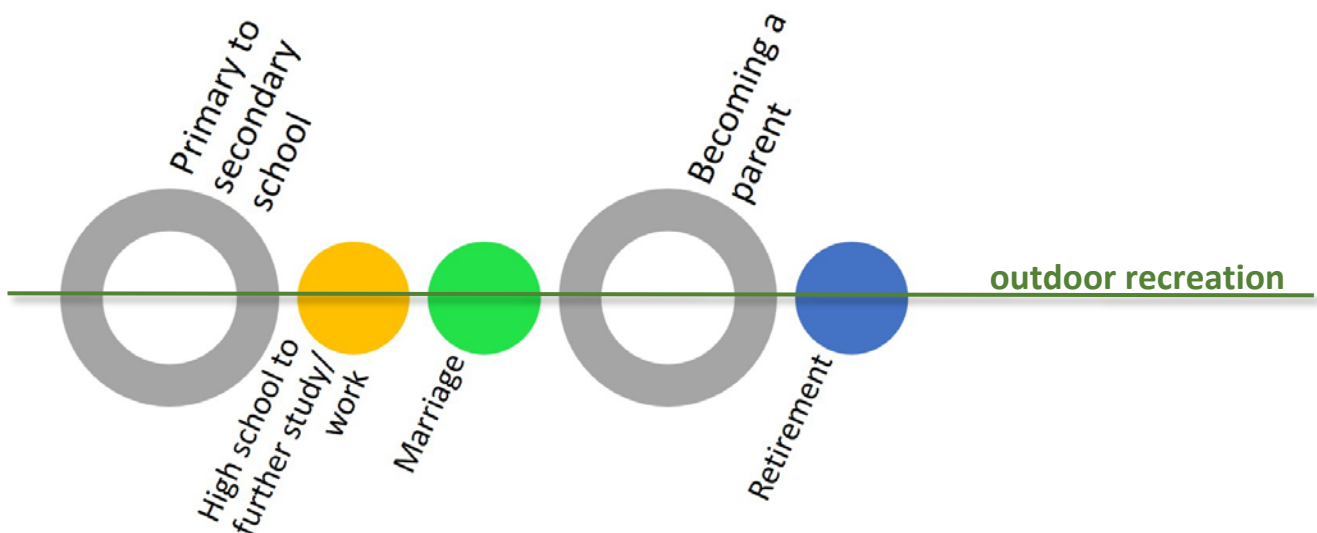




Charlotte Hellings

A compilation of thoughts and ideas generated from the presentations and discussions at the **Outdoors Queensland – Strengthening Connections Symposium** on October 28 at Rydges South Bank in Brisbane.

This was a day of discussion and practical tools focusing the sector to engage people at different stages of their lives to be active participants in outdoor activities and experiences.



Strengthening Connections – the things that bring us together, enable us to work together and keep us together - as individuals, as organisations and as a community of like-minded people.

As individuals, we can:

- Take the outdoors to fellow workers
- Encourage group, social weekend activities e.g. walking, kayaking
- Lead by example – leave the screen, be active, take a risk
- Think outside our own sector
- Encourage others to get outdoors and be more active

As organisations, we can:

- Operate less as silos, and more as teams
- Look for opportunities, and go after them
- Show true leadership
- Share and use information communication technology
- Partner with other organisations and other sectors
- Educate and set standards
- Better engage volunteers

As a sector, we can:

- Talk more often
- Collaborate
- Build relationships
- Establish mentor programs



Cameron Semple

Needs identified during the Symposium

- Program design should take into account the needs of different markets. Minor changes that are well thought out and tailored to a specific market can make big differences in ensuring participants are comfortable and confident.
- We should remember that participation is different for different people. Not everyone will participate every day, but all should be welcomed.
- Operators need to ensure they have the right gear, and enough of it, for our diverse community. Gear must fit correctly, be comfortable, and be relevant to all participants.
- There is a need to empower youth to lead on matters that are important to them. Allowing younger members of the community to take responsibility builds capacity.
- The outdoor community must continue to adapt to suit current and emerging markets – the only constant is change

On 'Selling' the outdoors

- Challenge people through inspiring advertising
- Focus on the benefits of being outdoors
- Give people permission to get outdoors – share the stories (social media)

Benefits of Symposium

- Collaboration with other providers – strengthening connections!
- Connect with others that could help solve my problems/ concerns
- Valuable information sharing
- Identify possible actions to be implemented in the workplace

Key points from the day:

- There is a need to give children opportunities to build mastery and confidence
- Not participating in outdoor activities impacts on the quality of life today and in the future
- People benefit from activity and culture familiarisation in the outdoors – check in with clients/ participants to understand their ability and interest
- Generation Y do things on the go
- 1 in 6 people in the population are currently over the age of 65 and by 2050 26% of the population will be over 65. We need to invite this group to begin, continue or re-establish participation.
- Attitude is never age dependent
- People “make” time for what is important to them
- Social connections are important ‘Create a tribe’ (Naomi Edwards)
- There is capacity within the sector to collaborate and ‘move mountains’

QORF can help to provide:

- Contact details for member organisations, inc social media links – [Member Directory](#) & [Discover](#)
- Links to service providers – [Discover](#)
- Event promotion – [What's On](#)
- Newsletter distribution - [eNewsletters](#)
- Training and career links – [Education & Training](#)



Thanks to all who attended the 2016 **Outdoors Queensland – Strengthening Connections** symposium. The symposium provided a timely reminder of the capacity that exists in the outdoor sector, with people highlighting terrific offerings for our communities.

Please visit Strengthening Connections (http://tiny.cc/strengthening_connections) for copies of presentations, video clips from the Symposium and more. You can contact the QORF office to discuss your ideas or to seek clarification of any of this information.

We would love you to share any success stories that started with an idea at the symposium – you can connect with QORF personally, or through social media.