Nature Now -
Experiencing the Joy and Benefits of Learning Outdoors

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Health, Wellness & Sustainability:
Environmental Education in Action
OISE/TDSB EcoSchools Conference
January 27, 2018
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Welcome

Who is in the room and why?
Session Plan

- Welcome - Introductions: Overview of the Afternoon
- Outdoor Experiential Learning - Value and Benefits
- Responses to That Research
- Environmental Inquiry - Meaningful Outdoor Learning Experiences
- ‘Walk the Talk’ at Philosopher’s Walk
- Resources
- FareWELL - Get Outdoors and Stay Healthy
Outdoor Experiential Learning — Value and Benefits

Classic and Current Research

Andrea Faber Taylor (University of Illinois) and Related

- Parks and Other Green Environments: Essential Components of a Healthy Human Habitat
- Green Outdoor Environments and Healthy Development
- Simcoe County DSB/Back to Nature Network Research Project
Parks and Other Green Environments: Essential Components of a Healthy Human Habitat

“Access to nature, whether it is in the form of bona fide natural areas or in bits or views of nature, impacts psychological, as well as social functioning. Greater access to green views and green environments yields better cognitive functioning; more proactive, more effective patterns of life functioning; more self-discipline and more impulse control; greater mental health overall; and greater resilience in response to stressful life events.”

Executive Summary (page 3)
Outdoor Experiential Learning - Value and Benefits

Classic and Current Research

- SEER (State Education and Environment Round Table) - 1998
- Rodney Matsuoka (University of Illinois) - greener cafeteria = better academic performance - 2010
- Vidar Ulset - more hours outdoors = greater attention - 2017
- Children and Nature Network - Research Library
Outdoor Experiential Learning — Value and Benefits

Classic and Current Research

Richard Louv

*Last Child in the Woods*

“... a growing body of research links our mental, physical, and spiritual health directly to our association in nature - in positive ways.” (introduction, page 3)
Outdoor Experiential Learning — Value and Benefits

Classic and Current Research

EcoHealth Ontario

- Health benefits of green space (multi-faceted, all aspects)
- “Take two parks and call me in the morning”
Outdoor Experiential Learning — Value and Benefits

Classic and Current Research

Reconnecting Children Through Outdoor Education: A Research Summary

“Outdoor and experiential education (OEE) is a vital learning methodology for today’s children and young people.”
Outdoor Experiential Learning — Value and Benefits

Personal Stories
Outdoor Experiential Learning — Response to that Research

- Back To Nature Network
- Children’s Outdoor Charter
- Outdoor Play
- Nature Playbook
- Pathway to Stewardship
Environmental Inquiry - A Curriculum Connected Approach to Meaningful Outdoor Learning

- Natural Curiosity
- Into Nature - Nature2Go
- The Big Book of Nature Activities
Walk the Talk - Philosopher’s Walk

- Walk and Talk
- Medicine Tea
- Goose Leadership
- Winter Buddies
- My Own Tree
- Scavenger Hunt
- Knowledge Building Circle (might come inside for this)
Knowledge Building Circle

What was something interesting that you discovered in Philosopher’s Walk, and why was it interesting?

Is there anything you are wondering about?
Essential Print Resources

Last Child in the Woods (Richard Louv)

Into Nature (Back to Nature Network)

Nature Playbook (Parks Canada)

The Big Book of Nature Activities (Drew Monkman and Jacob Rodenburg)

Below Zero (Canadian Wildlife Federation [Wild Education - www.WildEducation.org])
FareWELL – Get Outdoors and Stay Healthy

“Be who you needed when you were younger.”

- Dana Shapiro in *Hourglass: Time, Memory, Marriage*
FareWELL - Get Outdoors and Stay Healthy

“Healthy ecosystems are essential for human health and survival. We all depend on clean water to drink, healthy food supplies, green spaces for recreation, and contact with wildlife to enrich our lives. There is growing evidence that we gain specific physical and mental health benefits from living in clean, healthy ecosystems, and from having access to natural areas and biodiversity.”

EcoHealth Ontario (http://www.ecohealth-ontario.ca/)
Websites

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Parks and Other Green Environments: Essential Components of a Healthy Human Habitat (Ming Kuo Research Summary)
http://www.nrpa.org/uploadedFiles/nrpa.org/Publications_and_Research/Research/Papers/MingKuo-Summary.PDF

Lessons in Nature Boost Classroom Engagement (Ming Quo; along with Browning and Penner)

Impact of views to school landscapes on recovery from stress and mental fatigue (Li and Sullivan)

Green Outdoor Environments
velopment.pdf

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SEER (http://www.seer.org/)
https://www.childrenandnature.org/research-library/
Websites

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Reconnecting Children Through Outdoor Education: A Research Summary (https://www.coeo.org/research-summary/)
“Outdoor and experiential education (OEE) is a vital learning methodology for today’s children and young people. Its provision of safe, educator-framed and hands-on experiences in outdoor settings generates unique, vital and lasting benefits in terms of education for curriculum and community, education for character, education for well-being, and education for environment.” (Executive Summary, page 2)

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- Back to Nature Network (http://www.back2nature.ca/)
- Ontario Children’s Outdoor Charter (http://www.childrensoutdoorcharter.ca/); provide copies
- Outdoor Play (www.outdoorplaycanada.ca)
- Pathway to Stewardship (http://campkawartha.ca/pathway-to-stewardship/)
Websites

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- Natural Curiosity (including Second Edition, featuring Indigenous perspectives)
- The Big Book of Nature Activities ([www.newsociety.com](http://www.newsociety.com))

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- Medicine Tea (Nature Sundae [p.39 - Into Nature])
- Goose Leadership (pp.105-107 - The Big Book of Nature Activities)
- Winter Buddies (pp. 107-8 - Below Zero [show video clip])
- My Own Tree (p.37 - Into Nature)
- Scavenger Hunt (p.43 - Into Nature)
- Knowledge Building Circle (pp. 11-13, 21-23, 28 - Natural Curiosity)
Knowledge Building Discourse is “a communal activity in which learners come together to pose questions, posit theories, and to revisit, negotiate and refine their ideas. The collective goal is ‘idea improvement’.” A Knowledge Building Circle “refers to the seating configuration of students as they engage in Knowledge Building Discourse.” This is a great technique (either whole group or small group) to consolidate a learning experience, and generate additional ‘wonderings’/inquiry questions.