



Hoofbeats & Heartbeats

Providing opportunities for therapy and education in the natural environment

47W635 Beith Road • Maple Park, IL 60151 • 630.365.5550

Studies show positive effect of contact with nature.

- ▶ Children with symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are better able to concentrate after contact with nature (Taylor et al. 2001).
- ▶ Children with views of and contact with nature score higher on tests of concentration and self-discipline. The greener the view, the better the scores (Wells 2000, Taylor et al. 2002).
- ▶ Children who play regularly in natural environments show more advanced motor fitness, including coordination, balance and agility, and they are sick less often (Grahn, et al. 1997, Fjortoft & Sageie 2001).
- ▶ When children play in natural environments, their play is more diverse with imaginative and creative play that fosters language and collaborative skills (Moore & Wong 1997, Taylor, et al. 1998, Fjortoft 2000).
- ▶ Exposure to natural environments improves children's cognitive development by improving their awareness, reasoning and observational skills (Pyle 2002).
- ▶ Nature buffers the impact of life's stresses on children and helps them deal with adversity. The greater the amount of nature exposure, the greater the benefits (Wells & Evans 2003).
- ▶ Play in a diverse natural environment reduces or eliminates bullying (Malone & Tranter 2003).
- ▶ Nature helps children develop powers of observation and creativity and instills a sense of peace and being at one with the world (Crain 2001).
- ▶ Early experiences with the natural world have been positively linked with the development of imagination and the sense of wonder (Cobb 1977, Louv 1991). Wonder is an important motivator for life long learning (Wilson 1997).
- ▶ Children who play in nature have more positive feelings about each other (Moore 1996).
- ▶ Natural environments stimulate social interaction between children (Moore 1986, Bixler et al. 2002).
- ▶ Outdoor environments are important to children's development of independence and autonomy (Bartlett 1996).
- ▶ Play in outdoor environments stimulates all aspects of children development more readily than indoor environments (Moore & Wong 1997).
- ▶ In a study, participants were randomly assigned to one of three "treatments:" A walk in a natural environment, a walk in an urban environment or relaxing in a comfortable chair. At the end of each exercise, instruments indicated that people who had taken the nature walk had significantly higher scores on overall happiness and positive affect and significantly lower scores on anger/aggression. Nature walkers also performed significantly better on a cognitive performance measure. — Hartig, T., Mang M. & Evans, G.W. (1991) "Restorative effects of natural environment experiences." **Environment and Behavior**, 23, 3-26 (Reported in *Nature's Path*)
- ▶ A 1984 study by Roger Ulrich, Texas A&M University, proved that just seeing greenery improved people's quality of life. Patients recovering from surgery needed shorter hospitalization time, less nursing care, and less strong medicine when viewing trees out a window, than did those who viewed a blank wall.

Note: A copy of references for above may be forwarded by email upon request.