

Sail Training changes lives

Young people today lack the skills to succeed in life. Schools and governments have been concentrating on academic achievement and have neglected the wider personal development needed to lead happy, fulfilled lives. Policy makers are now recognizing that character traits such as resilience, self-regulation, and emotional and social skills help children and young people to be happier and healthier ¹. In addition, employers cite that skills lacking in the labour market include communication, self-management, teamwork and drive ².

Sail Training is a powerful and positive way of building resilience and self-confidence. The experience of a Sail Training adventure, with its intense teamwork and feeling of working together to tame the natural elements, brings a sense of pride and achievement. This has been shown to directly build resilience and self-confidence and give trainees the skills to go on to lead better lives.

Sailing as part of the crew on a large offshore sailing vessel takes young people out of their comfort zone. They need to live and work together in a completely new environment and get involved in all aspects of running the boat:

- 66 % of Trainees feel trusted with tasks with real consequences
- 67 % learn to follow a routine
- 65 % do things even though they are difficult
- 55 % are surprised at what they achieved

The benefits of Sail Training have been proven. ASTO has shown that the activities on board lead to positive changes for young people:

- A 29 % average increase in self confidence
- A 47 % average increase in resilience
- A 45 % average increase in feeling in control
- A 55 % average increase in doing things on time
- A 23 % average increase in getting on with people

ASTO also surveyed those sending young people Sail Training: 84 % of teachers and youth workers thought the young people gained a sense of achievement, 71 % reported raised aspirations and 67% reported improved wellbeing and confidence. 70% of group leaders felt the experience was better than other similar residential visits.

Our research shows that Sail Training is a powerful and exciting way to show young people what they are capable of, raise their aspirations and self-perception, and realise the value of being part of something. Testimonials from past trainees show that this impact can last a lifetime.

Sail Training voyages are available all around the UK, from 30 providers who are all members of ASTO/UK Sail Training. Voyages are usually 4 to 6 days long but can include day sails. Voyages can be tailored to the level of challenge your group needs, from gentle coastal sails to challenging overnight channel crossings. Vessels accommodate groups from 5 to 15 young people and can include those with learning or physical disabilities. Further details and how to book are on www.uksailtraining.org

UK Sail Training – life changing adventures

¹ 'Developing Character Skills in Schools', NatCen Social Research and National Children's Bureau, 2017

² 'Joint Dialogue: how are schools developing real employability skills' Education and Employers, Edge Foundation and National Education Union, 2019