



Ocean Heroes Social Impact Report

The Wellbeing of Children
on the Autism Spectrum & Their
Immediate Support Network

April 2020

Prepared by



HUBER
SOCIAL





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Improving the Wellbeing of Families Impacted by Autism Spectrum Disorder

All children deserve the opportunity to learn social skills, bond with others, and figure out what works for them.

Kids growing up with autism face unique challenges that can make it difficult for them to develop self-confidence and make friends. Learning to surf offers a fun, healthy way for children to develop that confidence, boost their mood and make connections with others. Ocean Heroes provide an opportunity for children on the autism spectrum to take part in organised sport backed by a highly supported, safe and inclusive environment. By running events and one-on-one surfing lessons, the organisation offers every kid the chance to experience the thrill of riding a wave.

As Ocean Heroes continues to expand its programs and locations, a data driven approach to measuring social impact is key to ensuring limited resources are directed to have the greatest impact on families affected by Autism Spectrum Disorder.

This Social Impact Report outlines the findings and insights from research conducted in February and March 2020. The social impact measurement included data collected from Ocean Heroes first event at URBNSURF in Melbourne, as well as a monthly event held in Perth, Western Australia. This report considers the impact of Ocean Heroes from the perspective of children participating in events (as assessed by their parent or guardian), and their immediate support network, referred to as 'parents and guardians'.



Surfing builds confidence in a fun, safe environment.



Why Measure Social Impact?

We measure the social impact of Ocean Heroes to both prove their social impact, and to be able to inform how delivery may be improved.

1. Prove

To measure the impact of Ocean Heroes, Huber Social measures the shift in overall Wellbeing and outcomes achieved for (1) the children participating in Ocean Heroes events, as well as (2) their parents or guardians.

Measurement provides a data-driven approach for Ocean Heroes to articulate their approach to social impact.

2. Improve

The measurement framework provides a holistic profile of the needs for both the children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their parents and guardians. This informs program improvements and facilitates effective collaboration. Statistical analysis identifies priority needs to inform where resources should be directed to have the greatest impact.





MISSION

**Ocean Heroes
help children on the
autistic spectrum
build confidence
through surfing.**





'Surfing the Spectrum'

Program Summary

Ocean Heroes offers children on the autistic spectrum the chance to experience surfing in a safe and fun environment. Families can decide between a group event or an individual surf lesson.

While surfing is the main event for the Ocean Heroes programs, it is the host of dedicated, enthusiastic volunteers that leave the children smiling ear to ear. Volunteers work both in the water and on the beach ensuring that families are supported from sign in to the final wave. All volunteers are provided with a briefing ahead of an event and volunteers always work in pairs to ensure children have all the support they need.

The passion, empathy and professionalism provide children with the confidence to try something new, and family members with peace of mind and the joy of seeing their children let go and have fun.



Public Events

Ocean Heroes offers free public events across Western Australia, Victoria and New South Wales. Every child has access to a 30 minute session, sharing time in the water with a group of other children and volunteer surf instructors.

Children are provided with wetsuits and life jackets, along with boards making it extremely easy to jump in and try surfing for the first time.



Private Lessons

Families also have the option to choose a private, 60 minute individual lessons. Children have the undivided attention of a trained surf instructor, but share the water with other ocean goers and on occasion a friend who is also enjoying a private lesson with Ocean Heros. While lessons do have a fee, NDIS funding or other financial support may be available to ensure lessons are accessible to a range of families.

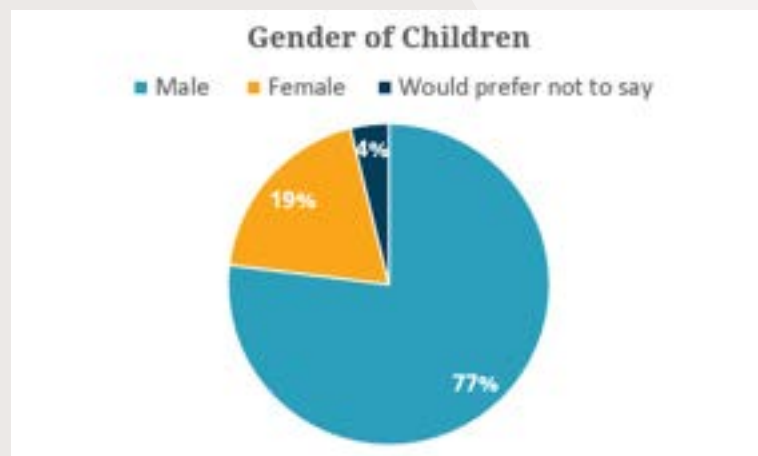


Demographics of the Children Attending Ocean Heroes Events

Included in this sample are the parent and guardian observations on 78 individual children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Gender

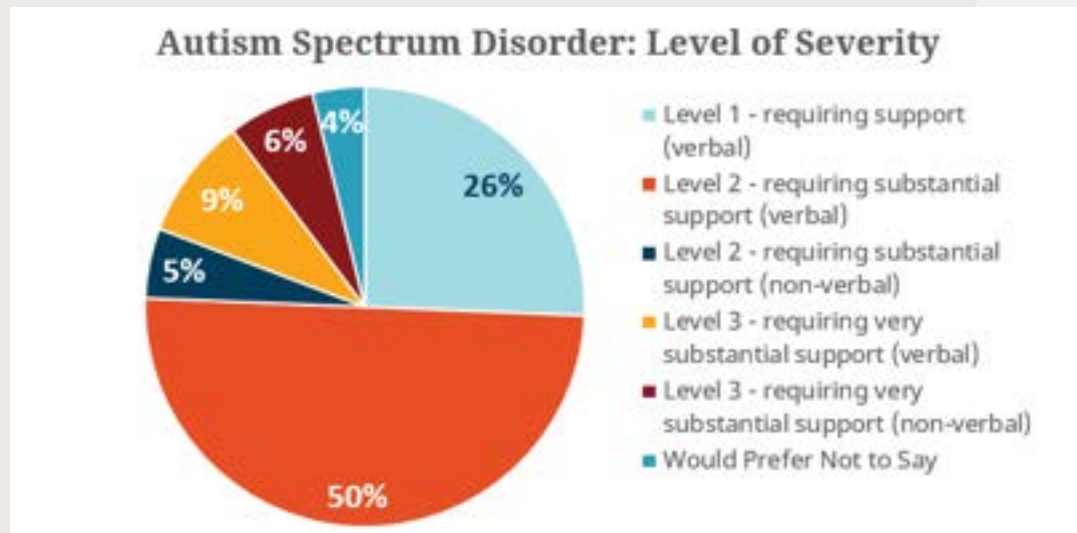
Approximately 20% were female, with the remainder male or not specified. This is representative of the gender split between male and females in Autism Spectrum Disorder diagnosis for children (1).



Severity of Autism Spectrum Disorder

Over 70% of children were diagnosed with a level 2 or 3, meaning they required substantial or very substantial support.

12% of the group were non-verbal.



(1) Males are 4 times as likely as females to have autism. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2017. Autism in Australia. Cat. no. WEB 187. Canberra: AIHW. Viewed 29 April 2020, <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/autism-in-australia>.



Ocean Heroes Social Impact Model

The Ocean Heroes Social Impact Model outlines how the organisation impacts those who participate in their programs. Through measuring each level of impact, Ocean Heroes can use a data driven approach to demonstrate what works and what is needed to maximise impact and outcomes. The following model considers outcomes for children participating in Ocean Heroes events and lessons, along with their immediate support network (Parents & Guardians)

1. Impact

Ocean Heroes enhances the lives of kids with autism, and their immediate support network, through surfing.



2. Outcomes for Children

Ocean Heroes achieves this impact by targeting outcomes across:

- Positive behaviour change
- Self-belief and confidence
- Community connection
- Relationship skills
- Passion and enjoyment
- Mental health
- Physical ability
- Personal development

Outcomes for Parents & Guardians

Ocean Heroes achieves this impact by targeting outcomes across:

- Community connection
- Personal relationships
- Enjoyment
- Mental health
- Hope
- Parenting stress
- Awareness of child's potential



3. Outputs

Ocean Heroes delivers the following outputs:

- Kids participating in surf events
- Kids attending ongoing surf lessons
- Parents in the active community
- Volunteers in the active community



4. Activities

Ocean Heroes runs the following activities:

- Half-day surfing events
- One-on-one surfing lessons
- School holiday surfing programs
- Education around ocean safety
- Photography and videography of event participants
- Managing an active volunteer community



5. Resources

The above impact requires the following inputs:

- Staff and surf instructors (paid and volunteers)
- Funding
- Surfing & event equipment
- Beach or wave park location



Key Findings: The Impact of Ocean Heroes

1. Improves Overall Wellbeing

Ocean Heroes creates a positive shift in overall Wellbeing for Children (as observed by their Parents and Guardians) and an overall increase in Wellbeing for Parents and Guardians themselves.

2. Wellbeing Increases with Number of Events

Wellbeing is shown to increase with the number of events a child attends. In addition, outcomes achieved in the short term post an event require more frequent exposure to surfing and events to be sustained in the long-term.

3. Achieves Target Outcomes

To contribute to an overall positive shift in Wellbeing, Ocean Heroes achieves a range of outcomes for Children as well as their Parents and Guardians.

Key Outcomes for **Children**:

- self belief
- passion
- physical fitness
- positive relationships
- personal development
- social development

Key Outcomes for **Parents and Guardians**:

- positive relationships
- community connection
- child's behaviour changes
- mental wellness
- hope

4. Addresses Priority Needs

Ocean Heroes is effective at addressing needs that have a significant relationship with overall Wellbeing.

5. Challenges that Remain

Despite positive outcomes achieved, following an event, children and their families still face challenges.



The Impact of Ocean Heroes

Ocean Heroes Improves the Wellbeing of Children and their Parents and Guardians

Children	Parents and Guardians
+3%	+2%

To measure overall Wellbeing, parents and guardians were asked about their own satisfaction with life*, as well as an assessment of their child's satisfaction with life.

The 'shift' is based on those that have participated in Ocean Heroes events compared with those that have not.

**Satisfaction With Life Scale (SWLS), Ed Diener, Robert A. Emmons, Randy J. Larsen and Sharon Griffin as noted in the 1985 article in the Journal of Personality assessment.*

Wellbeing Increases With Number of Events

Wellbeing was observed to increase with the number of events a child participates in.

Participation in two or three group surfing lessons was significantly related to higher Wellbeing, compared to participation in no group events (coefficient = 0.6117, p value = 0.002)[^], leading to the conclusion that the more events a child participates in, the greater their Wellbeing. Acknowledging of course, that these results are based on the parent and guardian's assessments of the child's Wellbeing.

[^] This is considered a medium to large effect size in significance.





Ocean Heroes Outcomes for Children

To understand Ocean Heroes's specific program outcomes for the children, Huber Social measured the impact across a range of different capabilities and opportunities.

To measure the impact, parents and guardians were asked to make an assessment on their child's level of capability and access to opportunity, to see how children were affected in different areas. The percentages below represent the largest positive shifts that parents and guardians observed in children who have participated in an Ocean Heroes public event.



Positive Relationships

+15%

Provides access to people outside of their family who encourage and celebrate them.



Personal Development

+11%

Challenges the children outside of their comfort zone.



Self Belief & Confidence

+9%

Children have pride in things they have accomplished.



Positive Relationships

+6%

Children have the opportunity to make new friends.



Physical Fitness

+5%

Improvement in physical fitness.



Passion & Enjoyment

+5%

Children have things they are passionate about.

Data includes:

- 30 Baseline responses (have not yet participated in an event)
- 57 Shift responses (participated in 1 or more Ocean Heroes events)

Responses were from across Victoria and Western Australia.



Ocean Heroes Outcomes for Parents & Guardians

While Ocean Heroes events focus on the children, the impact extends to their parents and guardians. To understand specific program outcomes for parents and guardians, Huber Social measured the impact of Ocean Heroes across a range of capabilities and opportunities. The percentages below represent the largest positive shifts that parents and guardians experienced.



Positive Relationships

+20%

Feeling valued and appreciated as a parent.



Community Connection

+17%

Belonging to a community.



Behavioural Challenges

+16%

Improvement in child's behaviour.*



Mental Wellness

+13%

Reduction in feelings of guilt and shame.



Hope

+13%

Increase in feeling optimistic about their child's future.*



Mental Wellness

+13%

Reduced feelings of anger.*

Data includes:

- 30 Baseline responses (have not yet participated in an event)
- 57 Shift responses (participated in 1 or more Ocean Heroes events)

Responses were from across Victoria and Western Australia.

* Indicates this factor is also a priority need (i.e. a predictor of high Wellbeing). See pages 12 and 14 for more information.



Outcomes for the Ocean Heroes Event at URBNSURF

At the beginning of March 2020, Ocean Heroes ran their first event at URBNSURF, Melbourne. URBNSURF is Australia's first surf park and provided consistent waves all day in a safe and controlled environment.

To measure the outcomes of the event, Huber Social asked parents and guardians how their children and they themselves were across a range of capabilities and opportunities. Surveys were completed one week before and after the event. The percentages below represent the areas with the highest shifts.

Outcomes Observed in Children

Self Belief +23% Pride in their achievements	Behaviour +21% Being able to focus on school work	Mental Wellness +17% Decrease in feeling anxious	Self Development +10% Decrease in being afraid of new experiences.	Mental Wellness +8% Decrease in feelings of sadness
------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------

Outcomes Experienced by Parents and Guardians

Self Care +32% Having the time and energy to take care of themselves	Relationships +25% Getting to spend quality time with friends	Connection +23% Feeling part of a community	Mental Wellness +20% Decrease in feeling lonely
Relationships +16% Being able to build and maintain healthy relationships	Relationships +15% Having people to help and support them	Relationships +15% Opportunity to meet like-minded people	

Data includes:

- 21 Baseline responses before the event
- 16 Shift responses after the event



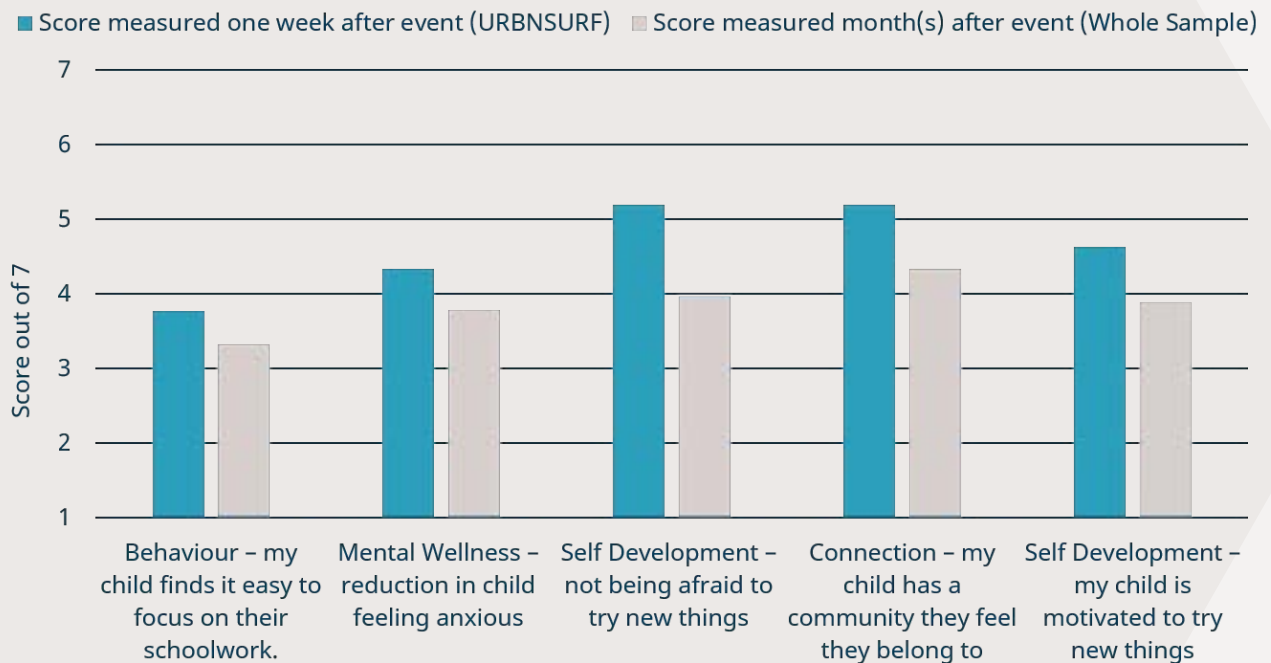


Short Lived Outcomes Require More Frequent Events

Measuring just after an event, compared to measuring those that had participated in an event months before, showed that many of the positive outcomes achieve immediately after an event start to decline over time. For children and their parents/guardians to experience sustained benefits, they need consistent access to events.

Outcomes that appear to be more short term include:

Outcomes Over Time



Increasing the number of Ocean Heroes events a child attends would increase their overall Wellbeing and key outcomes would be experienced on a more frequent to ongoing basis.





Ocean Heroes addresses the **Priority Needs for Children On the Autistic Spectrum**

In order to inform how to best support families impacted by Autism Spectrum Disorder, analysis was performed to understand the priority needs for children's Wellbeing (based on their parent or guardian's assessments). To deliver these findings, a range of statistical tests were performed to identify if any factors had a unique and significant relationship with overall Wellbeing.

Statistical analysis identified that, where parents and guardians assessed their children's Wellbeing as higher, they also assessed their children higher across the following factors. Ocean Heroes has been measured to effectively address these needs, as explained below.



Feeling Calm

Mental Wellness - Feeling relaxed and calm.

In the immediate to short-term following events, Parents and Guardians report their children are more relaxed and calm, which supports a case for Ocean Heroes to be able to offer more events.



Having Fun

Mental Wellness - Enjoying life and having fun.

This factor was among the highest scores following an event. In addition, results across the whole sample delivered a +5% shift in passion and enjoyment and frequency of happiness was also among the highest scores.



Self Esteem

Positive self esteem - Liking themselves.

This factor rated highly across the whole sample. Additionally, one of the biggest shifts seen within a week after the URBNSURF event was parents and guardians observing their child being proud of their accomplishments.



Hope

Hope - Having things to hope for.

Results across the whole sample (comparing those who had and had not yet attended an event) placed this factor among the highest scoring factors.

Predictors of Wellbeing: Factors found to have a significant relationship with overall Wellbeing in order of statistical significance.

FACTORS	Coefficient	P-Value
• Behaviour - in the past week my child has been calm and relaxed	0.4467	P < 0.001
• Autism level (Level 3)	0.4354	P < 0.001
• Parent/Guardian's Age (child's wellbeing reported as higher in older parents)	0.3448	P < 0.001
• Having fun - my child enjoys life and has fun	0.3389	P = 0.001
• Self esteem - my child likes who they are as a person	0.304	P < 0.001
• Hope - my child has things to hope for	0.1933	P < 0.001
• Challenge - my child is challenged by things outside of their comfort zone	-0.2209	P < 0.001
• Employment - parent/guardian has full time work	-0.2321	P < 0.001
• Wellbeing of Parent/Guardian	0.0009	P < 0.001

This statistical analysis was conducted using all responses collected (whether or not they had participated in an event).

Please see the Transparency Page for more information on the treatment of data throughout the data lifecycle.

"He becomes a child who has no limits, he can do anything he sets his mind to"

"Ocean Heroes and the legends that are the surfers is the absolute best thing I could ever do for my son.

I never see him happiest until we go surfing and he's in the water. It makes you want to cry every time, and if he didn't have to go to school he'd be there every single day and he'd be the happiest kid ever.

He becomes a child who has no limits, he can do anything he sets his mind to and if you could ask him what he wants to be when he grows up, he'd probably say surfing.

I hope he never loses the excitement, enthusiasm and acceptance that he gets from doing 1-on-1 surfing with these guys."

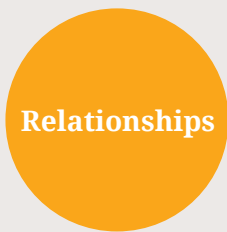
Mother of 11 year-old, Perth



Ocean Heroes addresses Priority Needs for Parents and Guardians

For parents and guardians, higher Wellbeing was found to relate to many high scoring factors that Ocean Heroes contribute to. Statistical analysis revealed the following factors have a significant relationship with Wellbeing.

The following areas all had significant relationship with Wellbeing and were also amongst the highest scores for Parents and Guardians following an event.



Relationships

Being able to build and maintain healthy relationships (6% increase overall and 16% increase for the URBNSURF event), the opportunity to meet like minded people (15% increase URBNSURF) and getting to spend quality time with their partner.



Child's Behaviour

Having fewer behavioural challenges from their child.
A 16% shift in parents and guardians noticing fewer behavioural challenges in children following an event.



Emotions

Enjoying life and having fun and lower frequency of anger.
There was a 13% decrease in feelings of anger across whole sample.



Hope

Having hope for their child's future.
Across the whole sample, there was a 13% increase in feeling optimistic about their child's future.

Predictors of Wellbeing: Factors found to have a significant relationship with overall Wellbeing in order of statistical significance.

FACTORS	Coefficient	P-Value
• Age - Being born after the 1990s	1.0652	P < 0.001
• Relationship Status - Being married or having a long-term partner	0.8757	P = 0.001
• Fun - Enjoying life and having fun	0.51111	P < 0.001
• Relationships - being able to build and maintain healthy relationships**	0.2584	P < 0.001
• Child's Behaviour - having fewer behavioural challenges from their child*	0.2037	P = 0.001
• Emotions - Less frequency of feeling angry*	0.151	P < 0.001
• Child's Age - those with older children had higher Wellbeing	0.061	P < 0.001
• Hope - hope for the child's future*	-0.1468	P = 0.001
• Relationships - the opportunity to meet like-minded people**	-0.2114	P = 0.001
• Relationships - getting to spend quality time with their partner	-0.5041	P = 0.001

*Factors that scored amongst the highest shifts for Parents and Guardians across the whole sample.

**Factors that scored highest amongst the highest shifts for Parents and Guardians related to the URBNSURF event.

Ocean Heroes has had a large impact for me socially, even the best of friends and family don't get 'it'. And it becomes a topic we avoid.

My two best friends are now special needs mums who I get to spend time with at Ocean Heroes.

Mother of 10 year-old, Perth



Challenges that Remain

Despite the Outcomes achieved by Ocean Heroes events, children and their families who attend face ongoing challenges.

Whether one week or a few months after an event, children and their families face a consistent set of challenges. These challenges have been identified by assessing the lowest scoring factors at the 'shift' measurements, for the whole sample and just for the families who attended the URBNSURF event. Across both data sets, the following factors consistently appeared in the lowest scoring factors:

Observed in Children



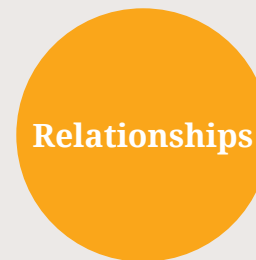
Behaviour

Finding it easy to focus on their schoolwork.



Personal Development

When they experience a setback in learning a new skill or activity, they are determined to keep trying.



Relationships

Being able to make new friends.

Experienced by Parent or Guardian



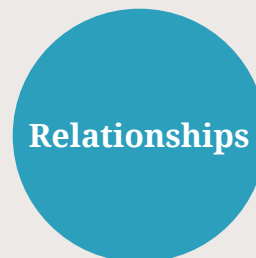
Hope

Being afraid of what the future holds for their child.



Mental Wellness

Feeling guilty or ashamed.




Relationships

Spending quality time with a partner or spouse.



Mental Wellness

Feeling worried.



Ocean Heroes gives her faith in her ability.

She knows she's out of place, highly aware that she struggles. She can feel really frustrated and failure is hard.

Ocean Heroes gives her faith in her ability. Confidence that she can feel herself progress. The one-on-one lessons allows her to work towards a goal and learn to persevere.

Afterwards she is relaxed, positive, regulated and feeling good.

The positive way Ocean Heroes operates gives us hope, supports our wellbeing and aligns with our family's values and goals.

Mother of 10 year-old, Western Australia



Ocean Heroes Reach

Number of Events: 41

**Number Families that have
Participated: 3,207**

Number of Years: 5

Locations:

PERTH

- Leighton Beach
- Trigg Beach
- Scarborough Beach
- Brighton Beach

REGIONAL WA

- Geraldton
- Denmark
- Esperance (TBD)
- Broome (TBD)

VIC

- Anglesea
- Tullamarine
(URBNSURF)

NSW

- Bondi Beach





The Measurement Activities

To measure the impact of Ocean Heroes lessons and events, Huber Social measured the shift in the Wellbeing (Impact) and shift in levels of capability and access to opportunities (Outcomes) for both the children and their parents/guardians.

Data was collected primarily through the use of surveys. However, given the young age and development challenges of the children participating in Ocean Heroes events, it was not appropriate to ask children to complete a survey. Data was instead collected by asking for the parents and guardians observations of their children. The survey was made up of two parts:

1. Parent observations and assessments of the children pre and post events/lessons
2. Parent self-assessment of their own Wellbeing and situation

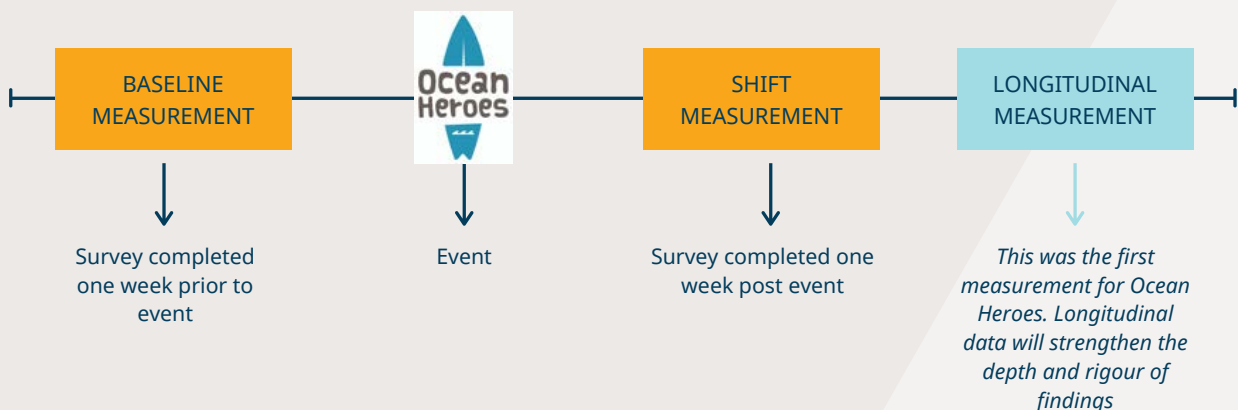
Importantly, parents were not asked to answer on behalf of the children, but rather to make a assessment on their child's behaviour and overall Wellbeing.

The intention had been to survey around several events and private lessons. However, unfortunately events had to be cancelled due to COVID-19. Therefore, the data set is made up of (1) pre/post surveys from the Melbourne Ocean Heroes Event at URBNSURF, as well as baseline surveys from people in WA waiting for an event (including some that had attended events in the past). Most of the analysis is done on the full data set comparing families that have never attended an event with those that have. However, to investigate short term impacts, the URBNSURF data set was also isolated.

In addition to surveys, parents and guardians were also asked over the phone for testimonials of their experience and their observations on the impact it has for their children.

For further information on the Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework see page 21.

Ocean Heroes Measurement Plan





Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement

To be able to fulfill their potential and achieve Wellbeing, each individual needs to have the capability and the opportunity to do so. Everyone has different needs within these categories depending on their context.

When it comes to measuring the social impact of a service, Huber Social measures the 'shift' the service creates in terms of Wellbeing and the specific programs outcomes achieved to create this. Results are then consolidated at a sector, community and global level.

Longitudinal measurement monitors effectiveness of programs to meet these needs; ensuring resources are directed to have the greatest impact. The vision is a Wellbeing measurement system that delivers us the whole picture, to put each of us in the best position to achieve Wellbeing and leave no one behind.

The goal for each of us is the same; Wellbeing. The part that differs, are our individual needs.

The Huber Social Wellbeing Measurement Framework

IMPACT

Wellbeing

To be in the best position to fulfil your potential and live a life of value. The overall goal for all services working with people.

OUTCOMES

Through building

Capability

- Resilience
- Life skills
- Wellness - mental, physical and spiritual

OUTCOMES

and providing

Opportunity

- Resources
 - Self development
 - Societal structures
 - Relationships
-



Help Share the Thrill and Wonder of Surfing

DONATE

Instead of just giving money and hoping it has the impact the organisation pledges, donating to Ocean Heroes means you can have data driven confidence that your dollar is being directed to have the greatest impact.

VOLUNTEER

Ocean Heroes is always on the look out for enthusiastic volunteers! As a volunteer, you have the option of helping out on the beach (registrations, donning wetsuits and lifejackets, handing out certificates etc.) or in the water (surfing with participants, shakas and high fives).

SPONSOR

Whether you would like to discuss an on-going sponsorship or run a one-off event with Ocean Heroes, they would love to hear from you.





Get in Touch



Ocean Heroes

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HUBER
SOCIAL

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Data Transparency Page

To ensure the integrity of findings always, Huber Social includes a Transparency Page for every project. This ensures both the rigour of evidence and rigour of analysis is clear for each project, across every stage of the data lifecycle.



Phase	Questions on the Treatment of the Data	Points allocated	Yes or No	
Design	SAMPLE	Everyone in the program included in the measurement	2	-
		OR Survey sample population designed to be representative of group	1	1
		Sample description: <i>87 surveys completed from across Victoria and Western Australia.</i>	N/A	N/A
	BASELINE	Control group (independent of the intervention)	3	-
		Group baseline measured (pre-intervention)	2	2
		Baseline inferred from time in program (e.g. 1 vs. 3 years)	1	-
EXCLUSIONS	Details of people specifically excluded from the measurement: <i>No one specifically excluded. Survey sent to all participants registered for an event in March 2020, opportunity also opened to the Facebook community for one week.</i>	N/A	N/A	
Data Collection	DISTRIBUTION	Online surveys		Y
		OR hardcopy surveys		-
		Data collection supervised by Huber Social consultant	1	1
	DATA SOURCES	Translation or guidance provided	N/A	N/A
		Data Mining of other sources	1	-
		Data included from previous years/measurements	1	-
Cleaning	CLEANING	Partial responses removed or no partial responses	1	1
		Details of any responses removed: <i>Responses removed if surveys incomplete. Partial responses, where a full response to either the wellbeing of a child or parent was complete were included in the dataset.</i>	N/A	N/A
Analysis	SHIFT MEASUREMENT	Calculated on time in program		-
		Calculated on group average	1	1
		Calculated based on individual scores	2	-
	TEST APPLIED	Basic analysis		Y
		Statistical Correlation Test	2	-
Reporting	REPORTING	Multiple Regression or Lasso Regression Test	3	3
		Client published Outcomes Report (prove)	1	-
		Client received Social Performance Report (improve)	2	-
		Client published full Social Impact Report	3	3
RIGUOUR SCORE: LOW: 1-9; MED 10-14; HIGH 15-19		MED	12	

