

OUTDOOR TIME AND NATURE

Research shows that time outdoors and exposure to the natural world have major benefits for child development!

Screen awareness isn't just about what happens on screens. It also means staying alert to how time on screens can displace other activities and interests. Nature time is multi-sensory, self-directed, non-commercial, holistic, and proven to enhance health and wellbeing for individuals of all ages.



Cognitive (Brain) Benefits^{4,5,6,7}

- Boosts academic performance
- Improves focus and attention
- Enhances creativity and imagination
- Improves problem solving skills



Social and Emotional Benefits^{1,2,4,5,6,7}

- Increases empathy
- Reduces stress levels
- Improves mood
- Reduces aggression
- Increases impulse control



Physical Benefits^{2,3,5,8}

- Increases activity and fitness levels
- Reduces nearsightedness
- Increases vitamin D levels
- Improves sleep

Scan or [click](#) for full Screen Aware Kit!

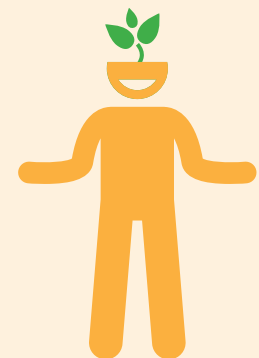


Scan or [click](#) for research references and recommended reading!



Outdoor experiences provide...

- ✦ Helpful breaks from screen environments and habits.
- ✦ Remedies for some of the negative effects of screen exposure.
- ✦ High-quality and accessible activities that do not involve or depend on screens.
- ✦ Multi-sensory, non-commercial, and self-directed opportunities for play.



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One of the best antidotes to screen time is green time!

There are endless activities to do outside, whether deep in the forest or on a city sidewalk!

Explore nature and use your senses

- Find different types of trees, flowers, or leaves
- Collect and compare seeds
- Collect flowers for pressing
- Go on a bug hunt
- Listen to nature sounds & name them
- Smell flowers, leaves, bark, and dirt
- Compare textures of leaves, grass, bark, flowers, etc.
- Collect different shades of green and brown
- Look for plants growing in surprising places (like in the cracks of the sidewalk)



Bring inside activities outside

- Create with play dough
- Do a puzzle
- Play a game
- Read a book
- Draw, sketch, or paint
- Sing songs
- Daydream
- Have a picnic
- Share stories
- Host a play time
- Plan a visit
- Take a nap

Get physical

- Play tag or hide and seek
- Balance on a log
- Go on a hike
- Run through a sprinkler
- Build a fort
- Ride a bike or scooter
- Roll down a hill
- Climb a tree
- Jump rope
- Swim
- Throw and catch
- Set up a race or obstacle course
- Stretch or do yoga
- Swing



Book recommendations

- 1000 Hours Outside: Activities to Match Green Time with Screen Time* by Ginny Yurich
- The Big Book of Nature Activities* by Jacob Rodenburg
- Nature Play Workshop for Families: A Guide to 40+ Outdoor Learning Experiences for All Seasons* by Monica Wiedel-Lubinski

Additional resources

- Connect with a local nature center
- Connect with your state's parks and recreation department

