

Media Release

The Hon Ros Spence MP
Minister for Multicultural Affairs
Minister for Community Sport
Minister for Youth



Wednesday, 7 October 2020

YMCA TO CONTINUE VICTORIAN OUTDOOR CAMPS PARTNERSHIP

Victorians of all ages and backgrounds can continue to experience the great outdoors with the YMCA to manage the Victorian Government's five residential camps across Victoria.

Minister for Community Sport Ros Spence today announced the YMCA had secured a 20-year lease to continue to manage the award-winning camps at Mt Evelyn, Mt Eliza, Rowsley via Bacchus Marsh, Falls Creek and Anglesea.

For the last 15 years the partnership between the YMCA and the Government has delivered a range of innovative programs aimed at helping Victorians of all backgrounds and age groups experience the best of the great outdoors.

The popular Kids' Adventure Outdoors (KAOS) camps and activities days are staged throughout the camps and state and continue to introduce thousands of families and young kids with the opportunity to rediscover the outdoors.

The camps have also provided the setting for innovative nature-based activities, therapies and healing including a recent pilot program assisting young Aboriginal people living in out-of-home care to reconnect with culture through sport and improve their long-term health and wellbeing.

Since 2005, more than 1 million Victorians visited the camps and participated in a wide range of healthy and active outdoor programs. These camps contribute more than \$15 million to the economy and support close to 400 jobs.

The YMCA has also helped establish Australia's first ever fully accessible adventure high ropes course for people of all ages and abilities at Camp Manyung in Mt Eliza which won a prestigious Golden Award in the Tourism/Inclusive Culture/Mobility Category of the 2016 International Association for Universal Design Awards.

The new partnership will ensure Victoria's camps continue to provide an opportunity for even more Victorians to tap into the health, social, educational, therapeutic, economic and employment benefits of active participation in the great outdoors.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Community Sport Ros Spence

"Our camps are inspiring more young people to embrace a healthier and active lifestyle, get connected with nature and importantly, have fun."

"We're proud that the YMCA will continue to lead these important programs and we look forward to more innovative outdoor programs and initiatives leading to more healthy outcomes for Victorians."

Quote attributable to YMCA Victoria chief executive Carolyn Morris

"We're extremely pleased to continue our partnership with the Victorian Government. We look forward to further developing activities that enhance people's quality of life through being active and getting outdoors."