

## Program Numbers

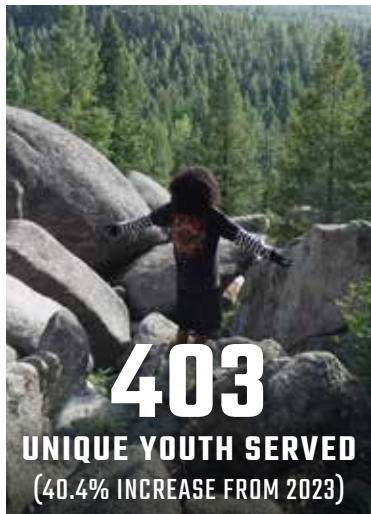
In 2022, BCM emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic with a full season of program activities in each of our regions of service across the country.

In order to increase access to the benefits of immersive time spent in nature, BCM made a strategic pivot to serving youth via a progressive, scaffolded program model. This structure provides more hours in the field per youth by adding both day and overnight experiences in preparation for our signature weeklong backcountry expedition.



# 88 TOTAL TRIPS

INCLUDES 29-DAY TRIPS, 25-OVERNIGHTS, 22-EXPEDITIONS & 12-LEADER FOCUSED TRIPS



# 403

UNIQUE YOUTH SERVED  
(40.4% INCREASE FROM 2023)

**26**  
Youth Agency Partners

**214**  
Program Days Provided

**4562**  
Program Hours

# 1491

YOUTH DAYS  
(54.5% INCREASE FROM 2023)



# 31,474

HOURS YOUTH SPENT IN FIELD  
(38.4% INCREASE FROM 2023)

## Youth Demographics

Youth participants on BCM trips are described as coming from disinvested communities or holding marginalized identities.

What this means in more concrete terms is that:

**88.5%**  
OF BCM YOUTH PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFY AS A PERSON OF COLOR

**68.7%**  
OF BCM YOUTH REPORT RECEIVING FREE OR REDUCED RATE LUNCH AT SCHOOL (AN INDICATOR OF SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS)

**55.2%**  
OF BCM YOUTH IDENTIFY AS FEMALE

**3%**  
IDENTIFY AS NON-BINARY

# Youth Participant Testimonials

What does having a connection with nature mean to you?



**"It means peace, it means reconnecting with myself and all the things that get trapped in my heart or mind as the days pass in my daily life."**



**"It means freedom"**

**"Being outside in nature makes me feel like a little kid again."**



What is something you did that surprised you or made you proud?

**"I learned what coyotes sound like."**

**"Walking 20 miles in a span of 5 days which for some people is not a lot but for me it meant that if I wanted to I could go far."**

**"I was proud of how much paddling I accomplished and of the fish I caught."**



## Adult Participant Reflections

"We saw students build closer connections on this overnight than during a full year of soccer and classes together. Specifically we had a group of 3 boys who had not been close before work together to lead hikes, and teach one another!"

"I felt like the team really bonded through adversity on this trip and I was able to connect with each participant throughout the expedition whether it was teaching skills, helping with chores, assisting on difficult trail sections, providing encouragement or just having conversations about topics the participants are interested in."



# Impact

**2022 was the first year BCM implemented a new methodology for measuring our program's impact, focusing on key index social-emotional dimensions in youth participants: Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, and Sense of Social Belonging.**

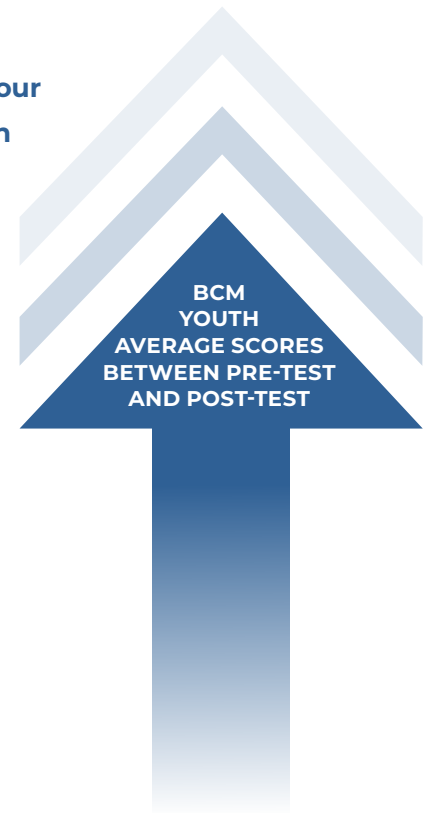
We chose these dimensions because they are well-established as key indicators of wellness in mental and social-emotional health research and correlate highly with success in other important aspects of a young person's life. Additionally, existing instruments of measurement for these dimensions have proven to be valid and reliable for the specific populations BCM serves.

Youth participants are measured in these dimensions before and after their trail experience with BCM. BCM uses pre- and post-scores to measure growth. BCM also compares participants' post-scores with the pre-scores of youth who did not participate in BCM's programming. In these ways, we can ascertain BCM's programming's positive effects on youth social-emotional well-being.

Our programming empowers youth to connect with themselves, their communities, nature, and a sense of joy. To ensure our impact, BCM employs rigorous psychometric tools to measure the strengths youth develop through our programming.

Our work directly impacts these areas and is closely linked to positive academic, career, and life outcomes. This ensures that the skills youth gain on trail with BCM extend to all areas of their lives.

To track progress, participants complete pre- and post-trip self-assessments of their social-emotional well-being. We compare individual growth, as well as post-trip scores against those of peers who didn't participate in our programs.



## Our analysis confirms that BCM programming significantly enhances youth development in key areas

- **GROWTH ACROSS THE BOARD**

Participants consistently improve in self-esteem, self-efficacy, and social belonging from pre- to post-experience.

- **DEEPER ENGAGEMENT, GREATER IMPACT**

Youth who complete the full trip series (day hike, overnight, expedition) show greater gains than those who only participate in parts of the program.

- **DEMONSTRATING HIGHER GAINS**


On average, BCM participants score higher in these dimensions than peers who did not engage in our programs.

- **TRANSFORMING CHALLENGES INTO GROWTH**

Youth with lower pre-trip scores experience the most substantial post-trip gains, demonstrating BCM's effectiveness for those facing greater social-emotional challenges.

**In short, BCM's programs powerfully foster social-emotional growth, creating positive ripple effects that extend far beyond the trail.**

The data below illustrate the most notable positive impacts that BCM’s outdoor programming had on youth participants this year. It is encouraging to see that participants with the lowest initial scores in all three categories experienced the most significant gains through their participation with BCM. Repeat exposure to BCM programs also enhanced overall positive impacts, demonstrating BCM’s effectiveness in fostering inclusion and support for youth from marginalized communities.

 <p><b>Self Esteem</b></p> <p>Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (RSE)</p>	 <p><b>Self-Efficacy</b></p> <p>New General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE)</p>	 <p><b>Sense of Social Belonging</b></p> <p>Sense of Social Fit Scale (SSFS)</p>
<p>BCM youth who completed expeditions saw self-esteem scores increase <b>3.5% – 2.04x</b> higher than youth who only did the day hike or overnight</p> <p>BCM youth whose pre-scores for self-esteem were below the median saw improvements of <b>3.7% – 2.12x</b> higher than youth who only did the day hike or overnight</p> <p>BCM youth who completed expeditions’ self esteem scores were <b>4.2%</b> higher than their peers who did not participate in BCM’s programming</p> <p>Youth who identify as Latinae, Native American showed the most significant increases in self-esteem</p>	<p>BCM youth who completed expeditions saw self-efficacy scores increase <b>3.7% – 9x</b> higher than youth who did only the day hike or overnight</p> <p>BCM youth whose pre-scores for self-efficacy were below the median saw improvements of <b>8.5% – 2.36x</b> higher than youth who only did the day hike or overnight</p> <p>BCM youth who completed expeditions’ self-efficacy scores were <b>6.6%</b> higher than their peers who did not participate in BCM’s programming</p> <p>Youth who identify as nonbinary, more than one Ethnicity showed the most significant increases in self-efficacy</p>	<p>BCM youth who completed expeditions saw belonging scores increase <b>2.9% – 3.25x</b> higher than youth who did only the day hike or overnight.</p> <p>BCM youth whose pre-scores for belonging were below the median saw improvements of <b>6.8% – 6.5x</b> higher than youth who only did the day hike or overnight</p> <p>BCM youth who completed expeditions’ belonging scores were <b>3.7%</b> higher than their peers who did not participate in BCM’s programming</p> <p>Youth who identify as nonbinary, Native American, and Asian/Pacific Islander, and whose families experience socioeconomic hardship (measured by qualify for Free-Reduced Lunch) showed the most significant gains in sense of social belonging.</p>

Big City Mountaineers’ work is made possible, in part, thanks to generous funding and support from various foundations, corporate sponsors, and private parties who share in our mission to provide transformative experiences in nature to disinvested youth.

You can find more details about BCM and our impact at [bigcitymountaineers.org/impact](https://www.bigcitymountaineers.org/impact)  
<https://www.bigcitymountaineers.org/programs/outcomes-and-measurement>