



Social

"Canadian researchers found that green school grounds enhanced learning, compared with conventional turf and asphalt school grounds; that the more varied green play spaces suited a wider array of students and promoted social inclusion, regardless of gender, race, class, or intellectual ability; and they were safer."

- Richard Louv, Last Child in the Woods, p. 220

Playing in Nature

- Increases confidence
- Increases problem solving skills
- Results in social inclusion
- Increases creativity in make believe group play
- Provides positive social interactions for all children



Green up Your School Yard

- Start a school and/or community garden
- Use any and all trees
 - Sit spot locations
 - Tree studies
 - Climbing trees
- Plant trees
- Install a natural playscape in your school yard
- Create an indoor nature table or space
- Visit neighbouring gardens, beaches, parks, forests, and streams.



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Benefits of Nature Play



Physical

Playing in Nature

- Increases activity levels
- Improves agility, coordination & balance
- Develops risk assessment abilities
- Lowers illness rates
- Reduces childhood obesity
- Heightens overall use of senses

"Frolic timelessly in the wilderness – that the fire of curiosity may light every eye and that myth and play may merge with fact and science."

- Young, Haas, McGown. Coyotes Guide to Connecting with Nature. 2010.



"Must we always teach our children with books? Let them look at the mountains and the stars up above. Let them look at the beauty of the waters and the trees and flowers on earth. They will then begin to think, and to think is the beginning of a real education"

- David Polis

Emotional

Playing in Nature

- Reduces childhood anxiety, stress, and depression
- Reduces or eliminates symptoms of ADD/ADHD
- Provides therapy for sensory needs
- Increases attention span
- Improves self-regulation
- Provides children the opportunity to develop independence, excellent decision making skills, autonomy, and personal power

"A student that I've worked with was said to have Attention Deficit Disorder. When I brought him into the field, I noticed he had the ears of a scout. He was able to monitor all four directions at the same time, and notice birdcalls from every direction. So, I watched him over time. When we worked indoors, in the classroom, in the group, he was a bit unable to sit still. But when we got out in the field, he was always the first one to see the hawk, always the first one to spot the hiding instructor, always the first one to hear the bird warnings."

And I started to ask myself, "Is that a disorder, or a gift?"

- Jon Young, *Seeing Through Native Eyes*, audio as seen in Young, Haas, McGown. Coyotes Guide to Connecting with Nature. 2010

