

# RESILIENCE



Over the last 18 months, we have used the Resilience Scale\* to measure changes in young people's capacity to adapt positively to challenge and change after completing their Outward Bound course.

The scale measures five separate characteristics of resilience: purpose, perseverance, equanimity (living with acceptance and balance), self-reliance and authenticity (knowing who you are).

Our evaluations show that young people improve their ability to bounce back from setbacks and learn from difficult experiences after taking part in one of our

courses. At the end of one 5-day Education course, 58% of students increased their score for resilience and six months afterwards 41% recorded an increased score. At the end of the Skills for Life Award course, 82% scored higher and six months on 64% scored higher. When we surveyed them again twelve months on, we found that the improvements had been retained.

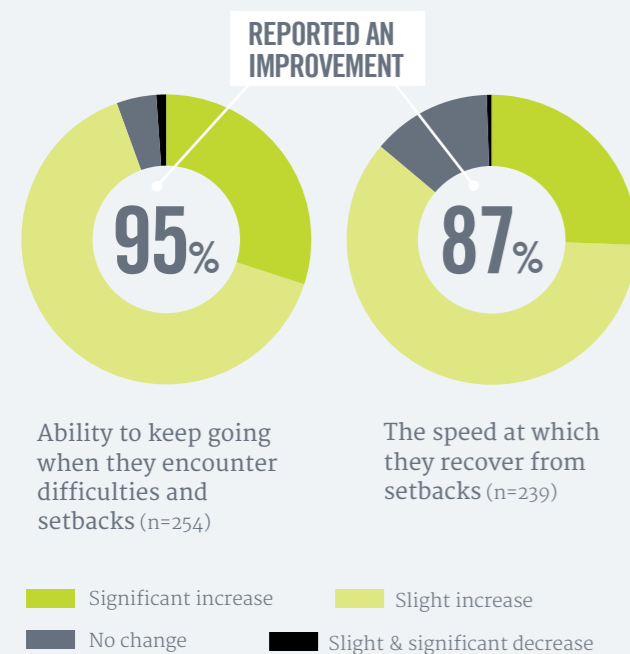
Improvements were recorded across all five characteristics, with the biggest increases observed in relation to participants' authenticity and self-reliance.



“Nathan has handled a change of plan regarding his education path with calm purpose. In the past, this change to 'routine' and plan would have made him unsettled, defensive and emotional. Now he refers to lessons learned at Outward Bound, and is calm and forward looking. He is far more confident in presenting himself, ideas and views. He is not daunted by the prospect of new people / places / skills. Thanks to Outward Bound!”

Parent of Nathan, age 17, who completed his Skills for Life Award in 2016

## FROM A TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE CHANGES IN PUPILS' RESILIENCE REPORTED BY TEACHERS FOUR-SIX WEEKS AFTER THEIR OUTWARD BOUND COURSE



Full results can be found in Additional Research, page 66, Figure 19.

\* The Resilience Scale is a psychometric questionnaire used to accurately measure resilience. For more information visit [www.resiliencecenter.com/](http://www.resiliencecenter.com/)

## INDEPENDENT EVALUATION

### A STUDY OF RESILIENCE & MINDSET

#### INTRODUCTION

A study was conducted in 2014<sup>21</sup> into the effects of using the positive psychology concept of growth mindset\* during an Outward Bound residential course. Two school groups were involved in the study, one of which was an 'experiment' group, which received a mindset-specific course; the other was a 'control' group, whose experience was absent of mindset-specific processing. Students were randomly assigned to the experiment and control group by the course administrator. A questionnaire was completed by students at the start and end of the course, and again one month afterwards.

#### KEY FINDINGS

A significant increase was found for self-efficacy in both the control and experiment group. However a significant increase was only found for the participants' resilience and growth mindset when the Outward Bound course included deliberate and structured learning around mindset. It is likely that the increase in resilience was linked to these students' move towards a growth mindset, as previous research has found strong links between these two areas.

The researcher concluded: "If participants are explicitly encouraged towards the belief that they have personal control over their development, gain an understanding of the utility of effort when facing challenges and have built up a bank of transferable strategies to use when facing setbacks, they are more likely to feel resilient and display resilient behaviours in future situations."

#### IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR PRACTICE

This study suggests that developing resilience in young people may not be as straightforward as providing them with a series of progressive outdoor challenges to overcome. It is more likely that structured processing specific to overcoming challenge with support, application of effort and highlighting transferable strategies for overcoming setbacks is required for improvements in resilience and mindset.

\* Fixed and Growth Mindsets describe the underlying beliefs that people have about learning and intelligence, and are terms developed by Dr. Carol Dweck. With a fixed mindset, young people are more likely to avoid challenges and give up easily. With a growth mindset, young people are more likely to embrace challenges and persist despite failure. For more information visit [www.mindsetonline.com/](http://www.mindsetonline.com/)