



1

KIDS IN NATURE NETWORK

STATE OF NATURE PLAY IN VICTORIA

KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS MAY 2025



Jobs, Skills,
Industry
and Regions



Department
of Education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

All parties would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the unceded lands on which the State of Nature Play research was conducted, especially the Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri peoples of the Kulin Nation where this report was developed, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We recognise and pay homage to the knowledge and ongoing connection Traditional Custodians have with the land and waters. We recognise the importance of a healthy Country for the health and wellbeing of all, especially children.



CONTENTS

Acknowledgement of Country	2
Partners	4
Acknowledgements.....	4
Executive summary	5
About this report.....	6
Data set.....	7
Locations of organisations.....	8
Why nature play is important	9
SURVEY RESULTS.....	11
How is nature play being funded?	12
Who is accessing nature play programs?.....	13
What support do organisations need?	14
Comments from respondents.....	15
Age of program	17
Structured versus unstructured play	18
BARRIERS AND ENABLERS FOR NATURE PLAY PROGRAMS	19
Barriers to nature play - starting programs up	20
Factors enabling existing programs.....	21
Summary of enablers to nature play	23
A story of challenge – Finding and maintaining a bush kinder site	24
BENEFITS OF NATURE PLAY	26
Benefits of nature play for children	27
Comments about young children’s development.....	28
Benefits of nature play for parents and families	30
Knowledge gained through nature play by parents and families.....	31
Comments about the benefits of nature play for families.	32
CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS	33
Professional development.....	35
Time	35
Funding (use and restrictions).....	36
Education	36
Program support.....	37
A final thought	38
RECOMMENDATIONS	39
Key Recommendations: One page overview.....	41
Key Recommendations: Evolving themes.....	43
Networking, advocacy and staffing	43
Education and Funding	43
Emerging trends.....	44
Education and Funding	44
Indigenous Community and Knowledge.....	44
Networking, Advocacy and Staffing.....	44
References.....	46
APPENDIX	I
List of tables and figures.....	ii
Horizontal representation of graphs for easier interpretation.....	iii-vII



PARTNERS

Kids in Nature Network (KINN)

Early Childhood Outdoor
Learning Network

Environmental Education in Early
Childhood

Victoria State Government
Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions
Federation University

Victoria State Government
Department of Education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project was funded by the Victorian Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions and the Department of Education Victoria.

Report compiled by Dr Amy Cloughton

Research Group: Dr Amy Cloughton, Mick Robertson, Rose Major

Steering Group: Dr Amy Cloughton, Mick Robertson, Rose Major, Dr Cecile van der Burgh, Doug Fargher, Karen Anderson, Stephanie Willey, Bronwyn Joslyn, David Strickland

Suggested citation.

Kids in Nature Network (2025). The State of Nature Play in Victoria. Summary findings and key recommendations.

Report design & illustration:

katejonesdesign.com.au

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our first report, *The State of Nature Play, Outdoor Learning and Bush Kinder in Victoria (2018)*, presented the first comprehensive dataset available on the occurrence of nature play in Victoria, the main barriers and enablers to starting and implementing nature play programs and a list of key recommendations to better assist groups achieve their goals. This second report, with data collected in 2023, builds on these findings and, in addition to occurrence, barriers and enablers, captures qualitative data and stories on the importance and benefits of nature play for children and families as identified and shared by respondents.

Play is widely recognised as essential for children's development. A growing body of research identifies the importance of nature play and bush kinder for children's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development (Gill et al. 2023; Williams 2023; Elliott and Chancellor 2014) and recognition that outdoor environments provide important educational places for learning and connection (Hughes et. al 2021; Warden, 2017).

Nature play offers opportunities to engage in unstructured and non-gendered play for all children, building confidence and supporting skill development (Kaskamanidis, 2022). In addition, nature play allows children the freedom to explore uncertain, challenging and engaging opportunities in play to satisfy their curiosity (Gill et al., 2023; Whittle, 2016). Furthermore, nature play enables the development of social and emotional skills through cooperative play and collective problem solving (Lucchetti, 2023), the development of positive relationships and self-awareness for children (Whittle, 2016) and rich opportunities to explore their emotions and imagination (McDonald et al., 2023).

Compared to 2018, a larger percentage of survey respondents identified themselves as specifically offering nature play and bush kinder programs, with 22% of respondents calling their program bush kinder. Organisations have a wide spread of locations across Victoria with a higher concentration of nature play and bush kinder programs in the urban and peri-urban areas of Victoria. In the programs offered across

Victoria, over half of the organisations offer activities that are accessed by children with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island backgrounds, children with a disability, or children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

This report highlights the main barriers that organisations face in establishing and setting up nature play and bush kinders, such as staffing, funding and training. There is also recognition of the enablers that allow organisations to grow and maintain their programs, such as networking with other practitioners, incorporating Indigenous perspectives, and access to training and funding.

Significantly, this report highlights the range of benefits of nature play and bush kinder for children and families as identified by survey respondents. The respondents noted that children who engaged in nature play and bush kinder increased their confidence and demonstrated a sense of calmness. Respondents also noted that parents gained knowledge of their local area, built sustainability skills and saw their children as confident contributors to their local community.

Nature play and bush kinder is a growing sector, and provides beneficial physical and mental health, cognitive and social outcomes for children and families. This report also indicates its importance in building connection, sustainability and stewardship, setting up younger generations to protect and restore the natural environment.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

The project was jointly developed by the Kids in Nature Network (KINN), Early Childhood Outdoors Learning Network (ECOLN) and Environmental Education in Early Childhood (EEEC). This project received ethical clearance (Ethics project 2022/189) from Federation University Australia. The project was funded by the Victorian State Government, Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions and the Department of Education Victoria.

The State of Nature Play in Victoria online survey was open from May 14 to June 9 2023.

The survey questionnaire was built on the first survey from 2016 to incorporate 60 questions with an average answer time of 39 minutes. The survey employed mixed methods: both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The quantitative or closed questions provided numerical data that allowed for measurement and comparison. The qualitative or open questions provided for written responses to expand on topics or provide further context from participants. The survey included multiple choice questions, ranking questions and short answer opportunities for participants to share stories. Participants were recruited via email callouts and social media networks. The survey captured the current state of nature play in Victoria, and this report is an exploration of the data, their implications and lists recommendations for the future.



DATA SET

TABLE 1:
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS



306

**SURVEY
RESPONDENTS**



297

ORGANISATIONS



6,140

**TOTAL NUMBER OF
CHILDREN ACCESSING
NATURE PLAY**



5,098

**0-5 YEARS
CHILDREN ACCESSING
NATURE PLAY ACTIVITIES**



992

**6-11 YEARS
CHILDREN ACCESSING
NATURE PLAY ACTIVITIES**



50

**12-18 YEARS
CHILDREN ACCESSING
NATURE PLAY ACTIVITIES**

7

The survey captured responses from 297 organisations overall, with 218 organisations in early childhood settings responding to the survey.

Nearly 70% of organisations had lines of reporting to a government organisation as their overarching funding body (i.e. not specifically for bush kinder or other nature programs), with the majority of those reporting to the Victorian Department of Education or local government.

The number of children accessing nature play captured in the 2023 survey is much lower than in 2016. There were many services that responded to both the 2016 and 2023 survey. However, comparison of our 2016 and 2023 survey data shows that respondents with the largest numbers of program participants in 2016, e.g. outdoor camps or outdoor community programs, provided fewer or no numbers in their responses in 2023. Our data suggest a more nuanced approach to defining nature play and bush kinder that moves beyond activities at camp,

education lessons taking place outdoors or informing children about plants or gardening. There is an indication that the benefits indicated by respondents for children have a greater focus on connection to and with nature, and on building connection with and understanding Indigenous culture. Part of the evolving definition of nature play suggests a focus towards kinship, connection and stewardship. This may be part of the reason that organisations indicated lower participant numbers engaging specifically in nature play. The focus of many bush kinder programs is more on nature connection rather than general activities that use nature as a location or a context. It is possible that this yields a richer understanding of nature play given the education, advocacy and professional learning that has been accessed by organisations since 2016.

While the overall number of survey respondents was lower in 2023, it is worth noting that 68 organisations identify as bush kinder programs. A further 6 other programs also mention bush in their program title, but not kinder (e.g., bush play).

In 2016, only 8 organisations used bush or bush kinder in their program title. While we can't directly draw a conclusion from our data that there are more bush kinder programs in operation in 2023 than 2016, it may be that bush kinder organisations are more keenly aware of support networks and thus our survey.

Of the respondents who shared the age of their program, 67.86% identified as being five years or younger. These organisations would not have been captured in the 2016 data. This indicates there are many new programs emerging offering nature

play, bush kinder and outdoor learning. Further to this, it is worth noting that the Department of Education Victoria is investing \$3.6 million over 4 years (2024-28) to deliver bush kinder programs in 150 kindergartens each year, with \$6,000 grants for kinders to support the delivery of these programs.

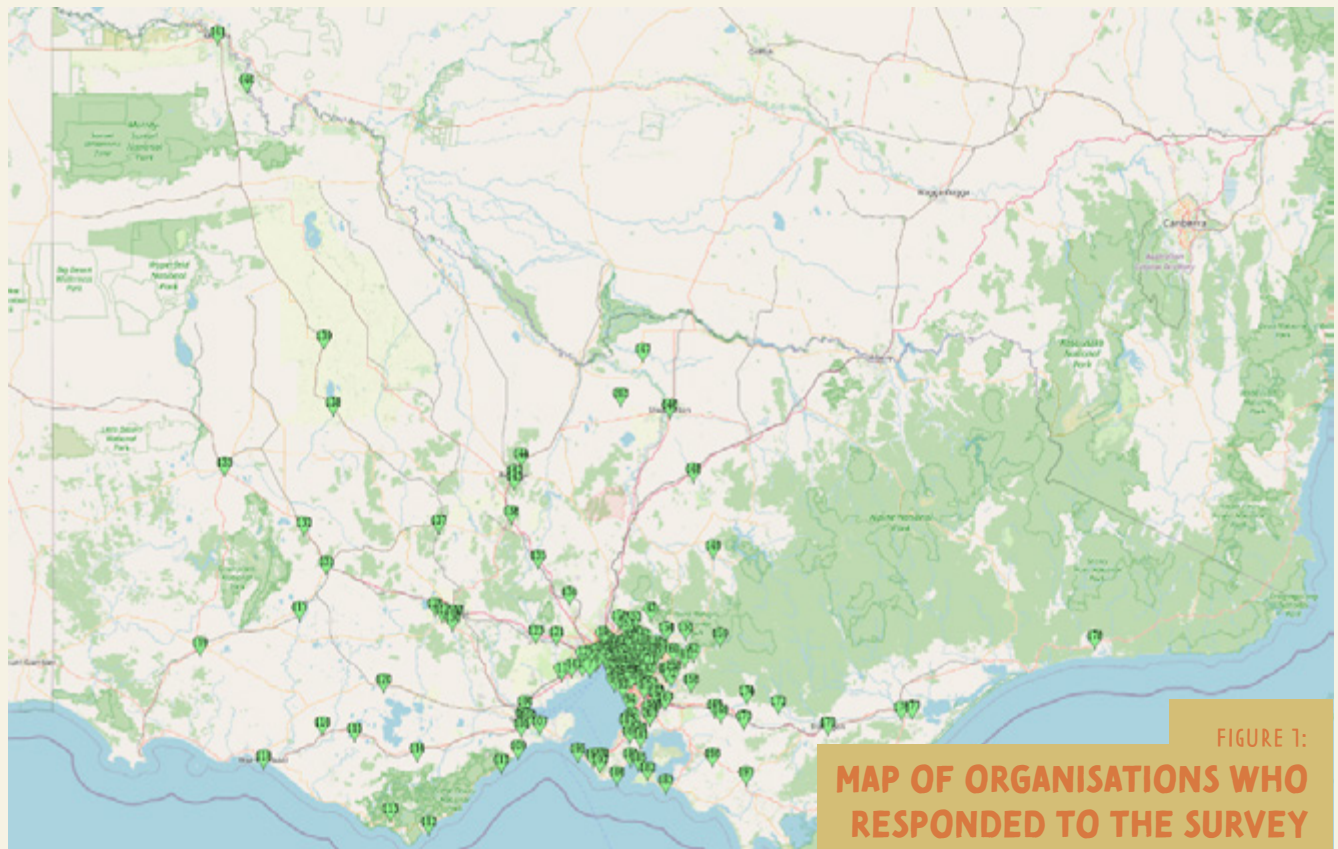
The frequency of nature play programs offered differed between organisations. Of the respondents, 46.5% said they offered weekly programs, 19.1% offered a program 2-3 times a week and 14% offered a program fortnightly.

LOCATIONS OF ORGANISATIONS

Respondents came from across Victoria. The main cluster was from urban and peri-urban organisations in and around Melbourne.

There is a widespread scattering of organisations across regional and rural areas. However, within these, there is a tendency for clusters to occur. For example, along the Calder Freeway there appears

to be an organisation at each regional/rural city, and then three organisations in Bendigo itself. Locations of smaller regional clusters of organisations may offer opportunity for information-sharing, collaboration and mutual support with the roll-out and implementation of nature play programs and on-going professional learning/networking through organisations including KINN, ECOLN and EEEEC.



WHY NATURE PLAY IS IMPORTANT

Nature play offers a significant role in building wellbeing for children, as well as building stewardship for nature. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (2019) found one in five or 22.6% of Victorian children are overweight and obese, which is slightly under the national average in Australia of 24.9%. The National Obesity Strategy (Commonwealth of Australia [COA], 2022) identifies strong and equitable physical activity including connecting people with nature as an important strategy. Australia's Strategy for Nature (COA, 2019) goals set out to "connect all Australians with nature" (p. 11) and be active stewards who understand the value of nature. Understanding how we (society) can scaffold better access to nature and improve these outcomes is essential to meeting these goals and shifting these numbers.

The benefits of being active in nature are acknowledged in the Victorian Memorandum for Health and Nature released by the Victorian Government in April 2017. This document states: "Victoria's parks and other open spaces provide critical settings that enhance our wellbeing and liveability by providing places for physical exercise, relaxation, play, learning and discovery. We know that being in nature enriches our minds and bodies, making us feel energised and alive." These benefits are also recognized in the Government's key health and environment platforms: The Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2023-2027 and in Protecting Victoria's Environment - Biodiversity 2037. The importance of outdoor learning for young children is also highlighted

in The Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework and the National Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. The importance of active outdoor play is also highlighted in the Active Victoria Blueprint 2022-2026.

There is a growing body of research that explores the role of nature in our lives. Roberts et al. (2020) explain ecopsychology is an expanding field concerned with psychological interventions that include the natural environment. Biophilia refers to the innate need to affiliate with nature (Roberts et al., 2020) and this concept is gaining traction in research publications. Children who spend time in nature and engage in play demonstrate a greater connection to nature (Barrable & Booth, 2020) which can predict pro-environmental behaviour and compassion in later years (Barrable, 2018). Children spending time in nature-based programs can also enhance adult (parent/carer) and community attitudes towards nature (Elliott & Chancellor, 2014). Moreover, nature play builds environmental dispositions in children (Elliot & Chancellor, 2014). These include greater interest and positive attitudes towards nature (Elliot & Chancellor, 2014), deepening ecological knowledge (McDonald et al., 2023) and awareness of the outdoors such as seasonal changes (Gill et al., 2023).

The restorative effect of natural environments can combat attention fatigue, shift emotional state and physiological states (Roberts et al., 2020). The benefits for children of engaging in nature play also include increased confidence, motivation, concentration and social, physical and language skills. A substantial body of research demonstrates that spending time in nature is important for children.

The Position Statement on Outdoor Active Play developed by Tremblay et al. (2015), further demonstrates the depth of research that documents the importance of nature play. Play is widely acknowledged for the essential role it plays in children's development. A growing body of evidence indicates that

Nature play is important for children's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development (Gill et al., 2023; Williams, 2023; Elliot and Chancellor, 2014). Tremblay et al. (2015) note that children who engage in unstructured nature play show greater instances of active play, develop greater resilience and self-regulation, and build connections with peers, community and the environment. In addition, children engaging in nature play access the health benefits of fresh air and Vitamin D (Hamid, 2022) and are able to slow down and ground their body (Williams, 2023). Outdoor play that involves skipping, running, jumping, climbing, rolling, balancing or game playing builds physical development (ACECQA, 2023; Lucchetti, 2023). When engaging in nature play children have opportunities to develop autonomy, decision-making and independence (Lucchetti, 2023; McDonald et al., 2023) and the decisions made through discussion and consideration build reflective skills for children (ACECQA, 2023).

Playing outdoors also allows children to engage in risky play. This can be play that involves heights,

speeds, rough and tumble play. Gill et al. (2023, p. 31) articulate the importance of risky play: "risk plays an important function in healthy childhood development. Children need to experience appropriate levels of risk in their play in order to feel challenged, learn, test their limits, and set boundaries for themselves and others."

Risky play provides opportunity for challenge, opportunity and adventure (Tremblay et al., 2015). Engaging in risky play builds physical literacy skills (e.g. movement, coordination, balancing) along with social and emotional skills (e.g. confidence, relationships and perceptual awareness) (Australian Sports Commission, 2021). Risky play also allows children to build life-long skills in managing risk, understanding dynamic situations (Lucchetti, 2023; McDonald et al., 2023) as well as introspective skills (ACECQA, 2023).

The experiences of children through nature play build a range of physical, cognitive and emotional skills that transcend childhood and build recognition, stewardship, respect and wonder towards nature for life.





SURVEY RESULTS

THIS SECTION EXPLORES THE SURVEY RESPONSES.



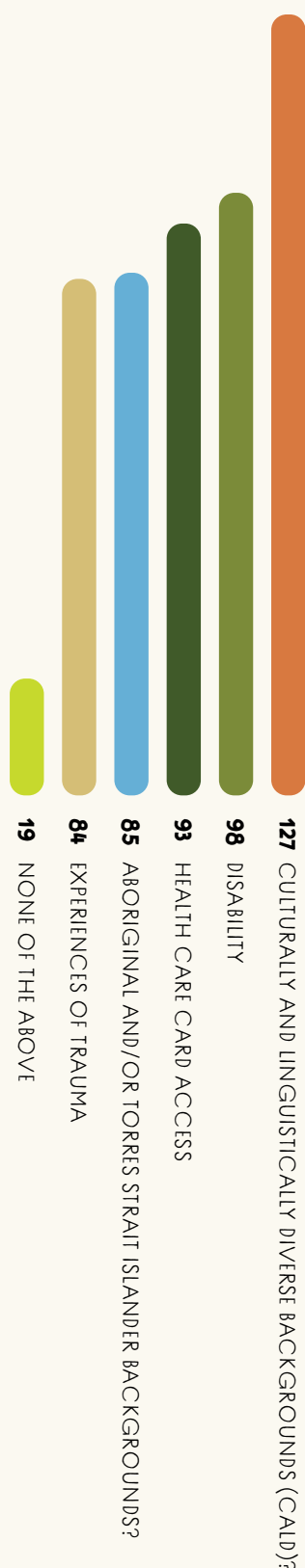
HOW IS NATURE PLAY BEING FUNDED?

FIGURE 2: RESPONSES TO
“HOW IS YOUR PROGRAM
PRIMARILY FUNDED?”



Nature play is not mandated to be part of Kindergarten or Preschool in Victoria. However, organisations that offer nature play can be connected to Kindergartens or Early Childhood Settings and are funded in different and varied ways.

The respondents identified that over half of the programs offered are self-funded. Money is found within the existing organisational budget to support the implementation of nature play programs. Some organisations apply a user-pays approach, and fewer provide it as a free program that can be accessed. There were several government funded nature play programs.



WHO IS ACCESSING NATURE PLAY PROGRAMS?

FIGURE 3: RESPONSES TO
“WHO IS ACCESSING YOUR PROGRAM?”

Of the organisations that responded to this question, the large majority of programs were accessed by culturally and linguistically diverse students (76.97%). Organisations also indicated their programs were accessed by children with disability (59.39%) and children with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds (51.52%).

In order to understand more about the socio-economic space of families attending the organisation, we posed a question about the use of a health care card because this can be indicative of economic status. Over half (56.36%) of the organisations had children attending their programs who accessed a health care card. It is also worth noting that children with a disability are also able to access a health care card, and this data could be explored in further detail.

It is worth noting that 50.91% of organisations are working with children who have experienced trauma. The Australian Child Maltreatment Study 2023 Report indicates that trauma is an on-going and increasing battle in early childhood education, and this is a significant finding. The restorative benefits of nature (Roberts et al., 2020) combined with the increased resilience and regulation (Tremblay et al., 2015) and improved confidence (McDonald et al., 2023) that nature play enables, demonstrates its importance for all children, especially those living with the effects of trauma.

WHAT SUPPORT DO ORGANISATIONS NEED?

ACCESSIBILITY OF PROGRAMS

FIGURE 4: RESPONSES TO

“DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR PROGRAM WOULD BENEFIT FROM SUPPORT (E.G. TRAINING OR FUNDING) TO SUPPORT PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE FOLLOWING TARGET GROUPS?”

Our survey asked what support (e.g., training or funding) organisations needed to support accessibility in nature play or bush kinder programs. The highest need identified was training for better inclusion of children with a disability (73.5%). The comments also indicated that inclusion was identified more broadly than physical disability, with mention of behaviour challenges and autism as needing more knowledge and support. A close second was the need for more knowledge about working with children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island backgrounds (68.4%). Improving

skills to work with children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (60%) or children who have experienced trauma (56.1%) were also rated as important.

It is worth noting that the vast majority of programs were accessed by culturally and linguistically diverse children. However, overall, organisations ranked professional development relating to this cohort third on their professional learning and funding priorities list, prioritising professional development and funding relating to working with children with a disability and children with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait backgrounds.

A range of programs and training were attended by participants. Over half of respondents (51.56%) indicated that they had accessed the Early Childhood Outdoor Learning Network (ECOLN) training. Other popular responses included the ECOLN conference (36.44%), Royal Botanic Gardens events (34.67%), Play Australia Early Years Series (22.67%) and ECOLN gatherings (21.33%).

In the comments for this section, professional speakers and community events featured prominently. Worthy of note are the guest speakers Tim Gill, Michael Ungar and Clare Warden. Local events that featured included Nature Play Week, Womin Djeka Balnarring Ngargee Festival and Campference.

114 DISABILITY

106 ABORIGINAL AND/OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER BACKGROUNDS?

93 CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS (CALD)?

87 EXPERIENCES OF TRAUMA

53 HEALTH CARE CARD ACCESS

38 TELL US MORE:

15 NONE OF THE ABOVE

COMMENTS FROM RESPONDENTS

Below are several examples of the comments that respondents provided about their professional learning needs.

“MORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARKS TO SUPPORT WORKSHOPS/ TRAINING.”

“INFORMATION TO SHARE WITH FAMILIES OF THE VALUES AND BENEFITS.”

“NOT ENOUGH FUNDING TO EMPLOY EXTRA/ ADDITIONAL STAFF FOR CHILDREN WHO NEED SUPPORT (E.G., DISABILITY, CALD, ATSI, TRAUMA) RECOMMENDATION: EXTRA MONEY TO APPLY FOR STAFF; SPECIAL FOCUS ON UNFUNDED COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS?) OR TO SET UP SITES AND OFFER SUPPORT.”



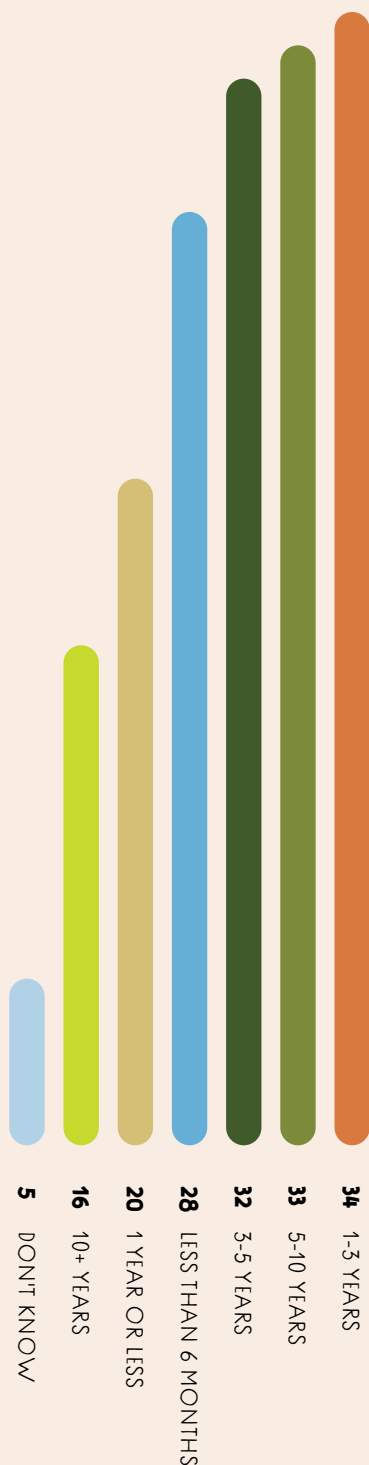
Professional learning needs are complex and nuanced. Organisations want opportunities to engage in professional development building skills for teaching and learning. There is a delicate balance in providing opportunity for early years educators during the workday (when they frequently teach) and during their own time (when they aren't teaching). Although there are designated non-teaching hours during the workday, these can be difficult to target for professional learning as these are already allocated for planning and administrative work. Due to heavy workloads, there is currently a lack of time and capacity for educators to organise or engage in professional learning opportunities.

16 In addition to building capacity of staff delivering programs, there is also an indication that organisations need support to build knowledge in parents and carers. There is also evidence that organisations would like to build knowledge in land managers (e.g.

local councils; Board and Trustee members) about the importance and benefits of nature play. Organisations are looking for innovative and connected ways to grow nature play in the community through programs that link with potential sites, building awareness and knowledge in the wider community, and working with other groups to offer support and programs.

Many programs are self-funded, and comments indicate that sometimes this is at the expense of other excursions or programs that could be run at the organisation, especially if those organisations are kinders or early childhood centres. Some respondents indicate the Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) and Inclusion Support Program (ISP) can be and are used to help fund nature play activities, whilst others indicate that funding support is allocated elsewhere and used for different programs. The allocation of funding for nature play appears to vary between organisations, which suggests some issues with consistency and accessibility of support across all settings.

Organisations have many good ideas about how to identify, develop, and deliver new and different nature play opportunities with the community.



AGE OF PROGRAM

Of the organisations that responded to the survey, 67.86% have been operating for five years or less, and 32.14% for longer than five years. This indicates that there is a growing space for nature play and bush kinder in Victoria. However, it does suggest that both barriers and enablers need to be carefully considered given the burgeoning programs in this space.

HOW LONG HAS YOUR PROGRAM BEEN RUNNING? (PLEASE CHOOSE ONE)

FIGURE 5: RESPONSES TO
“HOW LONG HAS YOUR PROGRAM BEEN RUNNING?”

STRUCTURED VERSUS UNSTRUCTURED PLAY

IS YOUR PROGRAM/ACTIVITY MOSTLY:



FIGURE 6: RESPONSES TO QUESTION

“IS YOUR PROGRAM MOSTLY CHILD-LED UNSTRUCTURED PLAY, ACTIVITY-BASED STRUCTURED PLAY OR BOTH?”

The programs of respondents are mostly child-led (51%), followed by a combination of structured and unstructured play (45%) and only 4% of programs are activity based, structured play guided by adults.





BARRIERS AND ENABLERS

FOR NATURE PLAY PROGRAMS



The survey asked respondents to consider what made things difficult when starting a new nature play or bush kinder program.

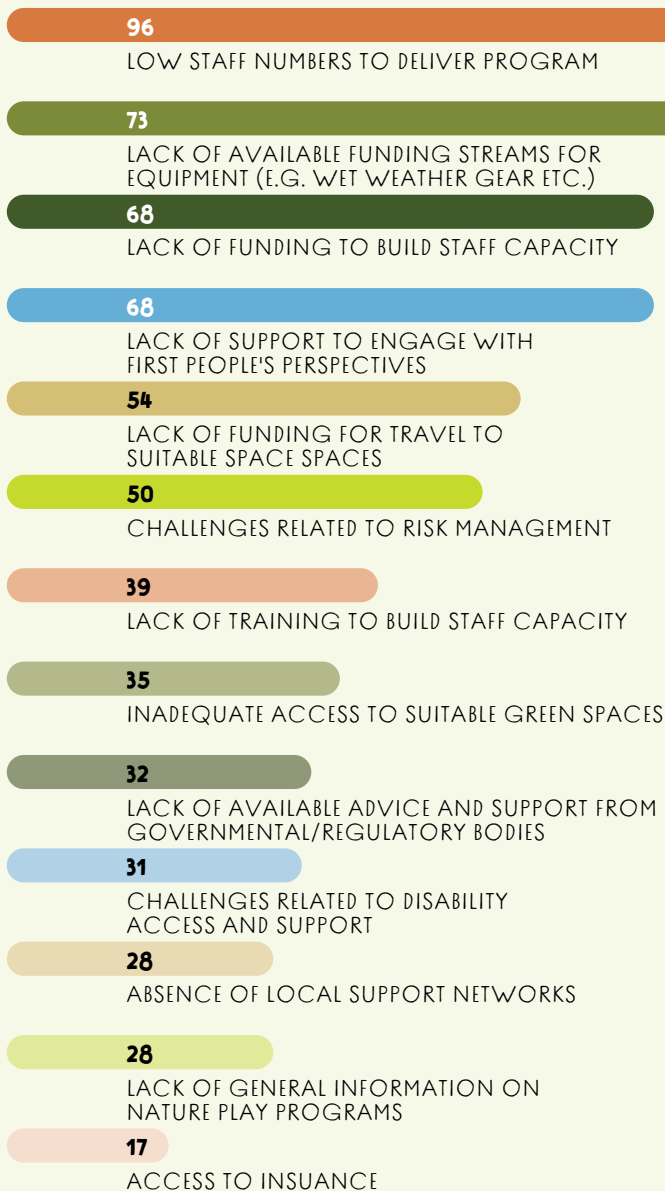


FIGURE 7: RESPONSES TO
“WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS
TO SETTING UP NEW
NATURE PLAY PROGRAMS?”

This question asked a ‘please select your answer’ feature. Our data shows that staffing is a key barrier: staff numbers are low, staff turnover is high, and finding staff to backfill positions (e.g., if people are going on PD) is difficult. Low staff numbers and capacity issues might also have an implication on the lower overall number of responses to our 2023 survey.

Initial indications are that the major barriers to starting a program are:



¹ In 2023, the Department of Education, Victoria, introduced the Bush Kinder Grants Program aimed at supporting Victorian Kinders to set up bush kinder programs

Organisations generally experience multiple, compounding barriers. Organisations experiencing challenges with staffing also experiencing challenges with training for those staff – both funding and accessing it.

FACTORS ENABLING EXISTING PROGRAMS

Our survey also requested respondents to consider what might be beneficial or helpful to maintain ongoing nature play programs. The questions used different scales to measure responses, so the results have been presented differently to the previous question.

The data shows a range of supports that were ranked in order of importance by organisations. The question asked respondents to rank the answers, with the most important answer being number 1.

The data here suggest that it is challenging to maintain a program. Support to engage with First People's perspectives stands out as a barrier even for organisations which have launched a nature play program - only staffing and training were considered greater barriers to both setting up and maintaining a nature play program.

Availability of suitable local spaces was also identified as a barrier: even among those organisations that have started off-site nature play programs, half reported finding a suitable space to be a challenge, while just under half found organising transport to and from the site an issue. Regional services and those in peri-urban areas, including those in western Melbourne, seem to experience the lack of suitable spaces and the funding for travel to suitable spaces.

HOW IMPORTANT WOULD THE FOLLOWING BE IN MAINTAINING YOUR NATURE PLAY PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY?

(PLEASE RANK WITH 1 BEING MOST IMPORTANT)

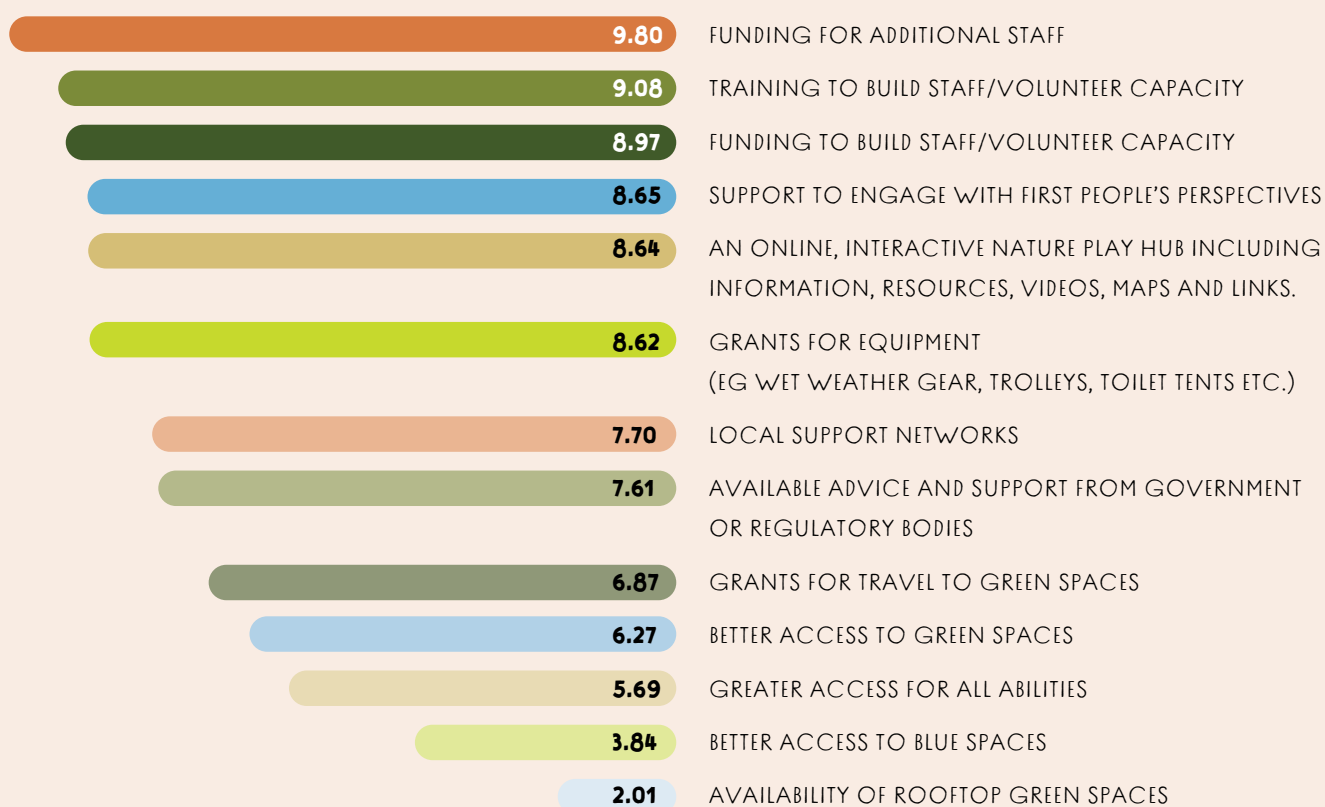


FIGURE 8: ANSWER TO
**“FACTORS THAT HELP
 MAINTAIN YOUR NATURE PLAY
 PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY”**

SUMMARY OF ENABLERS TO NATURE PLAY

The data below provides a clear summary of the top five ranked factors that enable nature play programs to be maintained by organisations.



FIGURE 9:

TOP FIVE ENABLERS FOR MAINTAINING NATURE PLAY PROGRAMS

Respondents would like to see an online, interactive Nature Play Hub including information, resources, videos, maps, links etc. – this was a particularly strong response among those yet to launch a nature play program.

Almost equally important was support for engaging with First Peoples' Perspectives (7.3/10) and training (7.36)/funding (7.1) to build capacity. Lower again on the scale was grants to access equipment (6.7). This list is from data about establishing/ maintaining a program, and it is worth noting that in other areas of the survey, it was reported that established settings often successfully applied for council grants to buy the equipment.

A STORY OF CHALLENGE – FINDING AND MAINTAINING A BUSH KINDER SITE

“We operated successfully at a site adjacent to our kinder for many years. The site is public land, but the committee of management is the Carrington Flora and Fauna Club.²

The CFFC were supportive originally but with a change in office bearers with very pure views on keeping nature closed off to rejuvenate - they were not happy with the ‘damage’ being done by our kinder groups (only foot traffic - our kids were highly respectful, and we had actually improved the site significantly over the years with the installation of nest boxes and revegetation). Unfortunately, they would not permit us to continue (much to the disgust of other CFFC members who thought it was a travesty to discourage children gaining a connection with nature).

We struggled to find a suitable replacement site and although we have one now it is not ideal for a number of reasons - further to walk, right on a busy highway, less indigenous vegetation. After several years away from the original site we again tried to return with a committed campaign by the kinder bush kinder committee to plead our case but were refused. So, in this instance, it’s not the finding of the space that is the problem but different attitudes about the use of the space by bush kinder programs - that although yes there will be some incidental short-term impacts, the long-term benefits far outweigh that if we are to foster Stewards of the future. We explored an alternative site managed by Parks Victoria, but it required some form of fencing to make it safe (as it was between two busy roads), and they would not allow this to happen with a policy of ‘leave no trace.’

So, we continue at our current site and make the best of it.”

² Some details have been changed for anonymity.

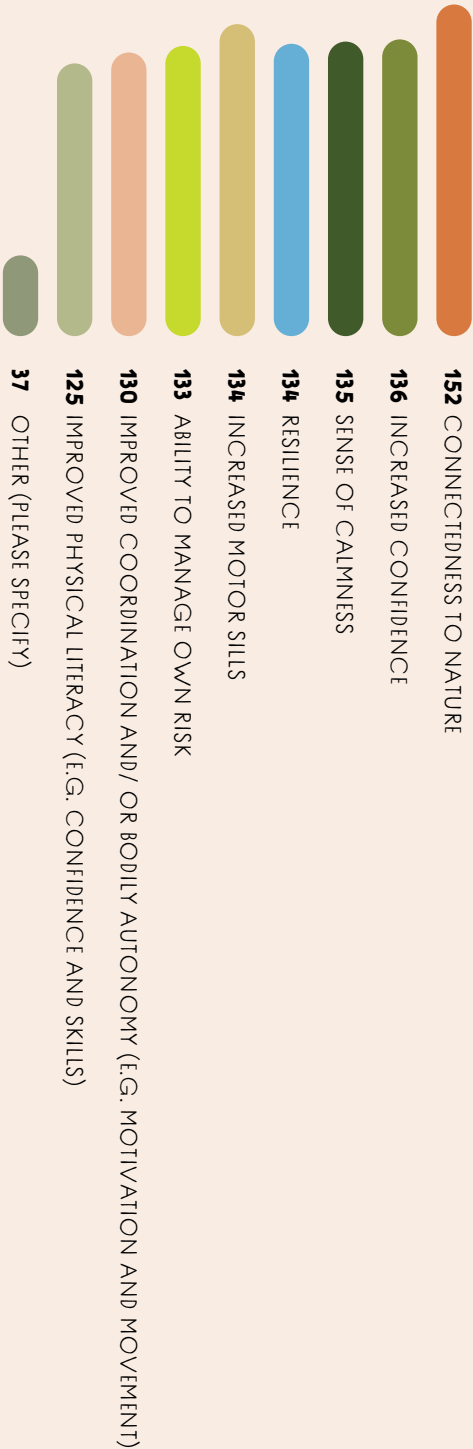


This case study shows that finding, maintaining and sustaining relationships of stakeholders and accessing green/blue spaces is a significant issue for some sites. This example is a single story, but there were similar stories about having to stop delivering programs at one place and then being unable to find another place to continue with the program. The story illustrates the tension between a range of values placed on the land, the approaches organisations are taking to sustain nature play and bush kinder as well as ensuring the site that supports it is sustained. This is only one of several responses that indicate any erosion was seen as a reason to block nature play and bush kinder on sites, rather than discuss and explore rotation to other spaces within the same site or learning moments for stewardship of nature. This builds on answers provided in the earlier written responses regarding the importance of collaboration with and education for wider community members and landholders.



BENEFITS OF NATURE PLAY

There was overwhelming and significant evidence provided by respondents on the benefits of nature play for both children and their families.



BENEFITS OF NATURE PLAY FOR CHILDREN

Respondents provided a powerful response here: no answer dips below 80% of respondents agreeing on each benefit nature play provides for children.

The importance of nature play for children's development has been highlighted by respondents. There is very little separating six of the areas of benefit, these areas are all considered highly important in children's development. Children gain many skills from engaging in nature play with the number one benefit being their connectedness to nature.

FIGURE 10: RESPONSES TO “BENEFITS OF NATURE PLAY FOR CHILDREN”

The results demonstrate benefits that respondents see children gain through nature play, including nature connectedness which can influence how children value nature (Elliot & Chancellor, 2014), a range of health benefits (Williams, 2023; Hamid, 2022; Tremblay et al., 2015) and skills built through risky play (Lucchetti, 2023; McDonald et al., 2023).

COMMENTS ABOUT YOUNG CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT

The comments below by respondents relate directly to the benefits of nature play for children.

"INCREASED KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOCAL AREA/ENVIRONMENT, HOW TO BE SAFE, ROAD SAFETY, BEACH SAFETY, HOW TO CARE FOR THE LOCAL LAND"

"INCREASED AWARENESS OF THE ORIGINAL CUSTODIANS AND HOW THEY CARED FOR THE LAND"

"IMPROVED CREATIVITY AND FAMILY BOND"

28

These comments show that the connections children gain in nature play are considered to not only be between children and nature, but their wider environments, community, Indigenous culture and families.

"LESS HURRIED, ABILITY TO DEVELOP THEIR PLAY AND IMAGINATION"

"LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT, JOY AND HAPPINESS, SHARING THEIR LEARNING WITH FAMILIES, INCREASED EMOTIONAL LITERACY, INCREASED UNDERSTANDING OF FIRST NATIONS RELATIONALITY PERSPECTIVES"

Strongly represented in open comments provided by respondents was the increased richness of play and opportunity for development (e.g. greater interaction with peers, more imaginative play) when children engaged in nature play.



Additional benefits of nature play shared in comments provided by respondents can be summarised in the following three elements:



**INCREASED
SOCIAL SKILLS**



**INCREASED COMMUNITY
CONNECTIONS**



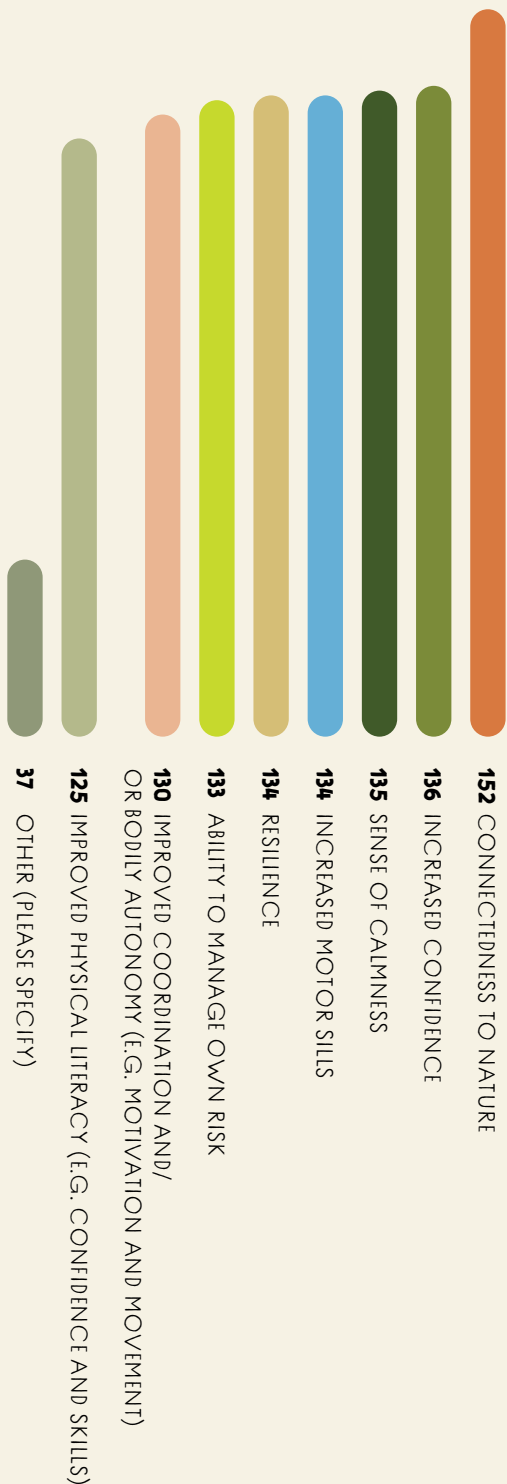
**INCREASED
CULTURAL AWARENESS**

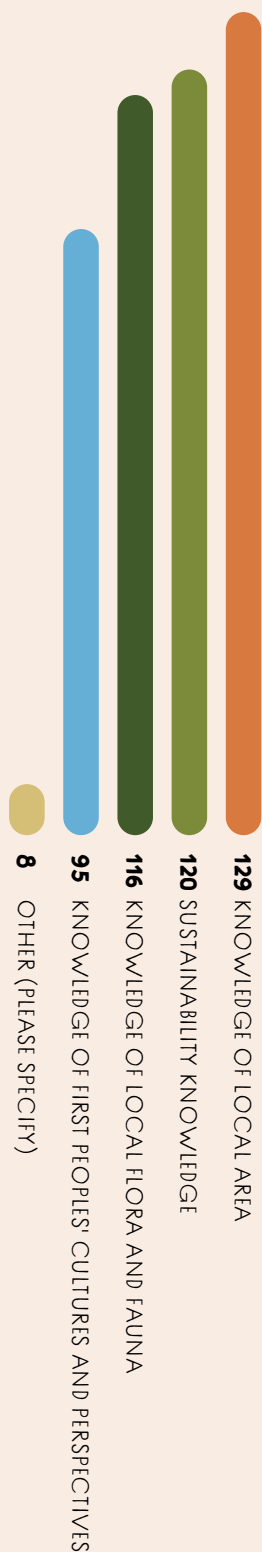
These benefits of increased social skills, increased community connections (which include family) and increased cultural awareness are the benefits that children take away from nature play, over and above the connection to nature, the increased confidence and sense of calmness.

BENEFITS OF NATURE PLAY FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES

There is an overwhelming recognition from organisations that there was an increase in how families valued nature as a result of their children participating in nature play. There was also a greater confidence from adults in children's abilities. Furthermore, connectedness to nature and improved connection and wellbeing were also valued as important benefits, and valued of almost equal importance.

FIGURE 11: RESPONSES TO
“BENEFITS OF NATURE PLAY
FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES”





KNOWLEDGE GAINED THROUGH NATURE PLAY BY PARENTS AND FAMILIES

Parents and families gain knowledge of the local area and sustainability knowledge from nature play programs that their children are participating in. Lower on that scale is local flora and fauna knowledge and knowledge of First Peoples' cultures and perspectives. This is somewhat expected given that we discussed earlier that one of the big areas of training that respondents want access to is working with First Peoples' knowledge.

FIGURE 12: RESPONSES TO
**"KNOWLEDGE GAINED
 THROUGH NATURE PLAY BY
 PARENTS AND FAMILIES"**

COMMENTS ABOUT THE BENEFITS OF NATURE PLAY FOR FAMILIES.

The below are direct comments from respondents about the benefits of nature play for families.

Comments from survey respondents indicate that children are able to communicate and share the knowledge they gain through nature play with their family. Children become trusted sources of information for parents and families. This also helps build 'institutional trust': those bridges between home and school that can be difficult to develop and maintain.

As children learn more in their programs, it would appear that perhaps they are influencing the minds of adults on issues such as sustainability and stewardship; or changing family actions. Introducing children to stewardship has the potential to shift actions of both children and their parents and carers. Nature play can change the behaviour of parents and families.

Organisations are still working on connecting families with nature and many of the organisations in Victoria are still growing. The final comment listed (in figure) says quite simply 'this is still a work in progress'. An important reminder that the work continues to grow and shift, and organisations are continually evolving, growing their skills and the skills of others.

"PARENTS SEE THAT CHILDREN CAN BE CONFIDENT CONTRIBUTORS TO THEIR LOCAL COMMUNITY."

"VALUING THE CHILD AS TEACHER, TRUST IN INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS AND SPACES, INCREASED UNDERSTANDING OF FIRST NATIONS RELATIONALITY PERSPECTIVES"

"EMPOWERING PARENTS AND CARERS TO BE PROACTIVE IN CARING FOR NATURE."

"THE LINK BETWEEN MINDFULNESS, NATURE & IMPROVED WELL-BEING."

"THIS IS STILL A WORK IN PROGRESS."

FIGURE 13:

COMMENTS PROVIDED BY RESPONDENTS ABOUT BENEFITS OF NATURE PLAY FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES



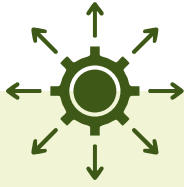
CHALLENGES & CONSIDERATIONS

IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS



The survey asked both quantitative - or closed - questions (providing numerical data for graphing and analysis) as well as qualitative - or open - questions (written responses). Qualitative data often tell a story and help unpack quantitative data with further information. This section summarises the comments left by respondents. Importantly, these comments communicated challenges, issues or enablers that were not captured in the questions or closed questions. Respondents took the opportunity to use the open-ended questions or 'other' options in questions to share a range of thoughts and concerns.

There were common themes that recurred across different questions that shape the understanding and experiences of organisations as they work in and grow nature play and bush kinder programs. The following topics came up frequently and show on-going areas of issues and opportunities for offering support.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There were several common themes that came through about professional development that indicate broader issues for organisations. These included:

STAFF TURNOVER

- » Nature play is impacted by staff turn-over. Staff learn new skills, and then leave. They either leave the profession, go on personal leave, or go to work at different organisations, leaving more staff to be up-skilled.
- » Experienced staff leave, and it changes the culture of the organisation; there is an implied connection between both professional development and experience that can be impacted by this staff turn-over.

ACCESSING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD)

- » Staff shortages in the industry make it difficult to take leave away from the organisation to access PD.
- » Knowing where to find specific PD that is at the right level (e.g. enabling groups to implement nature play; supporting organisations to grow their program; extend and deepen the use of nature play in learning)
- » There is a tension and conundrum facing PD for educators – during school hours is difficult to organise; in your own time is difficult to ask of working educators. Professional development needs to be re-imagined. Moving away from 'one-off' trends and allowing for on-going, reflective and practical opportunities to learn.

35



TIME

Time was identified as a major factor for challenges, enablers and opportunities. Respondents indicated the following themes in relation to time:

- » **Accessing professional learning**
As above – time for accessing, applying knowledge and shifting practice is needed to upskill and make meaningful change in organisations.
- » **Researching spaces for use in nature play and bush kinder programs.**
Finding appropriate places, identifying contacts and developing relationships to

maintain access to spaces; mapping out transport to visit sites with children and understanding access/facilities/risks all take time to complete.

- » **Completing paperwork**
Paperwork may be risk analysis, communications home to parents, agreements with councils and other red-tape processes also take a significant amount of time to complete.
- » **Grant writing**
Many organisations, especially with established programs, often chase grants to help implement, run, or resource their programs. Grant writing applications take a lot of time.



FUNDING (USE AND RESTRICTIONS)

Many organisations found the use of funding to be difficult or restrictive. In some cases, there were recommendations for where and how the money might be used. Participants suggested the following elements:

- » Funding to support organisations (both organisations that have nature play/ bush kinder programs and external organisations such as Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria) and actively link and network them together.
- » Funding [to be able to be used] for extra time for learning, grant applications, liaising with parks and other nature stewards.
- » Funding to support Parks and Councils to develop programs/spaces for use in nature play and bush kinder
 - This recommendation also either included or was followed by a recommendation for further consideration and active planning for 'turn over' of sites to preserve nature spaces.



EDUCATION

There were common calls for education about the importance of being in nature. There was recognition about stewardship, mental health and wellbeing, sustainability and local Indigenous knowledge as being of considerable importance to nature play and bush kinder development and maintenance. Some common themes included:

- » Greater education for parents, councils, community about the importance of nature play and its benefits [to everyone];
- » Nature play to be overtly included in the curriculum;
- » Incorporation of core units in TAFE and Higher Education courses/programs;
- » Primary schools to offer nature play as part of the curriculum.



PROGRAM SUPPORT

The following quote encapsulates the issue of funding for people and support, especially for children with additional and diverse needs:

Accessibility and support are integral elements of inclusion. Children with disability, diverse or additional needs may require alternative supports and funding to ensure access to nature play and bush kinder depending on their individual abilities and needs.

“OUR CURRENT CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES CAN ACCESS BUSH KINDER FINE WITH KIS SUPPORT, BUT PAST CHILDREN HAVE MISSED BUSH KINDER DUE TO PAST TEACHER’S CONCERNS ABOUT THEIR SAFETY, SO THEIR PARENTS WERE ASKED TO ACCOMPANY. MOST FREQUENTLY, THESE CHILDREN THEN DIDN’T ATTEND BUSH KINDER.”



A FINAL THOUGHT

“I HAVE TRIED FOR MANY YEARS TO INSTILL SOME SORT OF PASSION AND INTEREST IN OUTDOOR LEARNING BUT FIND THE MAJORITY OF STAFF ARE EITHER NOT INTERESTED AS THEY DON’T LIKE TO GET DIRTY OR IT REQUIRES A BIT MORE EFFORT! YOU NEED TO ENJOY BEING IN NATURE IN THE FIRST PLACE AND TRULY UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE ESPECIALLY IN EARLY CHILDHOOD WHILE THEIR BRAINS ARE FORMING THEIR FIRST MEMORIES ETC A LOT OF STAFF ALMOST NEED TRAINING IN BIOLOGY AND APPRECIATION OF HOW HUMANS ARE INTERCONNECTED WITH NATURE AND CHILDREN ARE INNATELY CONNECTED TO BEING IN THE NATURAL WORLD”

38

This quote encapsulates some of the challenges and importance of nature play and the nuanced road ahead to embed and enhance nature play in Victoria.

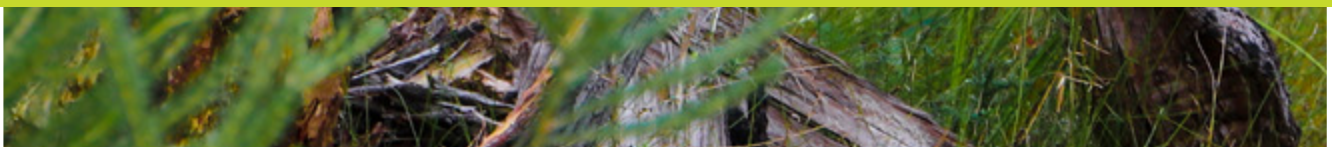
A common thread in the survey showed the importance of education for adults – teachers, staff, volunteers, councils, formal schooling, TAFE and Higher Education – so that nature can be prioritised in early childhood and beyond. Nature play is not only for the passionate converts: one of the most important things to continue is to build passion and interest in outdoor learning along with an

appreciation of how humans are interconnected with nature and children are innately connected to being in the natural world.

There is recognition of the importance of nature play and bush kinder - and establishing new programs - from the Victorian Government through their Bush Kinder Grants Program. We hope this report assists in addressing the key challenges and barriers that are identified and communicated by program leaders, both those who want to start new programs as well as those running more established programs.



RECOMMENDATIONS



Nature play organisers surveyed for this report identify significant benefits, not only for children who engage in nature play, but for their families too. Many programs are new or growing, indicating the burgeoning state of nature play initiatives in Victoria. Nature play and bush kinder are growing opportunities in the education sector and beyond. There are suggestions from organisations that are innovative and considered to build and evolve nature play and bush kinder.

Recommendations here are not presented in priority order. For nature play and bush kinder to flourish in Victoria, a cross-sectoral approach is needed to ensure a collective and informed approach prioritising the advancement of nature play and bush kinder. The recommendations have been grouped instead by theme, building on The State of Nature Play, Outdoor Learning and Bush Kinder in Victoria 2018 report. There are also new themes that have emerged from The State of Nature Play, 2023 that indicate the depth and nuance of this growing field.





KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings from State of Nature Play, Victoria, 2025 show Nature Play in Victoria is evolving with a range of opportunities to support and nurture the ongoing development across the sector. The recommendations below have been contrasted with the findings from the State of Nature Play (SNP), 2018. Recommendations are divided into two sections – Evolving themes and Emerging trends.

Evolving themes align with similar recommendations from SNP, 2018 with greater depth and nuance that reflect the strength and complexity of the sector five years later.

Emerging trends show news themes that arise from this report. These themes reflect contemporary understanding of nature play with a focus on growth through connection, stewardship and sustainability.



EVOLVING THEMES

NETWORKING, ADVOCACY AND STAFFING

Similar to 2018, key recommendations in this section explore integral aspects to enabling nature play including **access to staff**, an **online and interactive hub**, further **consultation and co-design** within the sector and an ambassador to advocate and liaise between sectors.

EDUCATION AND FUNDING

Resonating with findings from 2028, this key recommendations include general communication of the importance and benefits of nature play. There are two distinct opportunities to communicate its benefits and importance – through **advertising**, and through **education** and **advocacy**.



EMERGING TRENDS

EDUCATION AND FUNDING

New recommendations to come from the findings in 2024 include specifically **building educators' knowledge**, **extending professional development** into on-going opportunities, and **reducing restrictions on funding**.

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY AND KNOWLEDGE

This theme was a consistent thread across the responses from the survey. Recommendations include funded support to develop deeper links with Indigenous communities through **co-design and consultation**, greater opportunities to **build relationships with community** and **land specific supports**.

NETWORKING, ADVOCACY AND STAFFING

Building new trends from the 2024 findings, recommendations include **greater accessibility** for children with a disability and **provision of supports**.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

This section unpacks and extends on the summary of key recommendations to highlight potential approaches and supports that could implement and build these outcomes.



EVOLVING THEMES

These themes and recommendations build on or indicate the importance of these actions for organisations and respondents working in, establishing or planning to establish nature play and bush kinder programs. These evolving themes add to or further clarify the recommendations made in the 2018 report. The same themes have been reflected here as in the 2018 report.

NETWORKING, ADVOCACY AND STAFFING

- » The number one barrier for establishing programs is accessing staffing. This was also represented regularly within the context of supporting children with additional and diverse needs. Further opportunities to staff organisations, using grant funding or for higher ratios could improve accessibility and deliverability of nature play and bush kinder programs.
 - The number one preference from respondents to enabling nature play and bush kinder is an online interactive hub. This may include:
 - Resources to support nature play and bush kinder
 - Formal mentoring opportunities
 - Funding opportunities
 - Map out and support clusters/networks for organisation offering nature play and bush kinder
 - Connections to other organisations and networks
- » Further consultation and co-design
 - Many comments showed that educators have innovative and achievable ideas for bridging some of the challenges in providing nature play – further co-design

and systemic changes may solve many of the challenges and re-shape things such as professional development and instructional design

- » **Ambassador/Facilitator between parks, recreation, community, and kindergartens and schools**
 - Develop professional learning and program development opportunities in accessible locations
 - Map, deliver, update and maintain existing networks, spaces and organisations providing, implementing and supporting nature play
 - Landcare model may be useful in exploring ambassadors for regions, local councils and networks
 - Independent ambassadors connected to community groups (e.g. Kids In Nature Network) would have freedom of movement and connection

EDUCATION AND FUNDING

- » **Advertising campaign to build knowledge of benefits and importance of nature play**
 - Handouts and facts sheets developed to recognise the importance of nature play and bush kinder
 - Short videos and promotional materials for wider community
- » **Educate, advocate and embed wellbeing through nature**
 - Adding nature play to the Mental Health Menu for schools and educators
 - The importance of nature in decompressing, calming and recharging
 - The role of nature play to enrich Trauma-Aware Education and practices
 - Providing ongoing, authentic and recurring opportunities to be in and learn from nature
 - Connect with and communicate importance to parents/carers

EMERGING TRENDS

These recommendations are new themes from the 2023 survey that indicate a shift in the complexity and understanding of nature play and bush kinder. Contemporary notions of nature play and bush kinder focus more on connection, stewardship and sustainability. Many of the comments indicated the need to deepen connection with land and incorporate further Indigenous knowledge into programs.

EDUCATION AND FUNDING

- » Greater focus on building educators' knowledge on the importance of nature play and bush kinder
 - Embed into Initial Teacher Education programs at both the TAFE and Higher Education levels
 - Develop/revise/review nature play activities and their links to Early Years Learning Framework and the Australian curriculum
- » Professional Development is difficult to access and frequently 'one-off'.
 - Consider different ways to offer professional learning that are on-going, reflective and iterative
 - Offer a range of topics and levels – some organisations have lots of knowledge in some areas while others are starting out
- » Restrictions on funding
 - Fewer conditions on funding may provide choice and opportunity in use of funding to supply equipment, training, transport

or personnel depending on needs of the organisation

- Access to grants, funding, or programs to identify needs or partnerships (e.g., working with Parks Victoria)
- Alternative options for School Readiness Funding learning or supports.
- Alternative models of support for children with additional and diverse needs with a focus on Nature Play and accessibility

INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY AND KNOWLEDGE

- » Links with Indigenous community and knowledges
 - Funded support for greater opportunities to connect and consult with local Elders and community groups to build Land links and educator knowledge of Indigenous culture, history and story
 - Funded support for existing Indigenous community groups to co-design and co-develop content with a focus on site, land and Country specific materials and resources
 - Funded opportunity to develop Land specific and council supported networks for sustained support and implementation of community groups

NETWORKING, ADVOCACY AND STAFFING

- » Building awareness of access and support to nature
 - Form partnerships to ensure greater accessibility to nature play and outdoor areas
 - Provision of accessible supports to local parks, beaches, green spaces such as "The Mat" and "Caterpillar wheelchairs"



REFERENCES

- ACECQA. (2023). The how and why of in-nature programs. Retrieved: [In-natureplay-InformationSheet2-Thehowandwhyofin-natureprograms.pdf \(acecqa.gov.au\)](#)
- Arvidsen, J. (2018). Growing dens. On re-grounding the child–nature relationship through a new materialist approach to children's dens. *Children's Geographies*, 16(3), 279-291.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018). *Overweight and Obesity* <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/health-conditions-and-risks/overweight-and-obesity/latest-release>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (2019). *Fewer children overweight or obese in Victoria* <https://www.abs.gov.au/articles/fewer-children-overweight-or-obese-victoria>
- Australian Sports Commission (2021). Physical literacy. Retrieved: [Physical literacy domains | Australian Sports Commission \(sportaus.gov.au\)](#)
- Barrable, A. (2019). Refocusing environmental education in the early years: A brief introduction to a pedagogy for connection. *Education sciences*, 9(1), 61.
- Barrable, A., & Booth, D. (2020). Nature connection in early childhood: a quantitative cross-sectional study. *Sustainability*, 12(1), 375.
- Commonwealth of Australia [COA]. (2019). *Australia's Strategy for Nature* <https://www.australiasnaturehub.gov.au/sites/default/files/2020-11/australias-strategy-for-nature.pdf>
- Commonwealth of Australia [COA]. (2022). *National Obesity Strategy* <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-obesity-strategy-2022-2032-at-a-glance-summary-with-a-strategy-map>
- Elliott, S., & Chancellor, B. (2014). From forest preschool to bush kinder: An inspirational approach to preschool provision in Australia. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*, 39(4), 45-53.
- Gill, T., Power, M., & Brussoni, M. (2023). Risk benefit assessment for outdoor play: A Canadian toolkit. Child & Nature Alliance of Canada. Retrieved: [Risk-Benefit-Assessment-Toolkit.pdf \(outdoorplaycanada.ca\)](#)
- Hamid, K. (2022). 4 benefits of outdoor play in winter. Retrieved: [4 Reasons Children Should Play Outside In The Cold | Pentagon Play](#)
- Haslam, D. M., Lawrence, D. M., Mathews, B., Higgins, D. J., Hunt, A., Scott, J. G., ... & Malacova, E. (2023). The Australian Child Maltreatment Study (ACMS), a national survey of the prevalence of child maltreatment and its correlates: methodology. *Medical journal of Australia*, 218, S5-S12.
- Hughes, F., Elliott, S., Anderson, K. & Chancellor, B. (2021). *Early years learning in Australian natural environments*. Oxford University Press
- Kaskamanidis, Z. (2022). Bush kinders supporting early years STEM learning. Retrieved: [Bush kinders supporting early years STEM learning \(teachermagazine.com\)](#)
- Kids in Nature Network (2018) The State of Nature Play, Outdoor Learning and Bush Kinder in Victoria [PDF]
- Lucchetti, L. (2023). Benefits of outdoor play for children. Ed. K. Gill. Retrieved: [Outdoor play and children: Benefits and why it matters \(medicalnewstoday.com\)](#)
- McDonald, J., Butler, K., & Alla, K. (2023). Engaging young children (0-5) in nature play [Practice Guide]. Retrieved: [CFCA Practice Guide: Engaging young children \(0–5 years\) in nature play \(aifs.gov.au\)](#)
- Roberts, A., Hinds, J., & Camic, P. M. (2020). Nature activities and wellbeing in children and young people: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning*, 20(4), 298-318.
- Tremblay, M. S., Gray, C., Babcock, S., Barnes, J., Bradstreet, C. C., Carr, D., ... & Brussoni, M. (2015). Position statement on active outdoor play. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 12(6), 6475-6505.
- Warden, C. (2017). Nature pedagogy–An exploration of the storied narratives that illustrate its application across spaces inside, outside and beyond. *The SAGE Handbook of Outdoor Play and Learning*, 279-95.
- Whittle, I. (2016.) Nature play in early years education. Retrieved: [Nature Play in early years education | Nature Play QLD](#)
- Williams, D. (2023). *Nature, our medicine: How the natural world sustains us*. Currawong Books.



1

APPENDIX

A COMPLETE LIST OF TABLES & FIGURES



APPENDIX

For ease of viewing, this section also contains all the graphs referenced through the report.

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

TABLE 1:	Number of respondents	7
FIGURE 1:	Map of organisations who responded to the survey	8
FIGURE 2:	Responses to “How is your program primarily funded?”	12
FIGURE 3:	Responses to “Who is accessing your program?”	13
FIGURE 4:	Responses to “Do you consider that your program would benefit from support for accessibility?”	14
FIGURE 5:	Responses to “How long has your program been running?”	17
FIGURE 6:	Responses to “Is your program mostly child-led unstructured play, activity-based structured play or both?”	18
FIGURE 7:	Responses to: “What are the barriers to setting up new nature play programs?”	20
FIGURE 8:	Responses to: “Factors that help maintain your nature play program or activity?”	22
FIGURE 9:	Top five enablers for maintaining nature play programs.....	23
FIGURE 10:	Responses to: “Benefits of nature play for children”	27
FIGURE 11:	Responses to: “Benefits of nature play for parents and families”	30
FIGURE 12:	Responses to: “Knowledge gained through nature play by parents and families”	31
FIGURE 13:	Comments provided by respondents about benefits of nature play for parents and families	32

FIGURE 2: RESPONSES TO

“HOW IS YOUR PROGRAM PRIMARILY FUNDED?”

FIGURE 3: RESPONSES TO

“WHO IS ACCESSING YOUR PROGRAM?”

FIGURE 4: RESPONSES TO

“DO YOU CONSIDER THAT YOUR PROGRAM
WOULD BENEFIT FROM SUPPORT FOR ACCESSIBILITY
(E.G. TRAINING OR FUNDING)?”

114 DISABILITY

106 ABORIGINAL AND/OR TO

93 CULTURALLY AND LINGUI

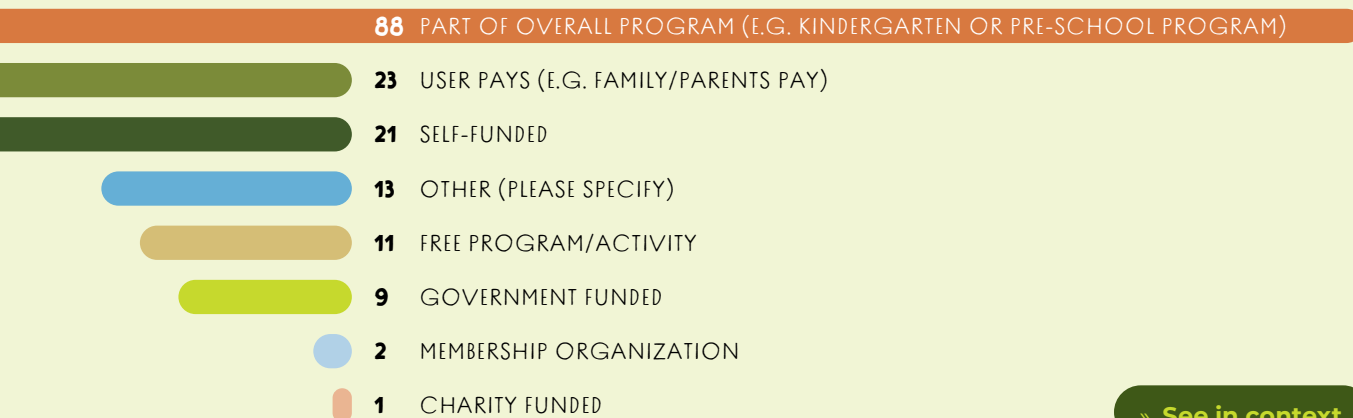
87 EXPERIENCES OF TRAUMA

53 HEALTH CARE CARD ACC

38 TELL US MORE:

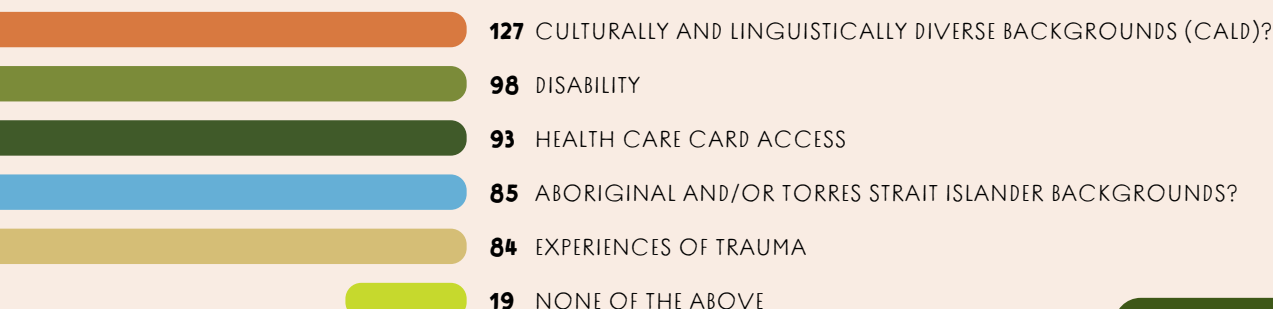
15 NONE OF THE AB

PROGRAM PRIMARILY FUNDED?"



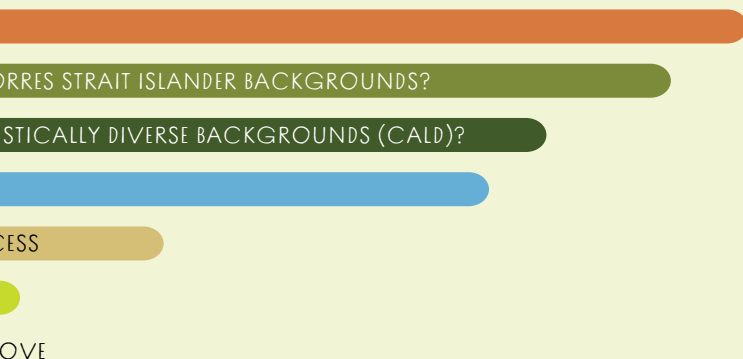
» See in context

YOUR PROGRAM?"



» See in context

YOUR PROGRAM WOULD BENEFIT FROM SUPPORT (FUNDING) TO SUPPORT PROGRAM ACCESSIBILITY FOR THE FOLLOWING TARGET GROUPS?"



» See in context

FIGURE 5: RESPONSES TO

“HOW LONG HAS YOUR PROGRAM BEEN RUNNING?”


[» See in context](#)

FIGURE 6: RESPONSES TO QUESTION

“IS YOUR PROGRAM MOSTLY CHILD-LED UNSTRUCTURED PLAY, ACTIVITY-BASED STRUCTURED PLAY OR BOTH?”

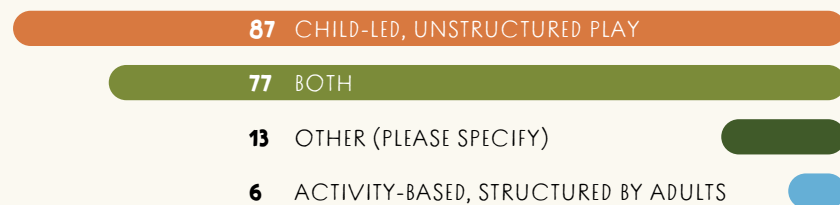
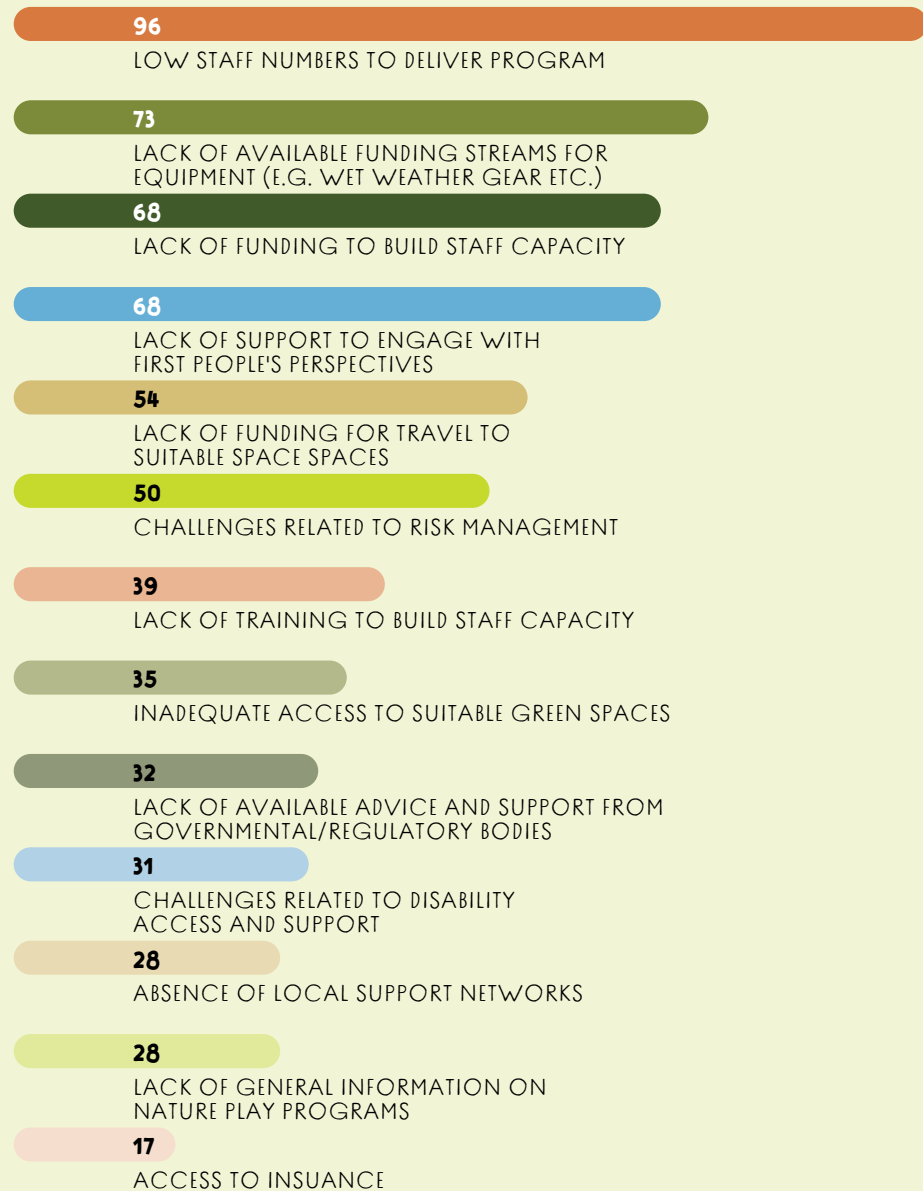

[» See in context](#)

FIGURE 7: RESPONSES TO

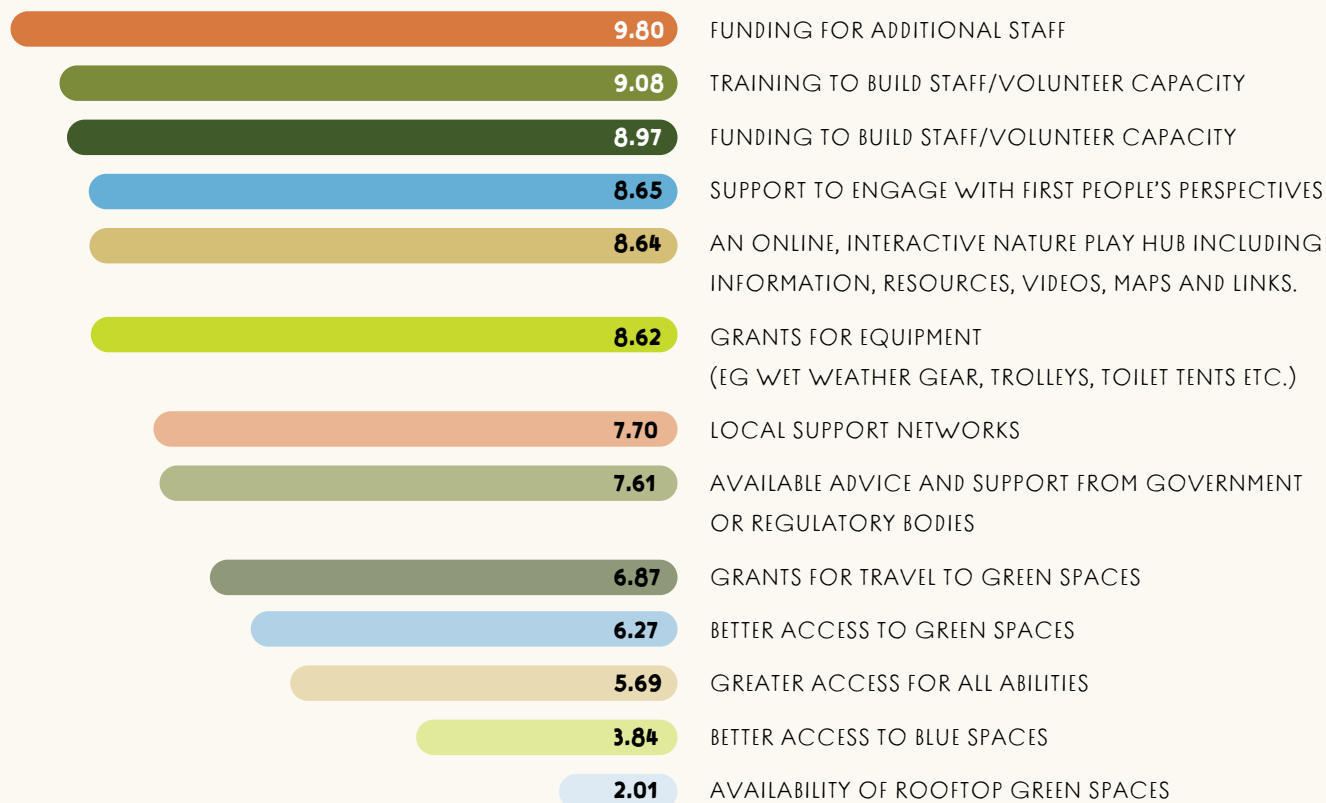
“WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO SETTING UP NEW NATURE PLAY PROGRAMS?”



» See in context

FIGURE 8: ANSWER TO

"FACTORS THAT HELP MAINTAIN YOUR NATURE PLAY PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY"



» See in context

FIGURE 10: RESPONSES TO

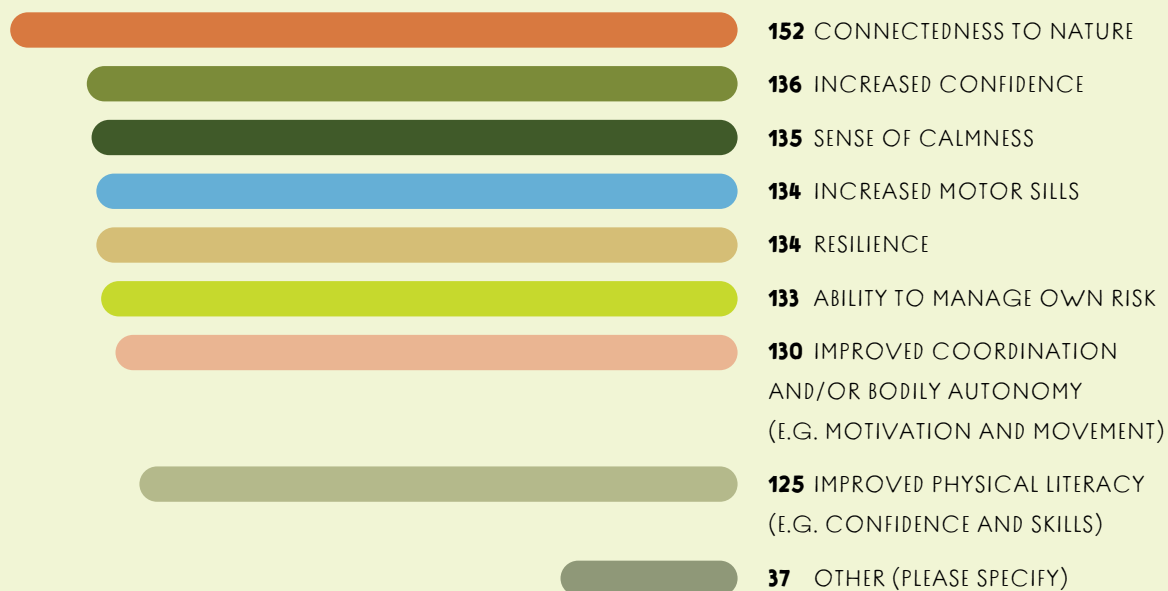
"BENEFITS OF NATURE PLAY FOR CHILDREN"

» See in context



FIGURE 11: RESPONSES TO

"BENEFITS OF NATURE PLAY FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES"

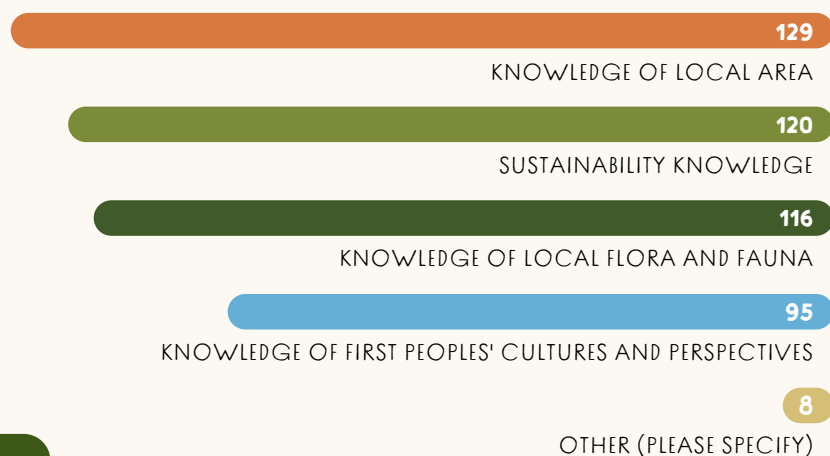


» See in context

VII

FIGURE 12: RESPONSES TO

"KNOWLEDGE GAINED THROUGH NATURE PLAY BY PARENTS AND FAMILIES"



» See in context



reconnecting kids to nature