

What do Queensland kids think of the Nature Play QLD Online Passport Program?



This report outlines the impact of the Nature Play QLD Passport to an Amazing Childhood online interface (April 2017-May 2018)



Mission: Frolic in the rain

Lucky it's been a rainy day with lots of mud. We had fun in the rain feeding our animals jumping in muddy puddles.



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Mission: Surf's Up
I never really liked surfing but when I grabbed the board to complete the mission, it was like flying and I had the time of my life!!!



Mission: Colour Quiz
I found a shady spot under my Mulberry tree out the front and looked around, I saw lots of different colours everywhere. There was green grass, yellow bamboo, orange hibiscus, red flowers, blue sky, black rocks and white leaves. This was a fun mission because it was quiet and relaxing to listen and see all the environment around me.



Mission: The Bravery Award
I climbed up a high rock wall at the park. It was very scary but I did it.





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Introduction

This study reports on the continuing impact of the online interface for the *Passport to an Amazing Childhood* program, examining comments and star ratings made by Queensland children, on individual passport missions. These comments are examined for their nature as either positive or negative, as well as any inferred primary outcomes these children may have experienced. The star ratings for passport mission are given from 1 to 5. 1 being poor and 5 being amazing.

Furthermore, this study looks to assess the continuing capacity of the Nature Play QLD online passport program to promote participation in unstructured outdoor play.

The results continue to highlight significantly positive experiences for the majority of the respondents, in addition to a significant impact in relation to the inferred primary outcomes achieved as a result of completing passport missions. On parallel with last year's report, fun, and environmental connection and skill development were the most common inferred primary outcomes, followed by sensory awareness and creativity.

This study demonstrates the *Nature Play QLD Passport to an Amazing Childhood* program has unquestionably continued to be a very powerful and practical tool for inspiring and encouraging outdoor play, of which is mostly child-led and unstructured.

This study has also produced evidence to suggest that by taking part in the *Passport to an Amazing Childhood* online program, children in Queensland's overall wellbeing and health has been benefitted and developed positively.

While there continues to be room for improvement, particularly in relation to the quantity of comments and ratings made by children, the anecdotal evidence collected cannot be ignored.

It should be recognised that this study does not attempt to generalise the impacts of the *Nature Play QLD Passport to an Amazing Childhood* program to all potential 143,235 passport holders across Queensland. This study specifically focuses on the potential impact for online program users, to inspire and encourage outdoor play, thus having a meaningful impact on the health and wellbeing of Queensland children.

This data continues to demonstrate the impacts of this program as significant for Queensland children and efforts should be made to further widen its use across the state to spread the positive impacts to more children.

Background of Nature Play QLD

Nature Play QLD is a not-for-profit organisation that aims to reconnect Queensland children with an outdoor childhood. This community service emerged to address the current trend and significant shift in childhood; the shift from being largely outdoors, active, social, independent, community-orientated, mobile, with all senses engaged to now largely indoors, sedentary, technologically-immersed, risk averse and fearful.

Many effects of these changes are now emerging with significant impacts on Queensland children's health and general wellbeing. Overweight and obesity rates growing, now at 29% of all Queensland children, along with a variety of mental health issues and many other health and social concerns (ABS, 2016).

Nature Play QLD's purpose is to redress outdoor play in order to address these issues for children and families and to help restore a healthy balance for Queensland children.

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Nature Play QLD achieves this through multiple community engagement strategies. The *Passport to an Amazing Childhood* program is one such strategy that inspires and encourages unstructured outdoor play.

Background to Passport to an Amazing Childhood Program

The program consists of a physical passport, accompanied by an online interface. Queensland children can register online, which will give them access to over 500 outdoor play missions. The passports are used to record and celebrate missions as they are achieved.

Passport missions are activities that encourage and inspire outdoor play, of which most are unstructured and child-led. Once children have selected the mission from the online interface, they then go outdoors and complete the mission. Once they have completed the mission they can then go back online, tick the mission as complete and add comments pertaining to what they thought about the activity.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to:

1. Examine what children thought of individual passport missions of the *Nature Play QLD Passport to an Amazing Childhood* online interface between May 2017 and May 2018,
2. To assess the overall functionality of this resource to encourage participation in outdoor play, and
3. To assess this resource's ability to provide real benefits for Queensland children.

Explanation and Methodology

Passport mission comments analysis

The following is a breakdown of 1145 individual comments made by 515 children (or parents of children) aged 3 to 12 years, pertaining to 272 of the passport missions of the *Passport to an Amazing Childhood* online interface.

These individual comments make up the data being assessed during this study, testing the effectiveness and impact of the online interface to encourage and inspire unstructured outdoor play.

For the purpose of this study, once again the comments were collected from the online passport interface and collated into a spreadsheet. All comments were categorised in two ways: 1) as either positive or negative and 2) examined for any inferred primary outcomes.

Comments were examined for inferred primary or major themes (see the Table 1. below) and grouped together for analysis.

Passport mission star rating analysis

The following is a breakdown of 1111 individual ratings of passport missions made by 515 Queensland children. Once passport missions are completed online children have the capacity to rate the mission from 1 to 5. 1 being poor and 5 being amazing. For the purpose of this study further analysis will be given to varying age ranges those rating missions.

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Limitations to Methodology

Due to the comments being brief the term ‘inferred outcome’ is used to delineate possible outcomes as a result of completing the passport mission. The reader should take care to note that inferred outcomes selected are based on the analyser’s judgement of the information provided and are subjective.

The term 'primary' was used to highlight the dominant theme in the comment. It should be noted that most comments had multiple outcomes within them. For example the following comment suggests outcomes such as Fun, Creativity, Active, Initiative, Achievement and Positive Relationship Development:

"We made a massive house with a door and a tunnel. We drew pictures on the house with cut out heads where we could put our own heads through. It was fun."

It can be assumed that almost all missions encourage active play, however the descriptor Active has been used to highlight a comment suggesting this was the dominant or primary outcome. For examples of comments see Appendix 1.

Inferred Primary Outcome Descriptors

Table 1. Inferred Primary Outcome Descriptors

Outcome	Descriptor
Achievement	Used to describe comments that suggest a sense of achievement as a result of the mission
Active	Used to describe comments that suggest the mission led to being active
Creative	Used to describe comments that suggest creativity was being used, practiced or developed
Enchantment	Used to describe comments that suggest either imaginative play was being engaged in or a sense of awe and wonder was being experienced
Environmental Connection	Used to describe comments that suggest either a connection with nature was being formed or enhanced as well as describing learning or expansion of knowledge pertaining to various aspects of the natural world
Fun	Used to describe comments that suggest enjoyment with the passport mission
Initiative	Used to describe comments that suggest the child was using their own initiative, building or scaffolding their own engagement with the passport mission
Intrinsic Motivation	Used to describe comments that suggest the child was either engaged in or developing a sense of internally driven enjoyment with the mission, further suggesting the building or achievement of self-direction, self-determination and independence pertaining to overall choice in participation with the activity
None	Used to describe comments that suggest no outcome was achieved
Positive Relationship Development	Used to describe comments that suggest establishment, building or enhancement of positive relationships
Resilience	Used to describe comments that suggest an activity has supported children with developing their ability to cope with and overcome failure or adverse situations.
Risk Taking	Used to describe comments that suggest activities were engaging, provided a sense of uncertainty, unknown or fear that resulted in a positive outcome including; building competence, confidence,

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	independence, self-regulation, self-assessment, astute awareness of own capabilities etc.
Self-Awareness	Used to describe comments that suggest the activity resulted in the child learning about themselves including: what they do and don't like, what they are and aren't capable of achieving, what they do and don't enjoy doing, how they react to certain activities or elements of nature
Sensory Awareness	Used to describe comments that suggest the activity led to establishing, building or enhancing awareness of senses
Sense of belonging and locality	Use to describe comments that suggest that an activity supported children with developing a sense of place and belonging in their local neighbourhood/ area.
Skill development	Used to describe comments that suggest the activity resulted in either learning new skills or building on existing ones

Results

Passport mission comment analysis results

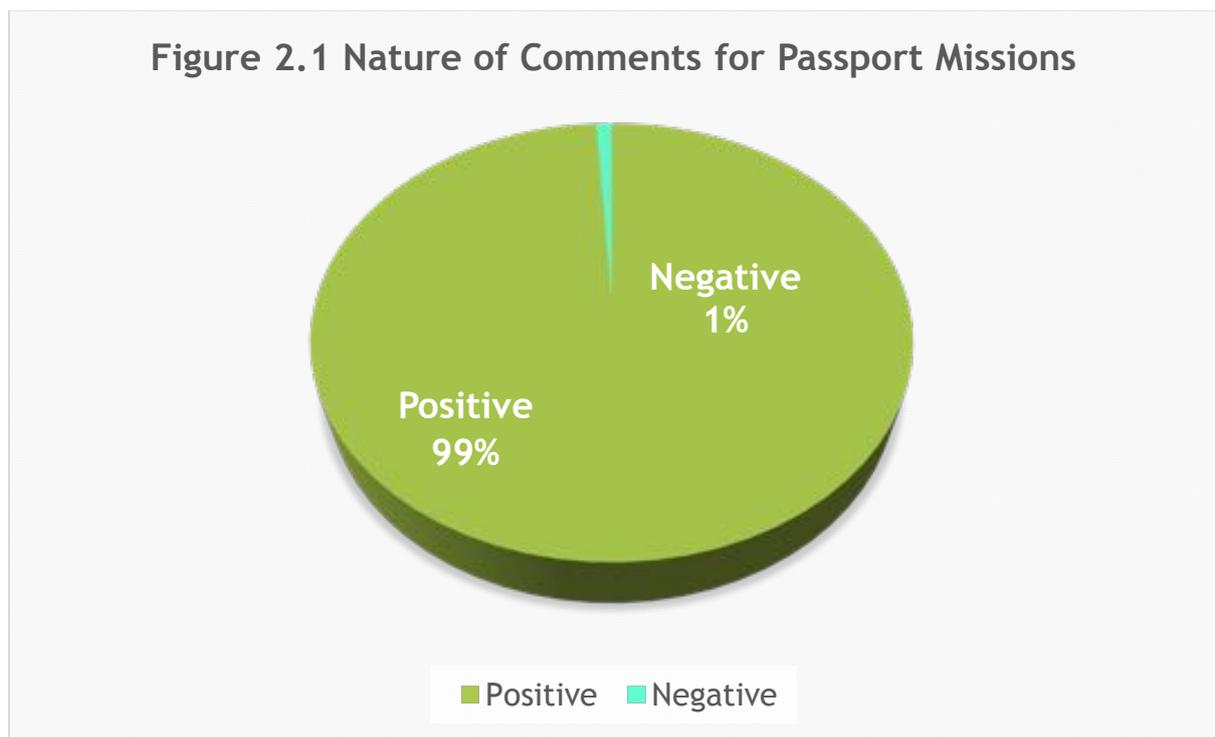


Figure2 Nature of Comments for Passport Missions

As figure 2 suggests, of the 1511 comments 1149 (or 99%) were positive in nature and 20 (1%) were taken to be negative in some nature.

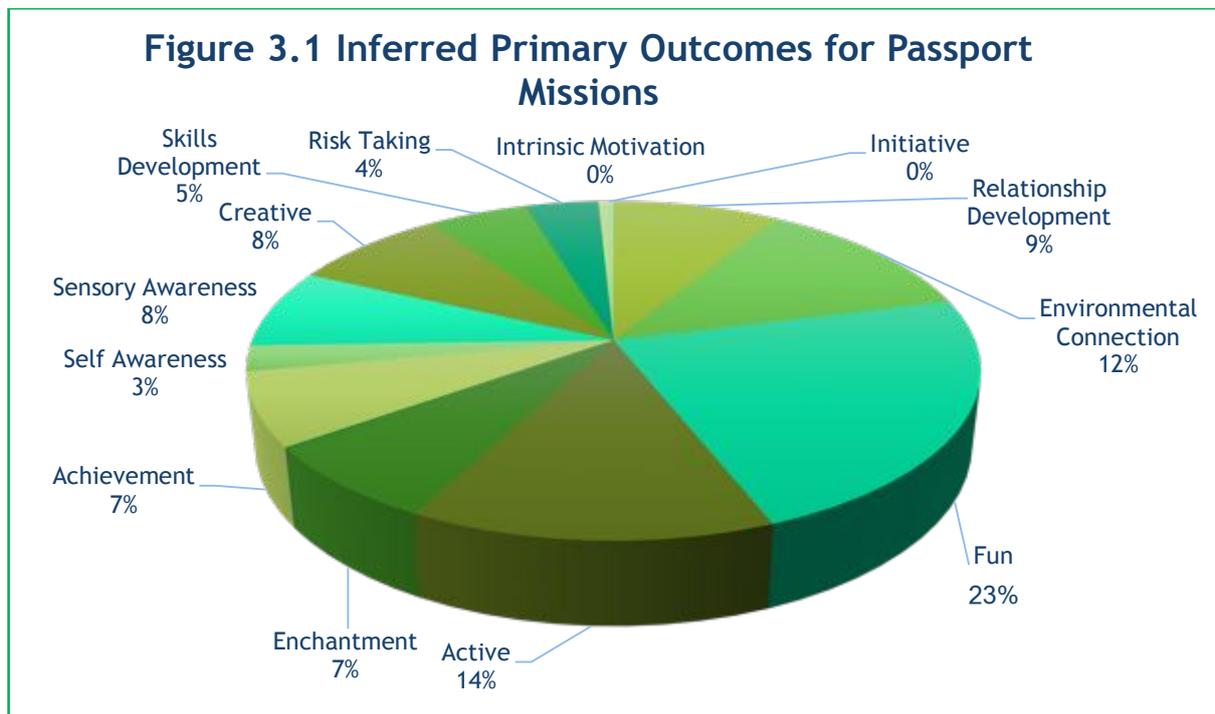


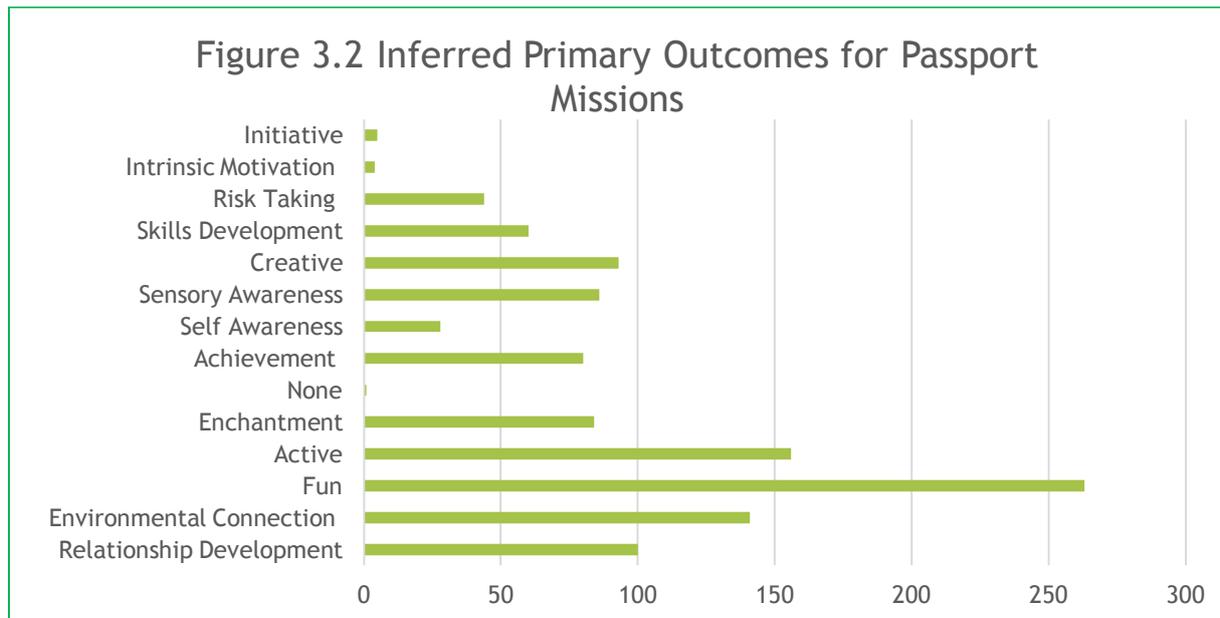
Figure 3. Inferred Primary Outcomes for Nature Play QLD Passport

Figure 3 shows the overall results for all the comments submitted after being categorised into each of the inferred primary outcomes.

The dominant inferred primary outcomes included fun (23%), active (14%) and environmental connection (12%).

Although the variance between most of the inferred primary outcomes was relatively minor, relationship development (9%), sensory awareness (8%) and creative (8%) should be noted as slightly more significant outcomes.

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Passport mission star rating analysis results

1111 individual ratings of passport missions were given to 272 Nature Play QLD Passport Missions. The average star rating given from all children was 4.36 out of a possible 5. A top 5 star rating was given by 212 (41%) of children and 828 individual ratings (75%) were 4 stars and above.

Figure 4 shows the average star rating for the mission categories, with the lowest average rating given 3.5 stars for 'Extreme' missions and the highest average was 4.66 stars out of 5 for "Camping" missions.

Figure 5 outlines the average star rating for mission categories by age range across QLD. The lowest average ratings were 3.3 stars given by children under 5 for 'Classroom' and 3.7 stars given by children over 9 for 'National Park'. The highest was 4.8 stars interestingly given for 'Parks' missions by children under 5 years of age.

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Figure 4 Average Star Rating for Passport Missions

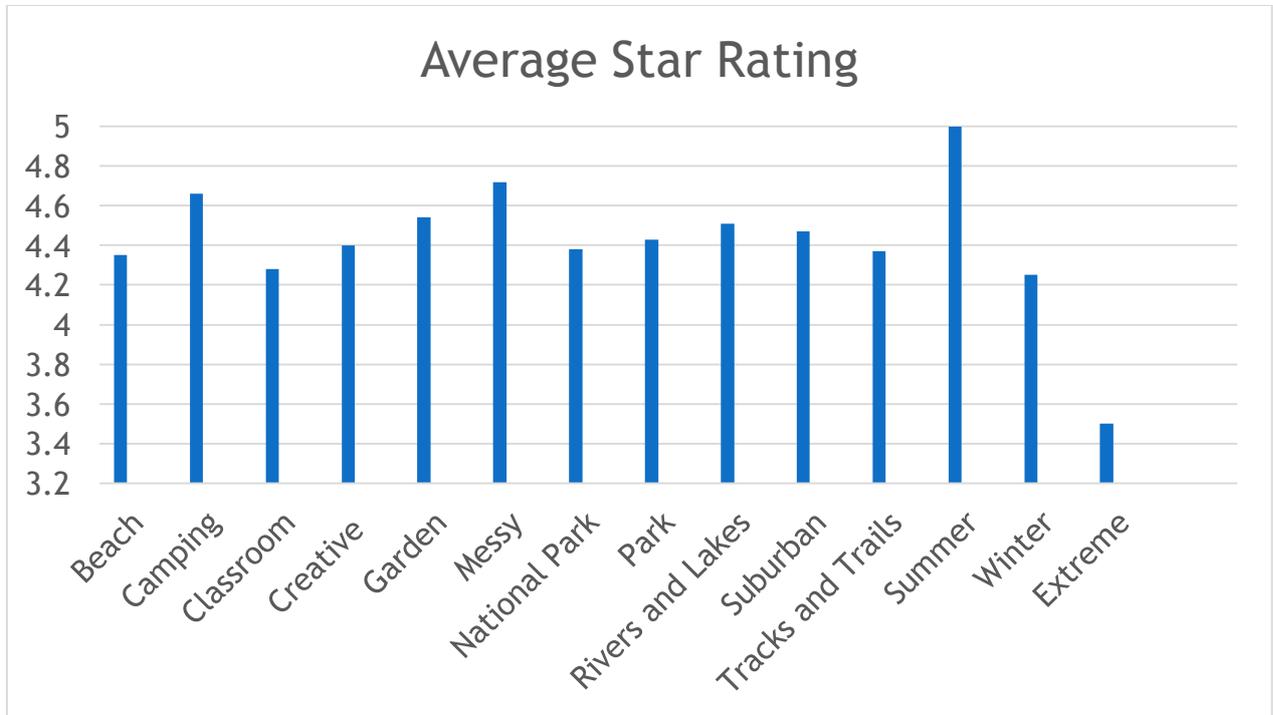
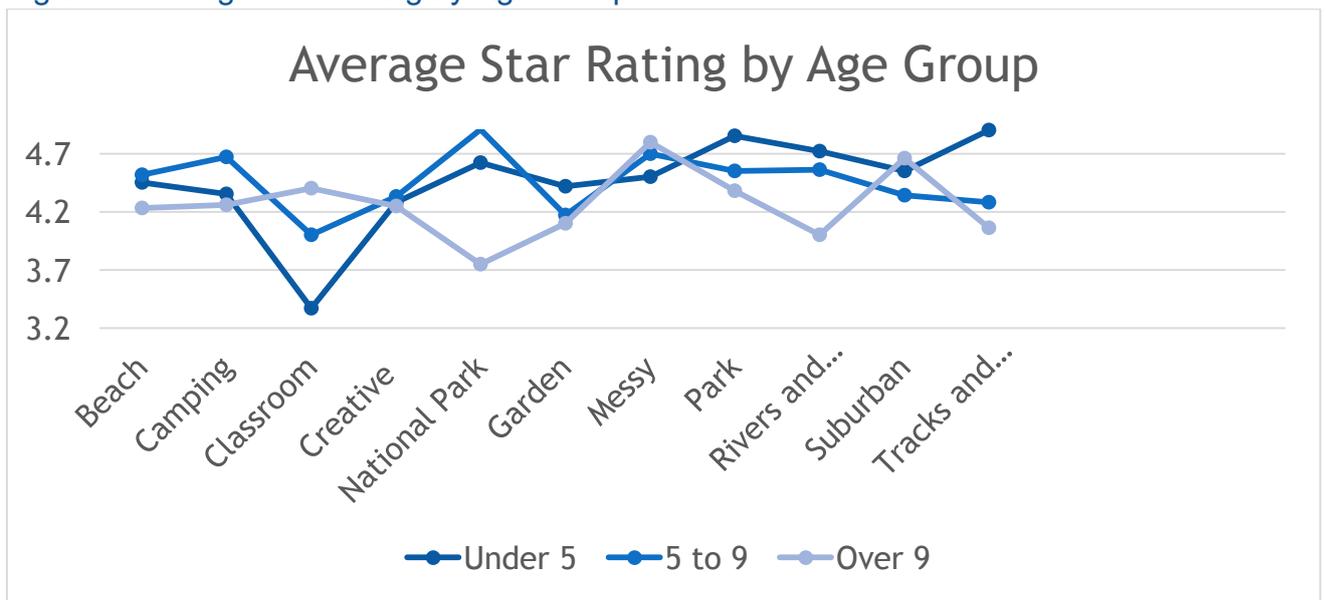


Figure 5 Average Star Rating by Age Group



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Discussion

By analysing the mission data, this study demonstrates the *Nature Play QLD Passport to an Amazing Childhood* program as a very powerful and practical tool for inspiring and encouraging outdoor play, across all ages.

The results continue to demonstrate Queensland children across all ages continue to highly rate and enjoy the passport missions. The emerging themes from the overall comments suggest that outdoor play is more than just play for play's sake.

While fun may be the key motivating factor for children to participate in Nature Play QLD missions, so many more outcomes are achieved. Specifically, from this study, it can be suggested that through utilising the online passport interface, Queensland children will nurture an environmental connection with nature and further develop their sensory awareness. In a society where extensive research is reporting a nature and sensory deficit in our children, the evidence in this study shows that the Passport mission program is an important and crucial resource for the children of today in Queensland.

By taking part and enjoying missions, participants of the *Passport to an Amazing Childhood* online interface remain active and mobile, develop their self-awareness as well as positive relationships with family and friends. They develop their confidence and competence through achievement and risk-taking, and are provided opportunities to be creative and imaginative. All this is occurring while children are developing their intrinsic motivation for outdoor play, practicing using their initiative as well as establishing and building connections with the natural world around them.

Future Improvements

While numerically the sample of comments (1145), in comparison with the amount of physical passports distributed across Queensland (143325), is not statistically significant, the strength of the comments made by children highlight that the Nature Play QLD passport program substantially promotes unstructured outdoor play. Continued innovation and effort will need to be placed on future efforts to gather data related to children's feedback relating to the Passport Missions, in order to further collate a greater quantity of feedback which can be used to improve the program.

In order to continue active participation from children in the online program, ongoing development of engaging missions should occur and be regularly introduced both from Nature Play Qld and our partner organisations.

Innovative ways to highlight the voices of Queensland children by making greater use of the comments shared could help to promote the importance of outdoor play.

Conclusion

The 1145 individual comments made by 515 Queensland children, about the Nature Play QLD Passport Missions continue to highlight Queensland children's experience with this resource as overwhelmingly positive.

The evidence provided further demonstrates the significant and strong capacity of the *Nature Play Passport to an Amazing Childhood* program to generate real and important outcomes that directly contribute to the health and wellbeing of Queensland children. These extensive outcomes were most notably: ability to have fun, build a connection with the natural

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environment, develop sensory awareness, creativity, skill development amongst others.

In conclusion, the above assessment of the data used for this study demonstrates the effectiveness of the *Nature Play QLD Passport to an Amazing Childhood* program to encourage and inspire participation in unstructured outdoor play for Queensland children.

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Appendix 1. Snapshot of the comments made by Queensland children about their experience of the Passport to an Amazing Childhood Program Missions

Mission	Comment	Mood	Inferred Primary Outcome
The Camp Out	I had camping fun in the weekend with my grummy and we all collected firewood and I had sparkles even. I love camping	Positive	Fun
Frolic in the Rain	I love getting wet and wearing my raincoat	Positive	Fun
Handstand, cartwheel, crab walk!	Found a yellow ladybug and I made a wish	Positive	Environmental connection
GC2018 Nature Collage	I collected different colours and types of leaves. We saw caterpillars but left them alone in their environment.	Positive	Creative
Surf's Up	I never really liked surfing but when I grabbed the board to complete the mission, it was like flying and I had the time of my life!!!	Positive	Achievement
The Camp Out	Camping. THE BEST MISSION EEEEEVVVVVEEEEERRRRR!!!!!!!!!!!!	Positive	Fun
Cuttlefish carving	I collected 3 pieces of cuttlefish fish. We also found pumice stone shells and stones. My brother calls them his treasures.	Positive	Environmental connection
Handstand, cartwheel, crab walk!	I did handstands and cartwheels at the beach. Mum drew hand and foot prints in the sand of how to do a cartwheel. It was fun.	Positive	Active
Be a Hunter Gatherer	I got to hide under the table and the thing I didn't like was when I hit my head on the bottom of the table.	Negative	Active
Master grass whistler	Listening to the sound the grass makes when blown through. Found it very funny ;)	Positive	Sensory awareness

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Muddy masterchef	Playing in the mud was very funny. I made a mud pie but pretended it was chocolate. I cooked it and then gave it to mummy with some salty leaves on top!	Positive	Fun
Backyard sleep out	I got to sleep with my cat Luna :)	Positive	Environmental connection
Three blind mice	It was a bit scary because the canoe was rocking a little and we went through a maze of reeds (that wasn't scary). And I paddled all by myself (with a couple of friends).	Positive	Risk taking
Leaf boat	it was really fun trying to get my boat to go further than my brothers, my boat kept sinking (it was totally the winds fault!)	Positive	Achievement
GC2018 Senses Challenge	I realised so many different things were in my backyard!!!!!! i had never noticed them before.	Positive	Enchantment
Cook on a campfire	X is amazing at this! HE HAS LEARNT TO BUILD HIS OWN FIRE AND NOW HELPING HIS BROTHER TO BUILD ONE. WHAT IS GREAT IS THAT HE IS NOW COOKING OUR DINNER ON THE FIRE!	Positive	Skills Development
Hug a tree	Me and my big brother hugged a huge tree! I decided to name it Grandma. Hugging the tree felt good, it was hard and smooth. It was very old tree and had been there a long time.	Positive	Environmental connection
Rock faces	I made a rock alien! He is green and his eyes are orange. It was fun to look 4 a rock	Positive	Creative

Note some mission names may have been modified