

The background of the slide features light green silhouettes of two hikers and a pine tree. One hiker is in the foreground on the left, leaning forward. The second hiker is slightly behind and to the right, holding a walking stick. To the right of the hikers is a large, detailed silhouette of a pine tree. The entire scene is set against a white background.

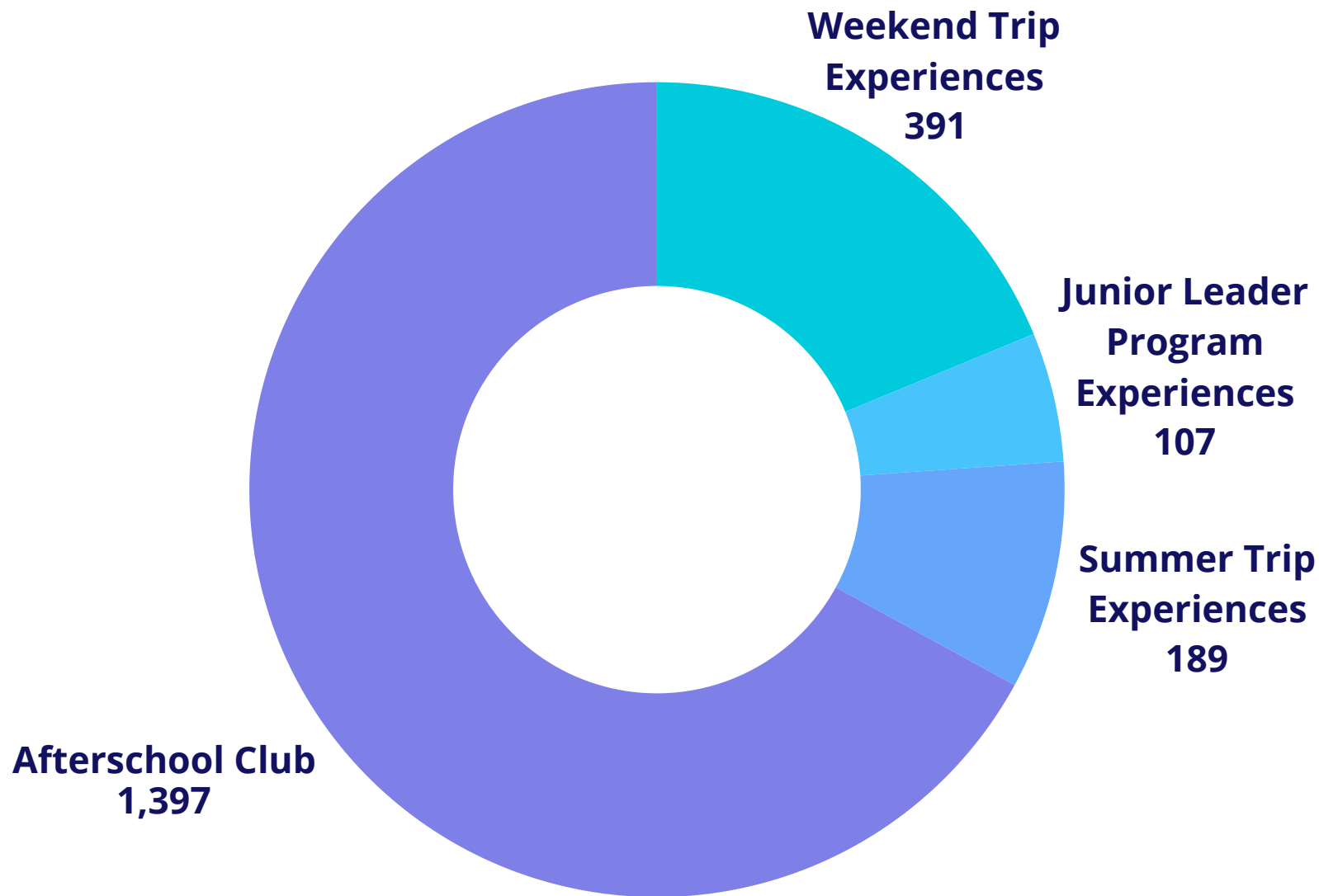
The Woods Project 2026 Impact Report

Creating wilderness exploration experiences that promote academic success, college and career readiness, and lifelong thriving for Houston high school students who wouldn't otherwise have access to these opportunities.



2025-26 Program Year Overview

2,084 Total Experiences





2025-26 At A Glance



**3 Weekend Day Workshops and
12 Overnight Weekend Trips In
and Around Houston, Texas**



**248 Volunteer Leader Experiences
During Weekend and Summer Trips**



2,715 Student Nights in the Woods

Summer Locations and Partners



**Olympic National Park
with NatureBridge**



**Apostle Islands National Lakeshore
with Wilderness Inquiry**



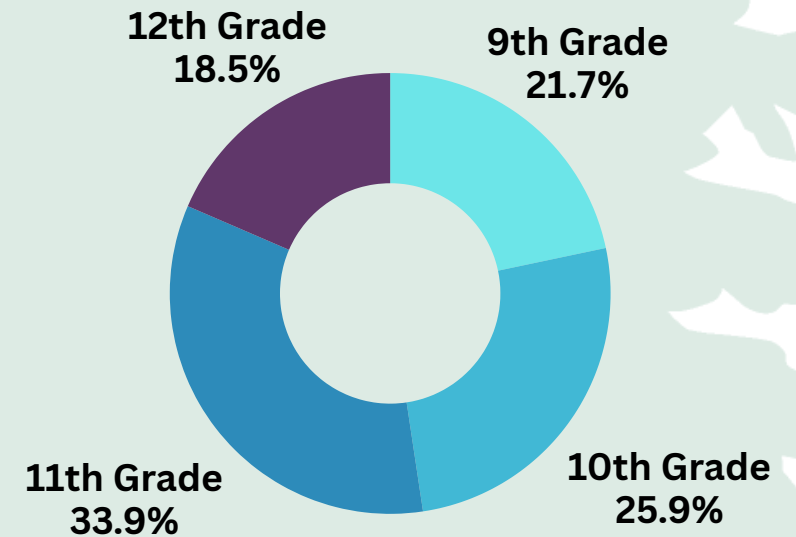
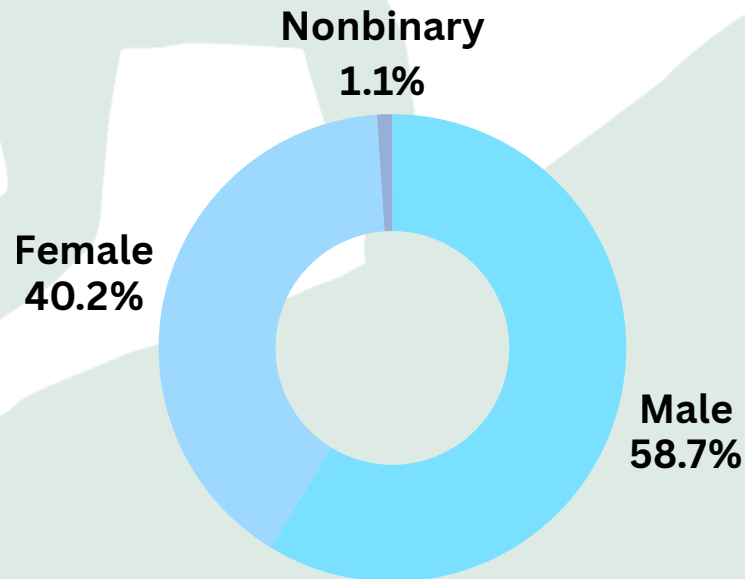
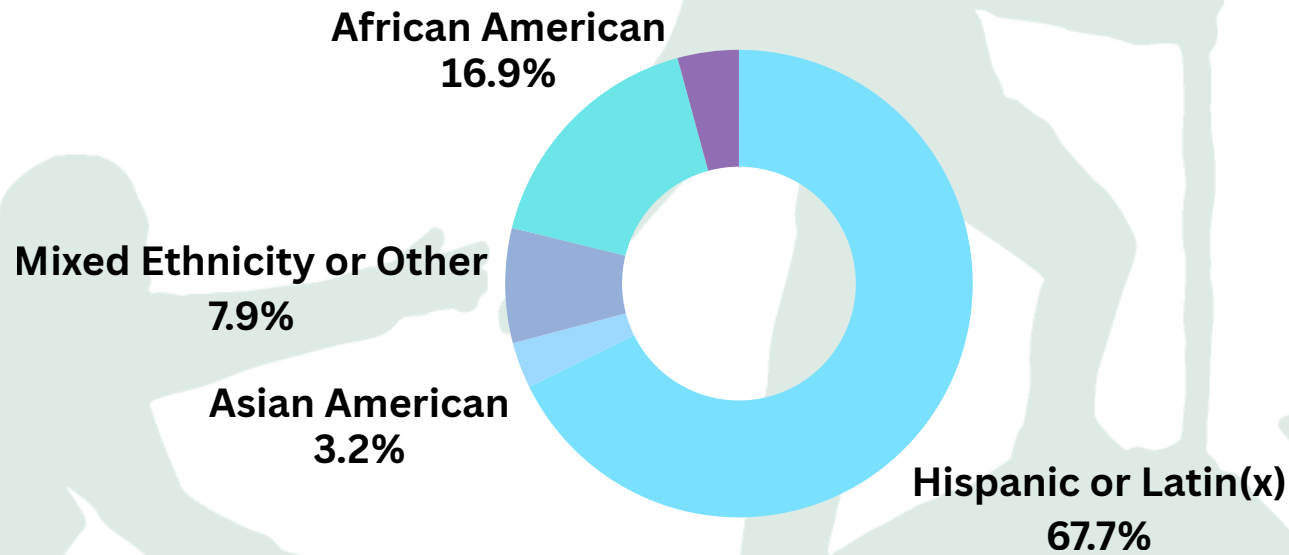
**Donner Summit/Desolation Wilderness
with NatureUp Health**



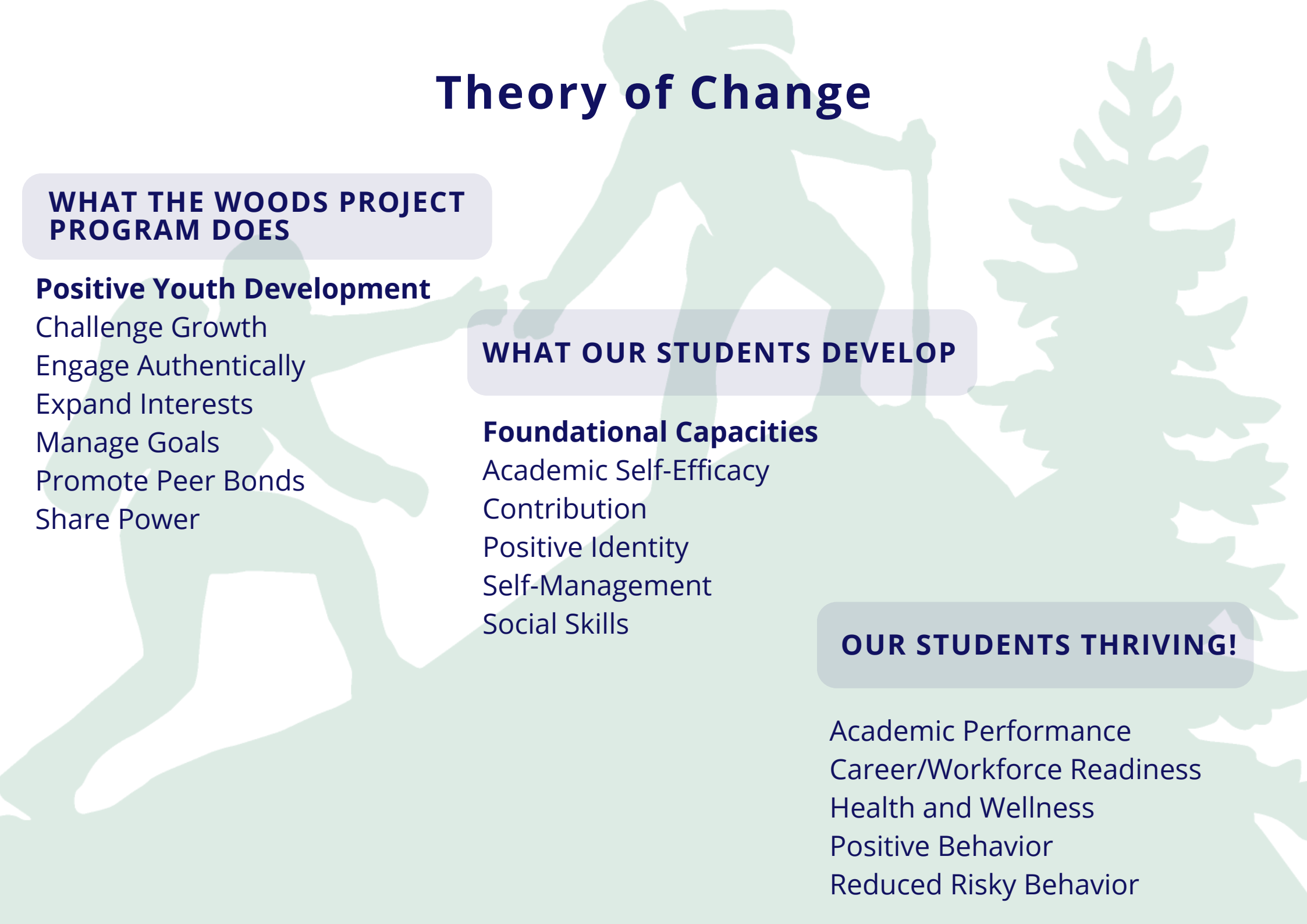
**Holy Cross National Forest
with Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center**



About Our Summer Students



Theory of Change



WHAT THE WOODS PROJECT PROGRAM DOES

Positive Youth Development

- Challenge Growth
- Engage Authentically
- Expand Interests
- Manage Goals
- Promote Peer Bonds
- Share Power

WHAT OUR STUDENTS DEVELOP

Foundational Capacities

- Academic Self-Efficacy
- Contribution
- Positive Identity
- Self-Management
- Social Skills

OUR STUDENTS THRIVING!

- Academic Performance
- Career/Workforce Readiness
- Health and Wellness
- Positive Behavior
- Reduced Risky Behavior

The background of the slide features a light green silhouette illustration. It depicts two young people climbing a mountain. One person is at the top of the peak, leaning forward, while the other is on a lower slope, reaching up towards the first person. To the right of the mountain, there is a stylized evergreen tree. The overall scene suggests a journey and achievement.

Young People

THRIVING

Long-Term Outcomes

Young people who develop essential capacities are on a journey to understand and cultivate their unique interests and talents in many aspects of life — they thrive. Thriving goes beyond competence, with success defined as an ongoing trajectory towards full potential in life.

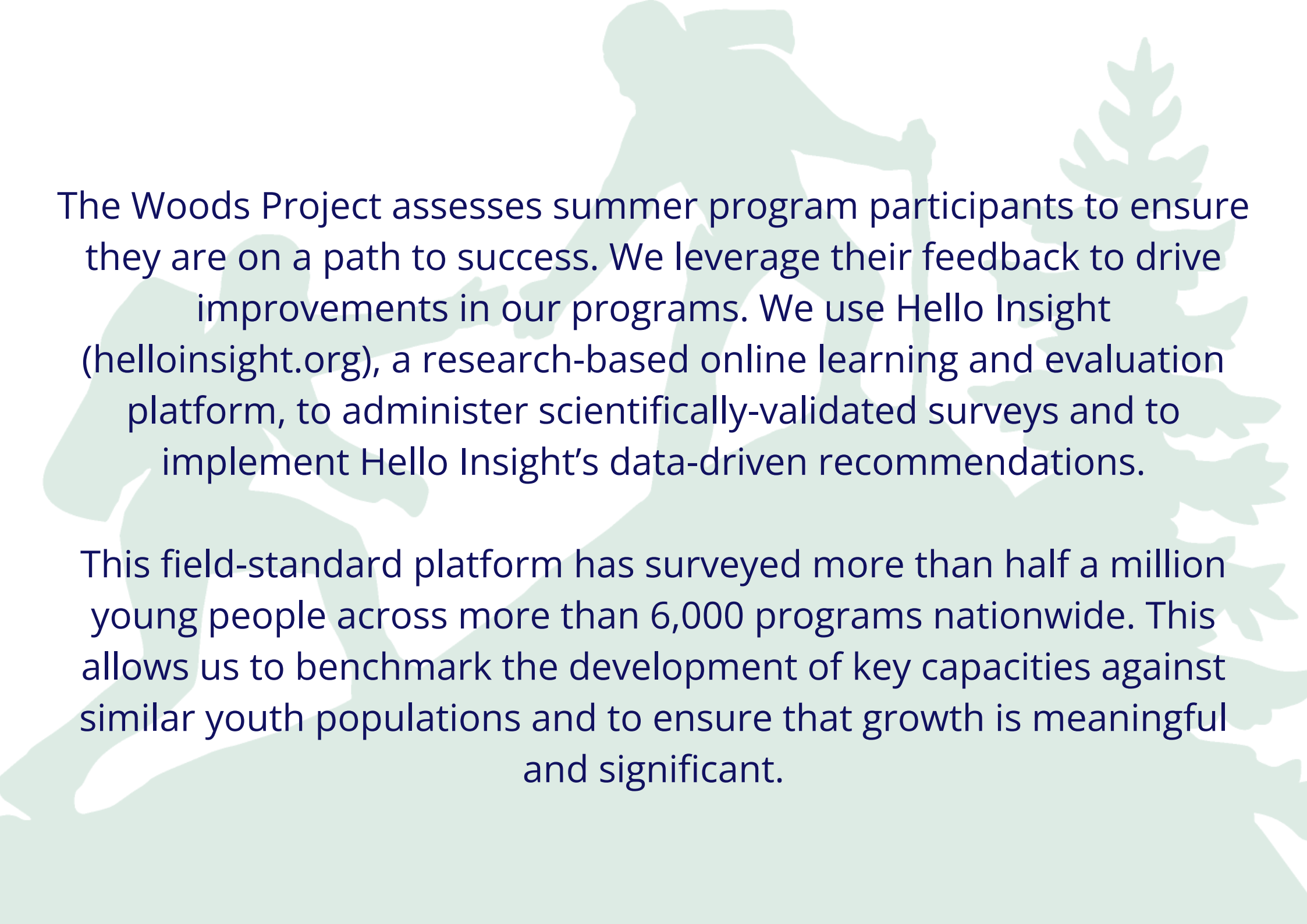
Academic Performance

Career/Workforce Readiness

Health and Wellness

Positive Behavior

Reduced Risky Behavior

The background features a light green illustration of two people hiking up a hill. One person is in the foreground, leaning forward and using a walking stick. The second person is slightly behind and to the right. To the right of the hikers is a stylized evergreen tree. The entire scene is rendered in a simple, flat style with no shading.

The Woods Project assesses summer program participants to ensure they are on a path to success. We leverage their feedback to drive improvements in our programs. We use Hello Insight (helloinsight.org), a research-based online learning and evaluation platform, to administer scientifically-validated surveys and to implement Hello Insight's data-driven recommendations.

This field-standard platform has surveyed more than half a million young people across more than 6,000 programs nationwide. This allows us to benchmark the development of key capacities against similar youth populations and to ensure that growth is meaningful and significant.



Growth in Foundational Capacities After TWP Summer Trip

Foundational Capacity	Meeting Benchmark	Exceeding Benchmark	TWP Results %	TWP Results Against Benchmark
Academic Self-Efficacy	70-74%	Over 74%	74%	● Meeting Benchmark ∨
Contribution	62-66%	Over 66%	71%	● Exceeding Benchmark ∨
Sense of Self/Postive Identity	65-69%	Over 69%	78%	● Exceeding Benchmark ∨
Self-Management	66-70%	Over 70%	75%	● Exceeding Benchmark ∨
Social Skills	68-72%	Over 72%	75%	● Exceeding Benchmark ∨

The Woods Project summer program participants have developed Foundational Capacities at levels exceeding Hello Insight's national benchmark, a remarkable achievement considering the high standards set by leading youth-serving organizations across the country.

Reaching this benchmark is a testament to our program's ability to deliver meaningful youth experiences that match the impact of top-performing programs nationwide. This powerful evidence underscores our commitment to building strong, resilient young people.

Foundational Capacities



SOCIAL SKILLS

The ability of a young person to take others' perspectives into account, and to develop a sense of caring and empathy



SENSE OF SELF

A young person's inner confidence in who they are and their belief in their own worth, values, and potential - giving them the grounding to navigate challenges and the courage to explore who they are becoming



CONTRIBUTION

A young person's desire to engage with and contribute to family, community, and society



ACADEMIC SELF-EFFICACY

A young person's motivation and perceived mastery over their own learning, school performance, and potential to attain academic success

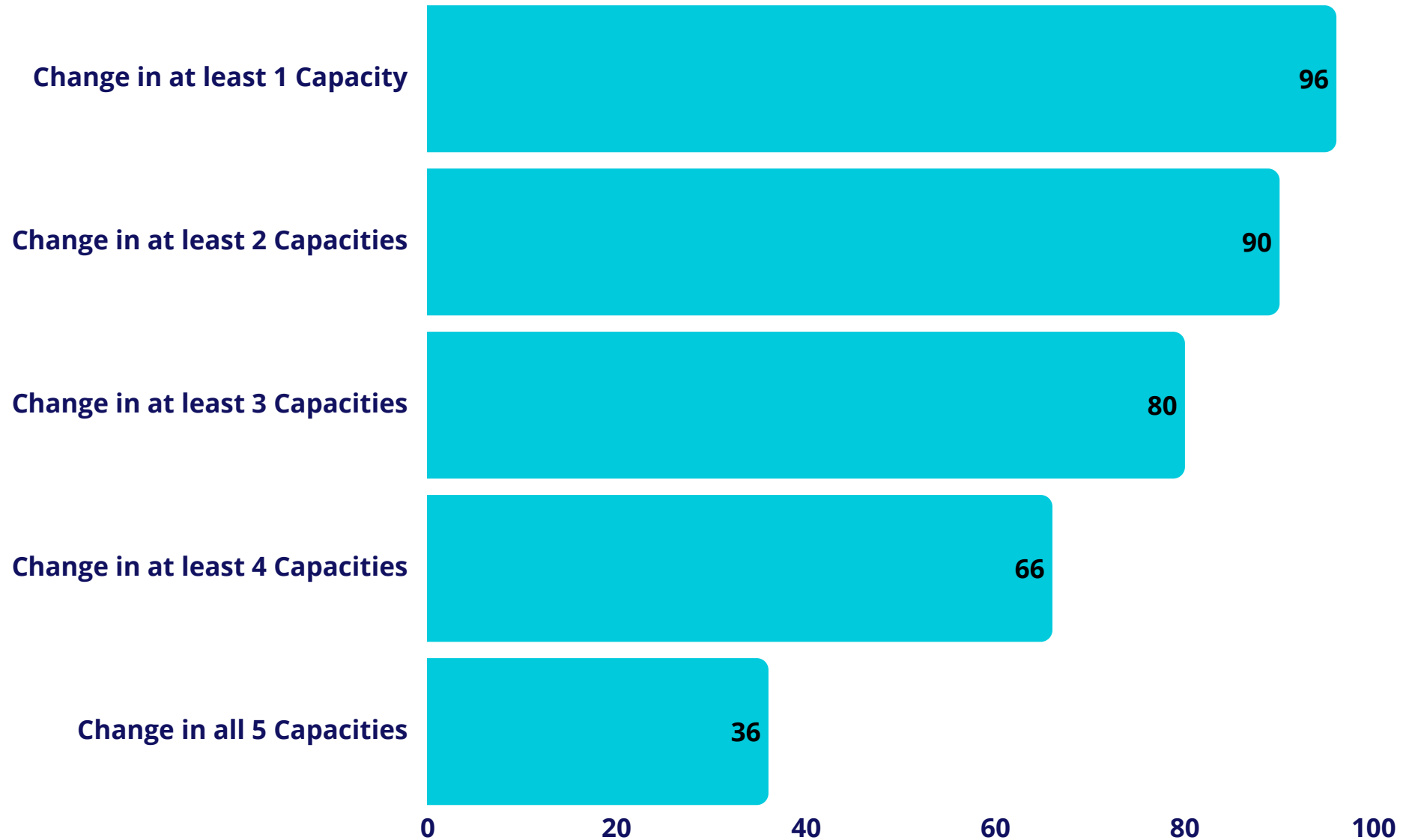


SELF-MANAGEMENT

The ability of a young person to regulate their emotions and behavior, take positive risks, and persist through life's challenges



Overall Impact: Foundational Capacities



Outdoor-Focused Capacity Measures





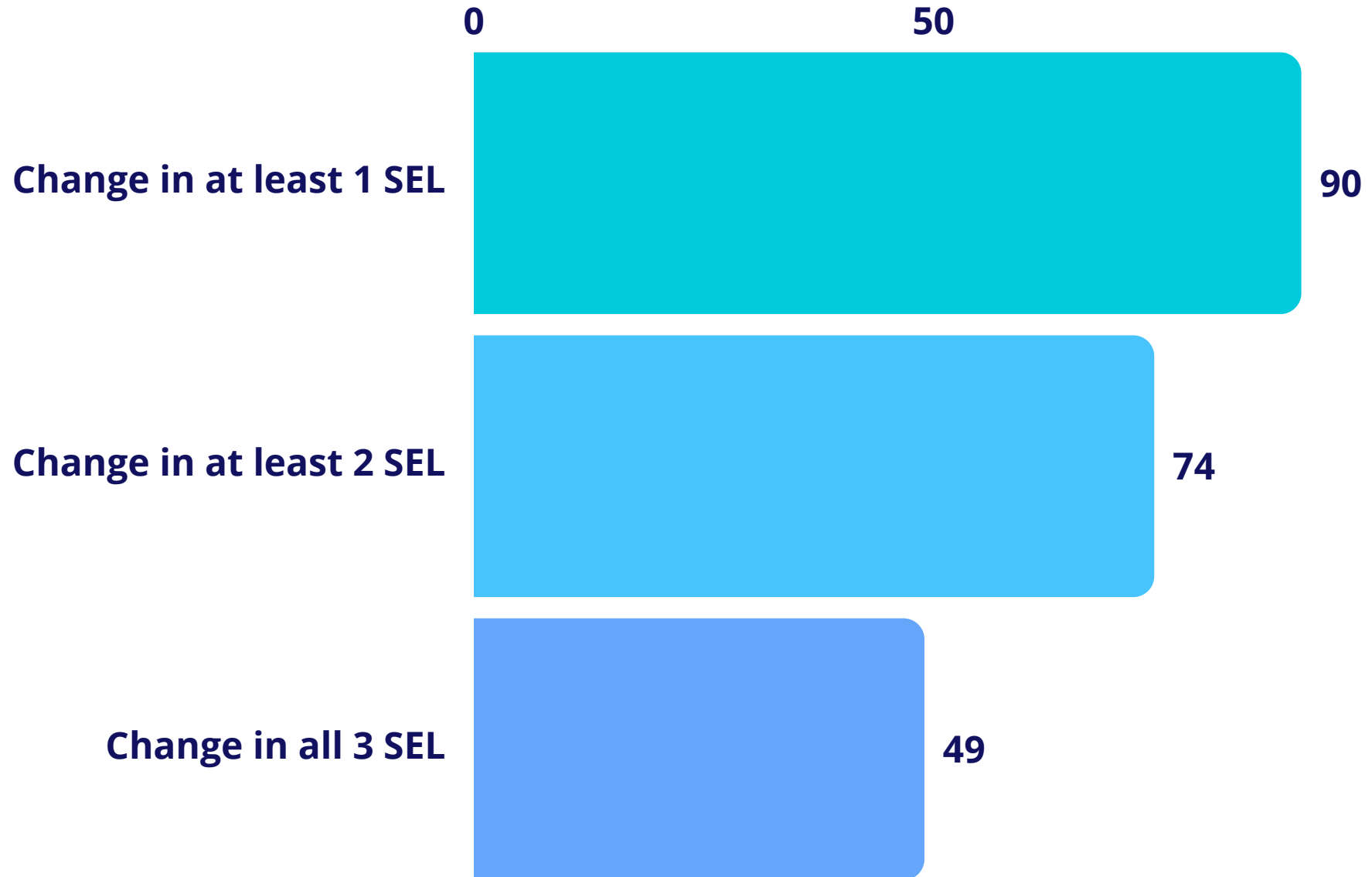
Growth in Outdoor-Focused Capacities After TWP Summer Trip

Outdoor Capacity	Meeting Benchmark	Exceeding Benchmark	TWP Results %	TWP Results Against Benchmark
Connection to the Outdoors	57-61%	Over 61%	71%	Exceeding Benchmark ▾
Support for the Environment	61-65%	Over 65%	79%	Exceeding Benchmark ▾
Well-Being in the Outdoors	62-66%	Over 66%	69%	Exceeding Benchmark ▾

The Woods Project summer program participants have developed Outdoor-Focused Capacities at levels exceeding Hello Insight’s national benchmark, a remarkable achievement considering the high standards set by leading youth-serving organizations across the country.



Overall Impact: Outdoor-Focused Capacities





Growth in Positive Youth Development Experiences After TWP Summer Trip

Capacity	Meeting Benchmark	Exceeding Benchmark	TWP Results %	TWP Results Against Benchmark
Challenge Growth	80-84%	Over 84%	93%	Exceeding Benchmark ▾
Engage Authentically	78-82%	Over 82%	93%	Exceeding Benchmark ▾
Expand Interests	66-70%	Over 70%	83%	Exceeding Benchmark ▾
Manage Goals	61-65%	Over 65%	82%	Exceeding Benchmark ▾
Promote Peer Bonds	70-74%	Over 74%	85%	Exceeding Benchmark ▾
Share Power	52-56%	Over 56%	75%	Exceeding Benchmark ▾

The Woods Project summer program participants have developed Outdoor-Focused Capacities at levels exceeding Hello Insight’s national benchmark, a remarkable achievement considering the high standards set by leading youth-serving organizations across the country.

Positive Youth Development experiences are not a set of activities or curriculum; rather, it is a way of working with young people that has been proven to promote meaningful growth in capacities.

Changing Lives

"I LEARNED THAT I CAN PUSH BEYOND MY LIMITS WITHOUT HURTING MYSELF AND THAT CAN HELP ME GROW AS A PERSON MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY." -AMBER A.

"I FELT PROUD THE WHOLE TRIP BASICALLY SINCE THIS WAS MY FIRST TIME DOING ANY KIND OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES LIKE THIS. NOW I KNOW THAT I AM CAPABLE OF SO MANY HARD THINGS I NEVER KNEW I WOULD BE ABLE TO DO." -JESSICA F.

"I LEARNED I'M WORTHY OF SO MUCH MORE AND SO MUCH STRONGER THAN WHAT I PREVIOUSLY BELIEVED." -ELEANOR R

