

Pathways to Manhood

Frequently Asked Questions



Every Child's Rite

What is the Pathways Foundation?

The Pathways Foundation is a Not For Profit Harm Prevention Charity. Our aims are to assist in the transition from boy to young man – a critical period in the life of any teenage boy, and to inspire our boys to have a vision and reach their potential. Pathways to Manhood programs have been running since 1995 around Australia and were developed by men interested and concerned about the health and wellbeing of boys and young men. Our male and female facilitators believe that boys benefit from having a range of adult men as role models, confidants, mentors, heroes and friends who will journey with them as they develop their male identity and thus grow into balanced integrated men themselves. The Pathways Foundation is hoping to start Mother and Daughter Programs in the near future.

Who are the camps for?

Boys aged 13 to 15, their father or significant male mentor, and their mother or significant woman in their life.

How much do the camps cost?

The \$800 per person program fee (\$1,600 per family) covers 5 days of professional facilitation (6 days on North Coast camps), including the mothers' processes, site fees and all meals. The First Night, Return Day, and Reunion are also covered in this cost.

Why does it cost this amount?

Each camp consists of only 16 or so boys and their fathers (mentors) which is a small number of participants and a large group of experienced leaders are required to fully support the boys, the fathers, the mothers and to ensure that the camps run safely. There is a cost associated with having high support levels for small groups of people and we know that this is what is required to deliver an amazing outcome for boys making their first steps to manhood.

Where & when are the camps held?

Pathways to Manhood camps are held in isolated bush locations all over Australia. See www.pathwaysfoundation.org.au for camp dates, or contact the office. We do not generally hold camps during school holidays, as this is often a time for the whole family to be together. The schools we have partnerships with value the Pathways experience as a significant part of a boy's development.

What happens on a camp?

The program is a fun, safe, and always interesting bush camp that is designed to acknowledge and honour the change from boy to young man. The boys have the opportunity to hear the stories of older men and ask questions in a sharing environment. They are exposed to a series of safe yet demanding ordeals to test and challenge them physically, mentally, emotionally and on a personal development level. Fun processes such as sharing of personal experiences, story telling, adventure and relationship building activities are also part of the program. It is a guided journey towards a deeper understanding of what it means to live a balanced adult male life in today's world.

Are women involved in the process?

Definitely. Women are an integral part of the boy's life and will continue to be. Pathways honours and values the role of women in young men's lives. Our female facilitators run a program for the mothers that is an essential part of the overall program. Mothers and/or step mothers are involved from the First Night through the Leaving Day, Return and Reunion.

Can I go to a camp outside of my area?

There may be some logistical challenges in doing so. Please contact the office if you are interested in attending a camp outside of your area.

Is the program the same at all locations?

Yes, the core program is the same no matter where you attend, but each area has its own local community flavour.

What are the facilities like on camps?

We have a variety of great bush locations that we use that are all set up to run our programs in the best environment possible.

What happens if it rains?

Dry areas are utilised with the care of all participants as a priority. All participants should bring effective wet weather gear with them (as directed on each camp's "what to bring" list).

Do I have to sleep on site? I live only a few minutes away....

Yes. One of the core elements of Pathways to Manhood camps is that it is a group residential experience.

My son's father can't or won't come – who can come on the camp with him?

The best person to take your boy on a camp is his father, but we are aware that this is not always an available option. A grandfather, uncle or other close male family member is ideal, or a male family friend actively involved in your boy's life. If this is not available, we will try to arrange a meeting with a suitable male mentor who may accompany your boy on a camp.

Will it matter if my son doesn't know any other boys on the camp?

No. Our camp processes quickly build a sense of community and friendship which break down all barriers.

What commitment is involved in attending a Pathways program?

There are several parts that make up the Pathways program. The program commences on the First Night, which usually takes place one evening approximately two to three weeks prior to the Leaving Day, which mothers and fathers /accompanying males attend without their boy. The evening's process lays the platform for your boy's experience, and gives you the preparation required to get the most out of this program. It also provides an important opportunity to meet the other families that you will be going on the camp with. The Leaving Day is for mothers, fathers/accompanying males and the boy going on the camp – this is the day your boy takes his first step on the journey to manhood. It is a day where the women have an opportunity to spend special time with their boy and farewell their boys and men. The mothers' work on the Leaving Day is critical to the success of the program. We ask that other children do not attend the Leaving Day, as this can be a distraction from the process. The Return Day is the final day of the camp when young men and accompanying males return. This is a day of celebration. Families and communities are encouraged to attend, to welcome and honour their returning young men. A Reunion Day is also held at a time after the camp, for young men, accompanying males, mothers and other family members to reunite with friends made during the camp and tell their stories.

Can I arrive late on the Leaving Day, or leave early on the Return Day?

This is not recommended. All experiences build upon each other. Missing part of the program will reduce the value of the camp for you, and impact on the other participants.

Is this a religious program?

No. This program is not based on any religion, and does not promote any one belief over another. Our programs blend a number of experiences drawn from many cultures and practices, and we invite you to honor your own beliefs. At all times you have a choice to participate in an activity or not. The Pathways Foundation is a values based organisation founded on a framework of respect, responsibility and awareness.

Why is the process so secretive?

The power of the Pathways program is in the unfolding of the processes. These are safe, responsible and professional methods designed to support your boy to become a healthy young man. To gain the maximum benefit we ask you to "Trust the process." If you feel you need more specific information, call the office and ask for assistance.

I can't afford this camp but desperately want my boy to come. What options are available to me?

Because we don't want anyone to miss out on our program for financial reasons, we have payment plans available to enable you to pay off the camp fee at a rate suitable to you. In cases of financial hardship we have scholarship places available. Please contact the office for more information.

I have two sons – can they both come on the same camp?

We strongly recommend that they attend two different camps. This allows for one on one attention, and is also a means of honouring the difference between the two boys, allowing them to have their own individual experience with their father or other significant male.

We have a blended family – what would you recommend?

Our bottom line is always what's best for the boy. All significant parents, step parents and/or carers should be aware of, and if possible involved in the program. It is not uncommon for mothers and step mothers to participate in the program to support their boy at this important time. If you have a sensitive family situation, please feel free to contact us to discuss this further.

What are some of the outcomes of attending a Pathways to Manhood camp?

The Pathways program has desired outcomes that include strong, long term relationships between father and son; respectful relationships between mother and son; increased self esteem; improved communication and leadership skills; decreased harmful behaviour such as drug and alcohol abuse; better results at school; closer relationships between boys, their families and communities.

Will my son be safe?

YES. As a professional organisation the wellbeing of your boy is paramount. We have strict Occupational Health and Safety guidelines, qualified First Aid Officers and evacuation procedures in place on all camps. As part of our Child Protection Policy all our facilitators are screened prior to coming on a camp.

Who comes to these camps?

We encourage all families to acknowledge that their boy is becoming a man by bringing him on a Pathways to Manhood camp. Whether your boy is a high achiever, or is experiencing some difficulties, he will equally benefit from attending. Our camp is certainly not *aimed* at boys who are having trouble, but we do not discourage them from attending. Pathways camps are for all boys.

How can I find out more?

Contact the Pathways Foundation National Training Office.
PO Box 416 , Narooma NSW , 2546. Toll free: 1300 850 766. Fax 02 8221 9474.
Email admin@pathwaysfoundation.org.au Website www.pathwaysfoundation.org.au