

Frequently Asked Questions

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, and girl to young woman – a critical period in the life of any teenage child, and to inspire our children 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. The Pathways into Womanhood program has been developed by a group of equally concerned women to meet the needs of our girls and began in November 2006. Our male and female facilitators believe that boys and girls benefit from having a range of adults as role models, confidants, mentors, heroes and friends who will journey with them as they develop their identity and thus grow into balanced and integrated people.

Who are the camps for?

Girls aged 12 to 15, their mother or a significant female mentor, and their father or significant male in their life. However a girl aged 12 must have started menstruating and be in high school to be considered. Also a girl aged 16 will also be considered on an individual basis to assess their suitability for the program.

How much do the camps cost?

The program cost for all PIW programs is \$1,950.00 per mother daughter couples for 2010 programs. This cost covers 5 days of professional facilitation for the residential program, site fees and all meals. Each location provides cabin style accommodation with all amenities. Also, the First Night, Return Day, and Reunion are covered in this cost.

Where & when are camps held?

Pathways into Womanhood camps are held in bush locations in Kangaroo Valley – servicing the Sydney, Canberra South Coast region, Melbourne, Perth and South East Queensland – servicing the NSW North Coast and Southern Queensland. Go to our web site for dates – www.pathwaysfoundation.org.au or ring 1300 850 766 for more information.

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 girl to young woman. Girls have the opportunity to hear the stories of older women and ask questions in a safe sharing environment. They are exposed to challenges that test them physically, mentally, emotionally and on a personal developmental 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 life in today's world.

Are fathers/men involved in the process?

Definitely. Men are an integral part of a girl's life and will continue to be. Pathways honours and values the role of men in young women's lives. Our male facilitators support the fathers and the fathers' participation is an essential part of the overall program. Fathers and/or step fathers/mentors are involved from the First Night through the Leaving, 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 locations that we use that are all set up to run our programs in the best environment possible. Amenities include showers, toilets, cabin or dorm style accommodation and indoor and outdoor program space.

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 into Womanhood camps is that it is a group residential experience.

My daughter's mother can't or won't come – who can support her?

The best person to support a girl on camp is her mother, but we are aware that this is not always an available option. A grandmother, aunt, or other close female family member is ideal, or a female family friend actively involved in your girl's life. If this is not available we can discuss the possibility of a female mentor to attend the camp with your girl.

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Will it matter if my daughter doesn't know any other girls 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 mothers and fathers/accompanying female/mentors attend without their girl. The evening process lays the platform for your girl'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 Return Day is the final day of the camp when young women and mothers/accompanying women return. This is a day of celebration. Families and communities are encouraged to attend, to welcome and honour their returning young women. A Reunion Day is also held at a time after the camp, for young women, mothers/accompanying women, and other family members to reunite with friends made during the camp and tell their stories.

Can I arrive late on the Leaving Day – First day of residential program, 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 girl to become a healthy young woman. 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 girl 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 daughters – 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 girls, allowing them to have their own individual experience with their mother or other significant woman.

We have a blended family – what would you recommend?

Our bottom line is always what's best for the girl. All significant parents, step parents and/or carers should be aware of, and if possible involved in the program. It is not uncommon for step fathers/mothers to participate in the program to support their girl 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 into Womanhood camp?

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

Will my daughter be safe?

YES. As a professional organisation the wellbeing of your girl 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 girl is becoming a young woman by bringing her on a Pathways into Womanhood camp. Whether your girl is a high achiever, or is experiencing some difficulties, she will equally benefit from attending. Our camps are *not* aimed at girls who are having trouble, but we do not discourage them from attending. Pathways camps are for all girls.

How can I find out more?

Contact the Pathways Foundation Bookings for more information on 1300 850 766

Email admin@pathwaysfoundation.com.au or visit our Website www.pathwaysfoundation.org.au