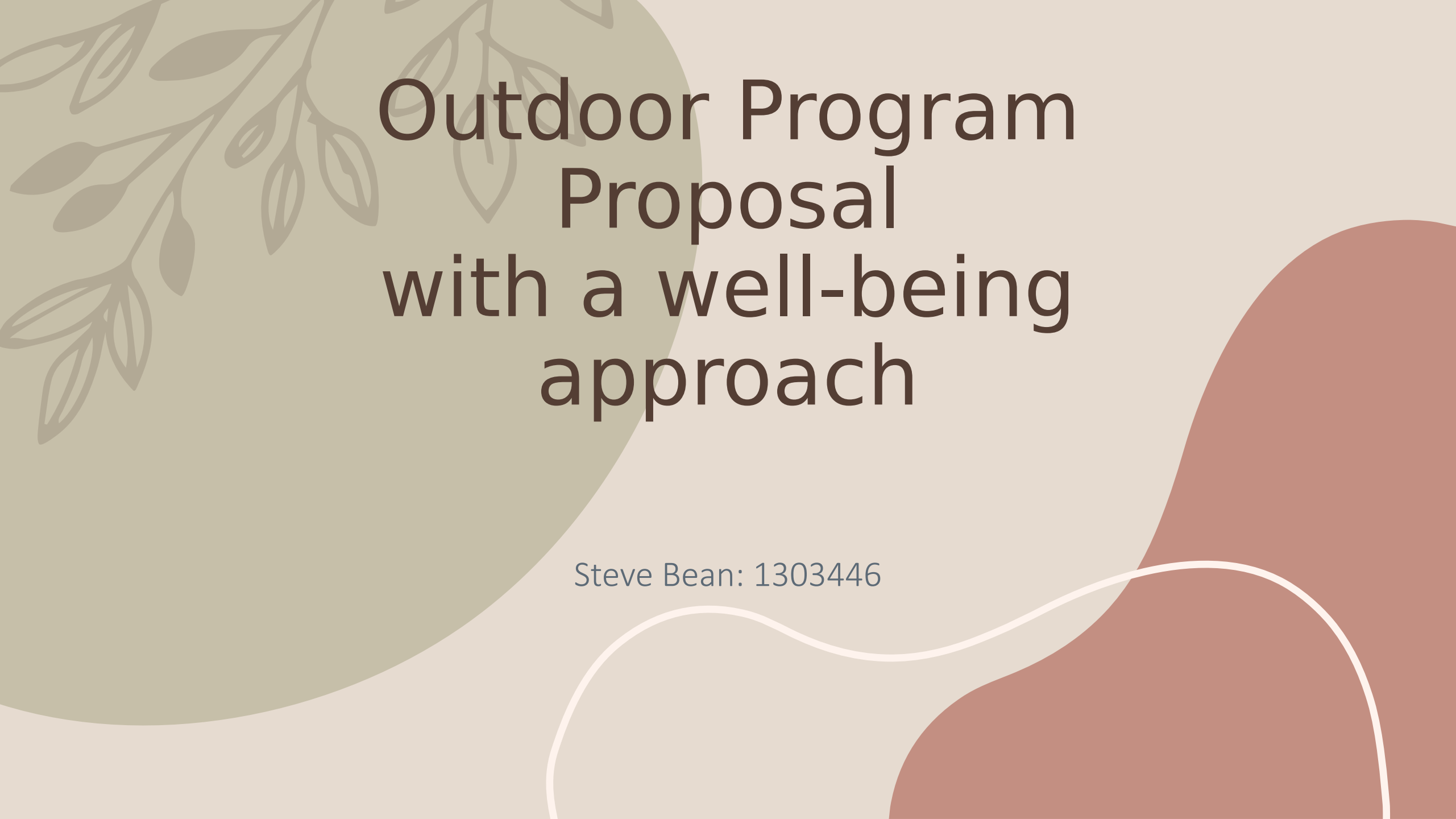




AI ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Steve Bean MA Outdoor education Module 1 Presentation:
outdoor programme with a well-being approach.

I confirm that I **have not** used any AI tools in the research and creation of this assignment. I confirm that I have not presented any AI generated materials as my own work. I confirm I have copies of my drafts, notes, and other resources I used, which I may be asked to provide in evidence.



Outdoor Program Proposal with a well-being approach

Steve Bean: 1303446

The Pitch

I am proposing a 6-session program aimed at year 6 pupils with behavioural difficulties specifically those associated with ADHD, whether diagnosed or suspected.

“to be diagnosed with ADHD, a young person has to be exhibiting significant inattention or impulsive/hyperactive behaviours that impair or impede success at school, home or during play.” (Harper et al, 2019)

The choice behind the year 6 age group is to target the point in the participants lives where they are likely to start experiencing ‘*the teenage dip*’ (Richardson, 2023) a period of decreased nature connectedness identified using the Nature Connectedness Index.



Aims

Throughout this program the aim will be to facilitate an increased rapport and relationship between allocated school staff and the participants, to allow nature to administer the ‘therapy’, and to give young people established methodology to manage their own nature connection.

“The development (or reawakening) of effective and caring relationships, whether interpersonal or between people and nature, is both a valuable outcome and key to achieving additional successful outcomes through outdoor learning.”
High Quality Outdoor Learning, IOL 2025

Put simply, I aim to re-introduce or re-awaken participants to mother nature’s call.



Content and Approach

Comprising of six hour-long sessions in a local green space, the participants will be encouraged to explore nature while being prompted to engage with the ‘five pathways to nature connectedness’ from ‘Reconnection’ by Miles Richardson.

In a series of three studies, Ryan Lumber and others developed the following five pathways: senses, emotion, beauty, meaning, and compassion.

Engaging with these on nature walks, “led to significant increases in nature connectedness when compared to simply walking in nature” (Richardson, 2023).



Content and Approach

The first session will focus on noticing and actively engaging with nature through the senses, with the further four pathways being developed in subsequent sessions as we build on the participants' increasing autonomy.

This will be tracked using feedback informed theory.

"Such noticing leads us towards activating the other pathways: appreciating beauty, feeling emotions, making meaning and displaying compassion."
(Richardson, 2023)



- Provide time for direct engagement with nature and immersion in natural areas
- Focus on experiences that define nature connection:
 - Affiliation, a sense of belonging, a sense of oneness
 - Enjoyment
 - Comfort and confidence in nature
 - Curiosity, interest, exploration
 - Challenge and achievement
 - Understanding human interdependence with nature
 - Empathy and concern for other living things
 - Caring for wildlife and natural habitats
- Give young people time to encounter nature at their own pace, following their own interests
- Let them know that there are many ways to be a 'nature person', including play and recreation in nature, working the land sustainably, gardening, studying natural history, caring for animals, making art in nature
- Make young people partners in collective efforts to study and protect the natural world
- Ground experiences in the local culture and ecology
- Share examples of people's enthusiasm and care for nature
- Make sure young people see others who look like them engaged with nature
- Enable young people to record their observations and experiences through writing, scientific record keeping and the arts
- Start young, but provide access to nature for all ages
- Aim for extended engagement, but even short-term experiences in nature can lead to gains in nature connection
- Allow young people to overcome fears in nature or fears of particular species through gradual interactions at their level of comfort

Chawla, 2020

Program monitoring

- The program will be feedback informed using a tailored variant of the outcome and session rating scales outlined in the field manual from *Solution-Focused Practice in Outdoor Therapy* (Dobud and Natyncuk, 2023)
- Completed by participant and assigned school staff to allow for clinical cut off variation.
- The activities will increase in intensity and exposure as the program progresses and relatedness increases.
- As this program is anticipated to be within the local authority, all licensing, safeguarding and risk management documents are already in place to support it.



A stylized, dark grey leaf graphic with several pointed leaves, positioned in the upper left corner of the slide.

Motivation

Two overlapping white circles of different sizes, located in the bottom left corner of the slide.

I HAVE A DEEP AND PERSONAL ATTACHMENT, ENCOURAGING RESPONSIBILITY AND POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, PARTICULARLY IN YOUNGER PEOPLE.

THIS IS ANCHORED BY MY APPRECIATION AND VALUE OF EVERYONE I AM COACHING AND LOVE OF THE ENVIRONMENTS I AM COACHING IN.



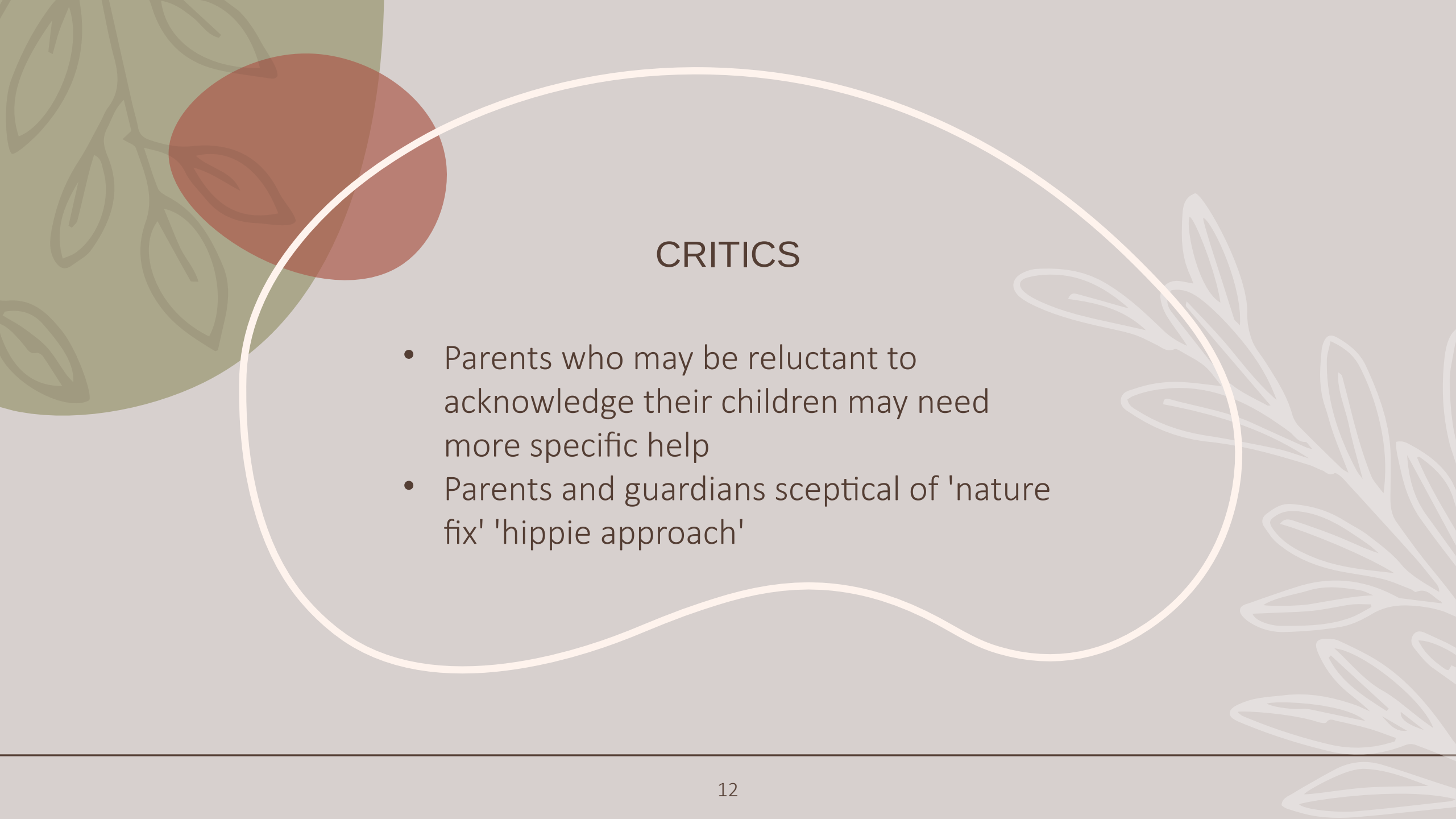
CHALLENGES

- Maintaining motivation in the young people, teachers, parents and myself throughout this program
- Finding schools with the staffing availability and willingness to go outside the standard management/treatment of perceived higher risk children
- Finding areas to engage with nature particularly at more urban schools
- Participants perceptions on why they are there



ETHICAL ISSUES

- Singling out individuals from the classroom, which would potentially cause equality of opportunity questions.
- ADHD is more commonly identified in boys than in girls and the groups may well develop a gender bias reflecting this



CRITICS

- Parents who may be reluctant to acknowledge their children may need more specific help
- Parents and guardians sceptical of 'nature fix' 'hippie approach'

Underpinning Theories

PET – PSYCHO-EVOLUTIONARY THEORY

- People have emotional responses to natural environments that they then may respond to cognitively in positive or negative ways
- This is less hopeful if you do not have appropriately pre-established cognitive response

(Harper et al, 2019)

SDT – SELF DETERMINATION THEORY

- Increasing the three aspects of:
- Competence: feeling competent and skilled
- Autonomy: feeling in control of one's actions
- Relatedness: feeling connected to others

(Smith and Wilkinson, 2020)

ART – ATTENTION RESTORATION THEORY

- Attention is restored in compatible natural environments and improves numerous cognitive functions.
- This gives hope
- This also meets some of the needs of my population group

(Van den Berg, 2016)

Attention Restoration

Whilst considering the various theories and methodologies it may not be surprising to learn that a theory claiming to restore attention was identified as the most likely option when dealing with participants with potential ‘attention deficit’.

“nature can help replenish necessary resources to deal with stress and difficult situations. One critical resource is attention.” (Haper et al, 2019)

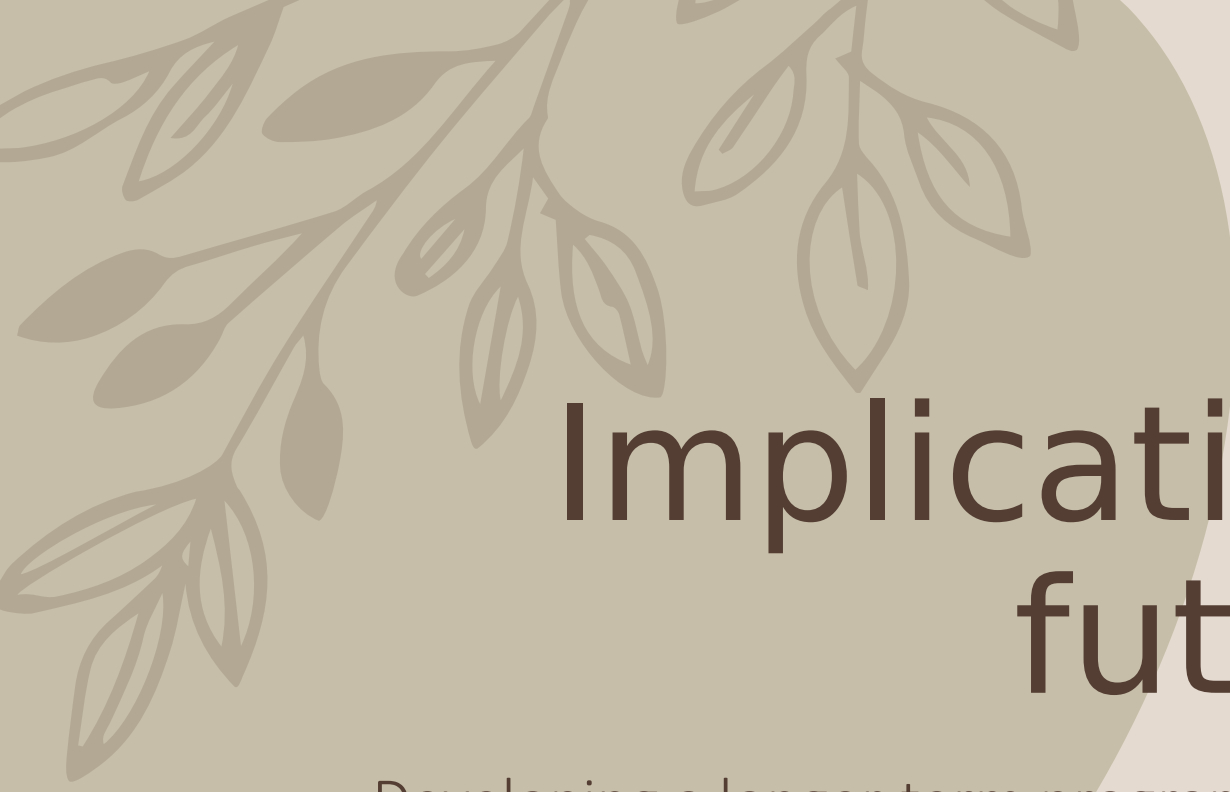


Reflection

“Thoughtfully designed outdoor therapies with leaders skilled in healthy relationship building have the potential to provide rich, transformative, paradigm shifting experiences for their participants” (Mitten, 2021)

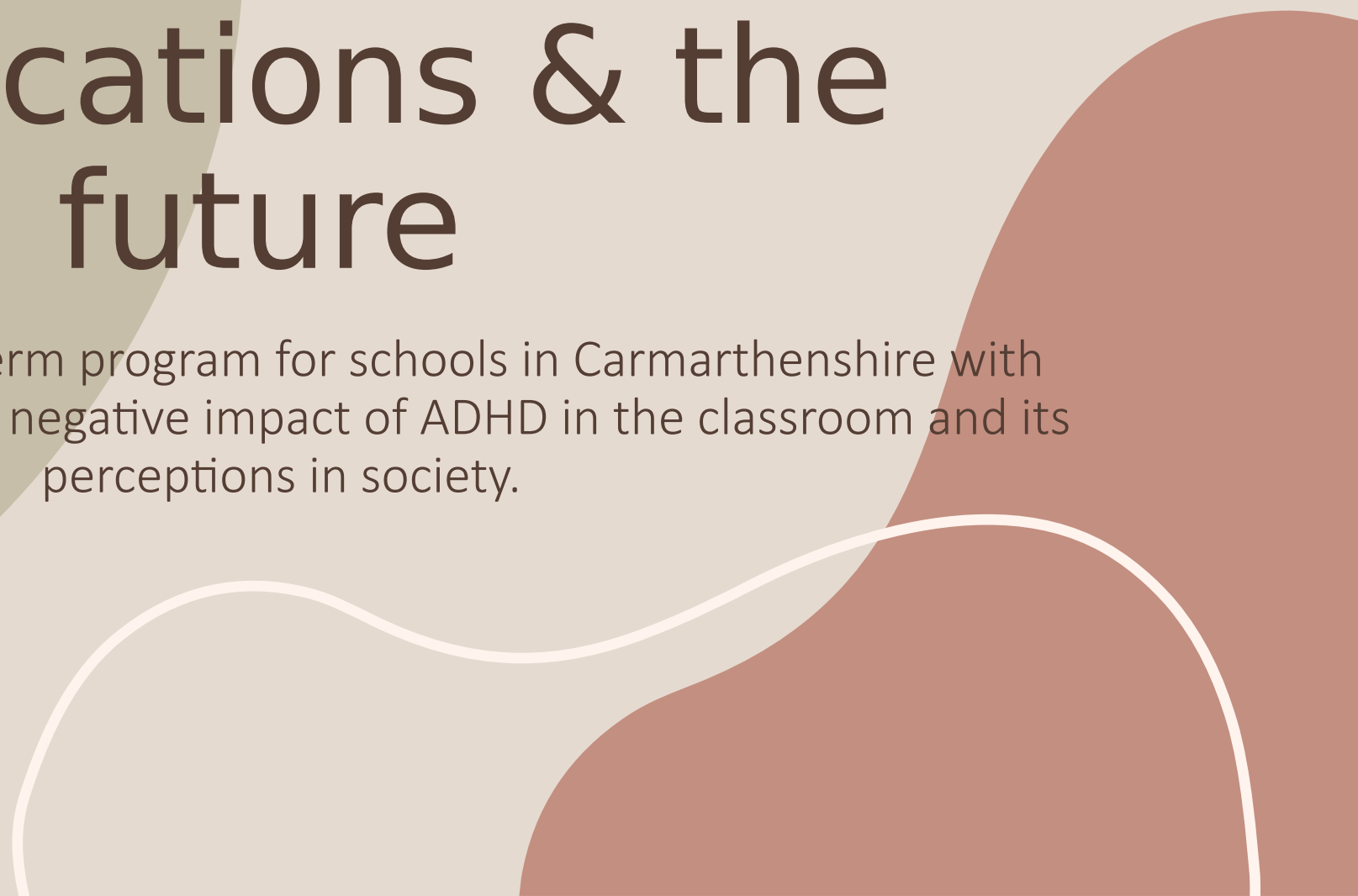
Learning difficulties in the classroom associated around ADHD are an increasing challenge to outdoor educators, peers, and to the individuals themselves. The research behind this proposal revealed a wealth of theories and studies tying nature connectedness to well-being, and offering solutions that are relatively simple and accessible.





Implications & the future

Developing a longer-term program for schools in Carmarthenshire with the aim of reducing the negative impact of ADHD in the classroom and its perceptions in society.



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