Connecting children & families with nature

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Bill Kilburn
Program Manager
Back to Nature Network
bkillburn@rbg.ca
Impacts on ADHD of a short walk in the park
Faber Taylor and Kuo, 2009

- Seventeen children 7 to 12 years old professionally diagnosed with ADHD
- Walks compared: park, downtown & neighborhood; duration = 20 min.
- Measurement of concentration: Digit Span Backwards

Effect sizes of a 20 minute walk in the park on concentration were substantial and comparable to those of methylphenidate, and “roughly equal and opposite to the performance deficit due to ADHD”
Interacting with nature improves cognition and affect for individuals with depression
Berman, M., 2012

- Subjects with major depressive disorder (MDD)
- At baseline, mood and short term memory span were assessed, and reassessed after the walk

“Participants exhibited significant increases in memory span after the nature walk relative to the urban walk (p<.001)...[and] also showed increases in mood”
Green space as a buffer between stressful events and health
van den Berg, A. E., et al., 2010

- 4529 subjects
- Measures: 1) # health complaints in previous 14 days
  2) perceived mental health (GHQ-12 measure)
  3) single item measure of perceived general health

Those with recent stressful life events had fewer health impacts if they lived within 3 km of green space
Role of natural settings in crisis rehabilitation
Ottosson and Grahn, 2008

Investigated crisis recovery with different levels of exposure to nature

N= 547

“...nature functions as a type of remedy, aid, resource or catalyst. If people in crisis have many nature experiences, they tend to experience an improved state of health”
Outdoor activity reduces the prevalence of myopia in children
Rose, K. A. , et al., 2008

- n=1765 6 y.o. and 2367 12 y.o.
- Higher levels of outdoor activity associated with lower myopia prevalence

“Higher levels of total time spent outdoors, rather than sport per se, were associated with less myopia...after adjusting for near work, parental myopia, and ethnicity.”
The Myopia Boom

Short-sightedness is reaching epidemic proportions. Some scientists think they have found a reason why.

By Elie Goldberg
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Discovering the wonders of nature!

Children have the right to explore and play in the outdoors. Research shows that kids who spend regular time in nature are happier and healthier. In Ontario, every child should have the opportunity to:

- Follow a trail
- Explore a park
- Harvest something to eat
- Swim in a lake
- Paddle a canoe
- Play in the snow
- Build an outdoor fort
- Visit a farm
- Camp under the stars
- Go fishing
- Observe plants and wildlife

...Or create an outdoor adventure

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Follow a trail
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http://www.childrensoutdoorcharter.ca/