

Green Gym

More Information

<p>What :</p>	<p>What is the Green Gym?</p> <p>Green Gym is a program that engages people in practical conservation activities resulting in benefits to a participant's health and well being as well as benefiting the environment.</p> <p>A Green Gym is a place where you can have fun outdoors, meet new people and help your local environment. At a Green Gym you can be involved in a range of enjoyable practical conservation activities as a form of healthy exercise. Green Gym is offered as an alternative to traditional fitness and competitive sporting options. Currently, there are Green Gym programs being undertaken in both Victoria and in New South Wales.</p> <p>The Green Gym involves small teams of up to 10 participants in a range of conservation and gardening activities that will require low to medium levels of physical effort. Typical activities will include: gardening, tree planting, weeding, track and trail maintenance and flora and fauna surveys.</p> <p>Participants are asked to commit for a period of 12 weeks for two, four hour sessions a week to gain a considerable health advantage.</p> <p>Participants complete an initial 'Health Self-Assessment'. This will be followed up with a re-assessment on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Following the completion the initial 12 week program, Green Gym participants are encouraged to continue their involvement through a tailored program of environment or heritage based activities with Conservation Volunteers Australia.</p> <p>The Victorian Green Gym program is being managed by Conservation Volunteers Australia supported by the Victorian State Government, through the Go for Your Life program. The New South Wales Green Gym program is being supported by the Australian Government.</p>
<p>Who :</p>	<p>Who can join?</p> <p>Everyone is welcome to join - although the program is focused at adults aged from 30 to 70 who would benefit from increased physical activity. Participation is free.</p> <p>The conservation activities may encompass a range of fitness levels with no previous experience or skills in conservation being required. Green Gym offers a very positive alternative to traditional organised sport and exercise.</p>
<p>Where :</p>	<p>Where are Green Gym activities held?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballarat • Bendigo • Melbourne • Port Macquarie • Sydney
<p>When :</p>	<p>What are the dates and times?</p> <p>Green Gym projects take place most days of week with the activity being available in the morning or the afternoon.</p>
<p>What do I need to bring?</p>	<p>What do I need to bring?</p> <p>Long pants, a long sleeved shirt, boots or runners, a hat/beanie, water bottle, lunch</p>

Health :	<p>What are the health benefits offered by Green Gym?</p> <p>Significant research from both Australia and overseas demonstrates that regular participation in practical conservation and gardening type activities has similar physical health benefits as walking or other exercise.</p> <p>Self-monitoring health surveys are provided to participants to measure health benefits including physical and mental well being, as well as social connectivity.</p> <p>The aim of Green Gym is to build up the awareness, confidence and capacity of participants to continue to undertake regular physical activity beyond the life of the program.</p> <p>Independent evaluation of Green Gym is embedded into the program and this will include evaluation of participation rates, retention rates and changes to participant's health and well being.</p>
Why :	<p>What is the international evidence for the benefits of Green Gym?</p> <p>Green Gym was developed and first implemented in the UK, and has been independently evaluated by the Oxford Centre for Health Care Research and Development at Oxford Brookes University.</p> <p>The study used a longitudinal evaluation of the psychological, social and physiological impact of the Green Gym over a period of six months. Results included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a significant improvement in the Mental Health Component Score. • Participants showed significant increases in fitness and improved muscular strength. • Waist-to-hip ratio decreased and there was also a trend towards weight loss. • Major motivating factors for participation and adherence to the project included the environmental and social aspects of the program. <p>Evaluation also found that the benefits of the Green Gym included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased opportunities to participate in managed conservation activities – projects designed to attract those not currently engaged in physical activity. • Increased range of activities that enable participants to exercise at a level that suits individual capabilities, and allow participants to gradually build up their exercise levels. • Increased motivation and ease for participants of being part of a structured physical activity program. • Improved cardiovascular fitness, coordination, muscle function and balance for participants. • Improved social activity and promotion of social inclusion for participants. • Positive outcomes from the conservation activities – eg: habitat restoration, heritage protection, installing interpretive signage, all improving publicly accessible recreation facilities.
Referrals:	<p>How do I refer someone to Green Gym?</p> <p>Green Gym can be a suggestion as part of the Active Script program, or simply provide your clients and patients with information about the Green Gym. Promotional materials can be provided by contacting a Green Gym Project Officer in:-</p> <p>Ballarat - Gail Weston, 0427 526 406 or (03) 5330 2600 Bendigo - Adam Smolak, 0427 507 004 or (03) 5444 0777 Melbourne - Travis Scicchitano, 0438 541 110 or (03) 9326 8250 Port Macquarie - Paul Price, 0404 828 937 or (02) 4926 2103 Sydney - Elizabeth Cowan, 0439 321 910 or (02) 9564 1244</p>
More?	<p>How do I get more information? Visit www.conservationvolunteers.com.au</p> <p style="text-align: right;">01/08/2008</p>