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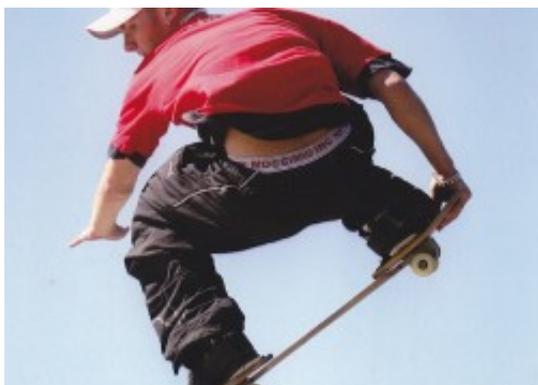
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Skate park kids are good

Posted on 14 April 2014. Tags: [Sport](#)



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STAFF REPORTER

Tired of superannuated not-in-my-back-yarders raining on the parade of kids just tryna have fun down at the skate park?

Well, here's something you can tell the condescending old buggers next time they offer you pocket money to serve cordial at their monthly Bridge night ...

University of Western Australia researchers have found that skate parks are actually likely to promote good behaviour.

Despite this, the researchers say, skate parks are often under threat from community opposition because of fears that young people who congregate at the parks will engage in illicit behaviour. Most recently this has been seen at a mega skate park that opened this week in Fremantle's Esplanade Park against the wishes of a vocal band of inner city residents.

The researchers' community survey found that young people cooperate, learn from, teach, help and respect others, socialise with friends and take turns more often than they engage in anti-social behaviour at skate parks.



A oneperth.com.au inspection today of the Esplanade Park skate park (pictured, left) confirmed the youths down there were very well behaved.

The researchers write that despite its popularity skateboarding suffers negative associations and there has been far less attention given to the positive behaviour exhibited at skate parks.

“... skate parks are in fact a powerful setting in which young people can learn the arts of cooperation, negotiation and compromise informally, in contrast to via the structured rules of organised sports,” lead study author Lisa Wood said.

Professor Wood said that because playgrounds cater to younger children, groups of adolescents using parks and public places were often stereotyped as being ‘up to no good’.

“Australian data indicates the youth participation in skateboarding, in-line skating, rollerblading and scooting is now close to exceeding participation in organised sports,” she said.

The researchers focussed on a small suburban skate park in a central suburb of Perth and developed an online survey in which the almost 400 respondents reported good behaviour more often than impishness.

Homepage photo: Doomsday Streetboarding Australia

Esplanade Park snap: Chris Thomson



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