Recommendations: New and Returning Campers

First time campers tended to experience greater change than returning campers.

However, most significant in this study is:

That children did not reach a plateau where development stopped even after multiple experiences at camp.

It appears that camp continues to offer challenges and supportive experiences that encourage development EACH TIME a child attends!



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