

DECLINING ENJOYMENT OF THE OUTDOORS

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We've all heard the joke about toddlers absorbing information quickly and then forgetting it, but the opposite is true. A child's brain grows rapidly between the ages of three and a half and five, making this a critical period for both social development and the beginnings of autonomy.

A child's worldview transforms between the ages of three and five, from the belief that everyone sees things the same way to the understanding that other perspectives exist. Play, according to experts, is a complex succession of talents that takes time to develop and accounts for most of a child's early learning and reasoning.

Sharing and taking turns are two of the first lessons in collaboration and negotiation that a child will learn as he plays with others. Time spent playing outside benefits children's motor development and sense of autonomy, as well as establishing key social skills at this age.

Outdoor play is vital for the development of abilities such as memory, timing, and sequencing, which are required for more complicated physical activities. Playing outside may appear to us as adults to be a waste of time, but children's minds are actually working hard to build abilities that will aid them as they move to the more organized environment of a school. When children are permitted to play freely outside, they develop as people and find their voices.

According to research and studies, active, outside, free play might lead to higher academic performance. It demonstrates that giving children outside play breaks during the school day improves their attention to cognitive tasks.

Outdoor activities during recess at school have numerous cognitive, social-emotional, and physical benefits. First, when children have recess, they are less fidgety and more focused, and children with ADHD (attention-deficit/hyperactivity syndrome) benefit the most. Second, studies on memory and attention reveal that learning that is spaced out rather than concentrated improves recall. Recess allows the brain to "regroup" during breaks. Third, brain research indicates a link between physical activity and the formation of brain connections. Fourth, on the playground, children learn to lead, teach one another games, take turns, and manage problems. Finally, in a free-choice environment, children develop negotiation and conflict-resolution skills in order to continue playing.

The benefits of outdoor play for a child's cognitive development do not diminish once they attend school. Students appear to be taking periodic vacations from their studies in order to improve exam outcomes and meet performance goals. The difficulty with squeezing in extra study time is that it leaves little room for mental relaxation and rest.

Free, unstructured playtime during breaks benefits children both physically and emotionally since it allows them to go around and burn off some energy. Children were shown to be more obedient, to make more attempts to learn on their own, to come up with their own answers to problems, and to have less disciplinary concerns after only a short amount of time.

Unfortunately, our culture increasingly promotes sedentary pursuits like watching TV, using computers and playing video games over active play outside. Modern children's lives are increasingly confined and controlled by factors such as small living quarters, high-stakes academic education, schedules, stressed, fatigued, and overworked parents, and fewer opportunity to simply be kids.

Parents are naturally hesitant to let their children go free due to rising levels of traffic, crime, and instances of missing youngsters. This is why outdoor recess and break times are being cut at many schools.

The importance of breaks and the many advantages of exercise in the open air cannot be overstated. To develop one's mental, physical, and emotional capacities, play is essential. Numerous studies on the topic of how young people learn have revealed that children, in particular, learn best via hands-on experiences like play, experimentation, exploration, and discovery. Recognizing that children may acquire many of the essential skills necessary for success through outdoor play is essential. This includes learning new information, developing motor abilities, and learning a wide range of knowledge.

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