

Moving Learning Outdoors

Wellness Wednesday Webinar

April 20th 2022



**CREATING HEALTHY
SCHOOLS AND
COMMUNITIES**



TODAY'S AGENDA

1

**Benefits of
learning
outdoors**

2

Your “why?”

3

**How to take
your class
outside**

4

**Setting up
an outdoor
classroom**



1

Benefits of learning outdoors



Benefits of moving learning outdoors

Improved physical and mental **health**

Improved **academic** achievement

Increased respect and **appreciation** for nature

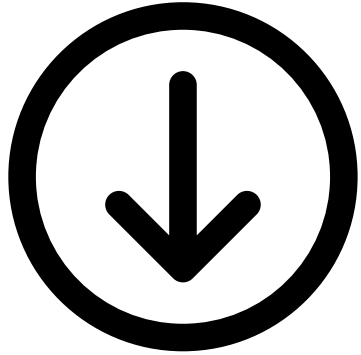
Improved **behavior** and social interactions

Increased **creativity**

A young boy with short blonde hair is sitting on a wooden post in a park, meditating. He is wearing a light blue t-shirt and denim shorts. His hands are resting on his knees in a mudra position, and his eyes are closed. The background is a lush green park with trees and a wooden fence. The scene is bathed in warm, golden light, suggesting late afternoon or early morning. A semi-transparent white banner with green text is overlaid across the middle of the image.

Physical and mental health benefits

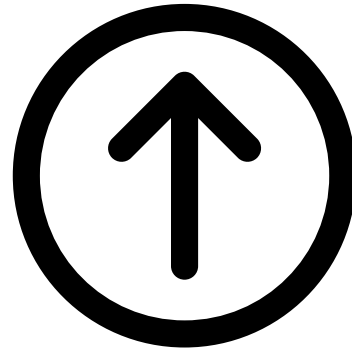
Physical and mental health benefits



Blood Pressure

Stress

Depression



Mood

Focus and attention

Healing

Opportunities for physical activity

Outdoor time reduces depression

% of participants that had a decrease in symptoms of depression after walking in different locations



Improved academic achievement



Introduction

When, then, does this leave us? We should not draw a wedge between seeking personal communion with God and seeking the advance of his kingdom in hearts and in the world. And if they are kept together, then communion will not be just wordless mystical awareness on the one hand, and our petitions will not be a way of presenting God's love "for our many wounds" (Matt 6:7) on the other.

This book will show that prayer is both conversation and encounter with God. These two concepts give us a definition of prayer and a set of ways for deepening our prayer lives. The traditional forms of prayer—adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication—are concrete practices as well as profound experiences. We must know the awe of praising his glory, the intimacy of finding his grace, and the struggle of asking his help, all of which can lead us to know the spiritual reality of his presence. Prayer, then, is both awe and intimacy, struggle and reality. These will not be every time we pray, but each should be a major component of our

Stanford Analysis of more than 100 Studies showed increases in:

Knowledge in science, mathematics, reading, writing, and more.

Academic skills (21st Century skills), such as critical thinking, oral communication, analytical skills, problem solving, and higher-order thinking.

Motivation to learn, including **enthusiasm** for and **interest** in school.



Experiential activities that infuse content with

meaningful experiences

help students **retain knowledge** longer.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands gently holding a small, vibrant salamander. The salamander has a dark, iridescent blue-black back with bright orange-red spots and a lighter, orange-brown belly. The person's hands are positioned to support the creature from below. The background is a dark, out-of-focus surface of wet, dark grey or black rocks, suggesting a natural habitat like a stream bed. A semi-transparent white horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text "Increased respect for nature" in a green, sans-serif font.

Increased respect for nature

Stanford Analysis of more than 100 Studies showed increases in:

Environmentally friendly behavior, such as reducing water use, increasing recycling, and participating in community cleanups.

Civic interest and engagement, including feelings of **civic responsibility**, feelings of empowerment, and ability to take action.





4th graders- Allentown, PA

They used **hands-on outdoor learning** and field investigation over 24 weeks.

Students collected water samples to test the water quality.

The adults were surprised when the children insisted on holding a **community pond clean up**.

Improved behavior and SEL





Stanford Analysis of more than 100 Studies showed increases in:

Self-esteem, autonomy, character development, maturity, empowerment, verbal communication, leadership, poise, and the ability to collaborate with others.

Number of teacher redirections per student per minute during the same lesson indoors and outdoors

Environment	Mean	SD	<i>n</i>
IN	0.0834	0.0696	140
OUT	0.0707	0.0654	115

Increased creativity



Immersion in nature increases creativity

Study shows that four days of immersion in nature increases performance on a **creativity**, problem-solving task by a **full 50%** in a group of naive hikers.

There is a **cognitive advantage** to be realized if we spend time immersed in a natural setting.

Atchley RA, Strayer DL, Atchley P. Creativity in the wild: improving creative reasoning through immersion in natural settings. PLoS One. 2012;7(12):e51474.





Benefits of moving learning outdoors

Improved physical and mental **health**

Improved **academic** achievement

Increased respect and **appreciation** for nature

Improved **behavior** and social interactions

Increased **creativity**

2

Your “why?”

Remember your “why”





3

**How to bring your
class outside**

How to take your class outside?



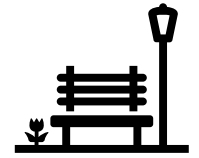
Plan



Set limits and
expectations



Prepare



Create routines



Plan

Check in with building administration

How far can you go

Permission slips

Extra adult or communication plan

Outdoor gear

Plan lessons

1. Invert your planning!
2. Modify lessons
3. Add in new outdoor activities



Set limits and expectations

Communicate to students before heading outside

Make a safety plan

Model expectations and review them before each adventure

Use the buddy system if kids will be exploring

Outdoor class rules

Prepare

Check out the location: noise, distractions, timing, dangers.

Material (include a 1st aid kit)

Weather

Communicate with the office





Create routines

Exit, outdoor and entry routines

Routines to Teach in the First Few Days of School	
Beginning of the Day	End of the Day
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting off the bus • Entering school • Walking in hallways • Breakfast routine • Unpacking backpacks • Handing in work, notes from home • Where to put lunch/snacks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Up • Retrieve folder • Grab Back Pack • Grab Lunch box • Grab coats/snow things • Stack Chairs • Meet together at carpet

45 different routines to teach in the first few days of school

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitor entering the class • Behavior/routines at recess • Nurse • Bathroom • Getting the teacher's attention • Visual/verbal cues for getting attention • Transitioning to the carpet and back to the tables • Snack • How to transition in between subjects • Safe movement within classroom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to do when work is complete • How to take turns (math games, partner <u>reading</u>) • How to put away materials when done • Using the classroom library • How to find a "just right" <u>book</u> • How to set up notebooks/papers • Choosing a "good" spot on the rug • What to do when the teacher is busy • How to communicate kindly (whisper buddy/partner)
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Create routines

Exit, outdoor and entry routines

21 exposures to develop a routine

Exit routine

Bathroom

Fill water bottles

Gather material

Dress for weather



Outdoor routines

Meet up spot

Attention signal (whistle, bell)



Entrance routine

Wet/dirty outerwear

Hand washing

Return to class



How to take your class outside?



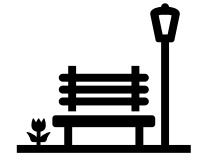
Plan



Set limits and
expectations



Prepare



Create routines



4

**Create an outdoor
classroom**

Outdoor classrooms





Choose location

Close to exit

Good drainage

Cover or shade



Elements to include

Seating

Shade

Storage



Extras

White board

Raised beds

Rain barrels and compost bins

Weather tools

Resources for benefits of outdoor learning

[The Benefits of Environmental Education for K–12 Students | NAAEE](#)

[Green schoolyards as havens from stress and resources for resilience in childhood and adolescence – ScienceDirect](#)

[The Benefits of Children's Engagement with Nature: A Systematic Literature Review on JSTOR](#)

Resources for moving learning outdoors

[Moving the Classroom Outdoors – Taking learning to the next level by taking it outside.](#)

[Getting Ready to Teach Outdoors — Madison Audubon](#)

[10 Best Tips for Teaching Outside the Classroom \(meganzeni.com\)](#)

Resources for outdoor classrooms

Kalvaitis, D. (2007). A recipe for outdoor classroom management. *Green Teacher*, (81), 36.

[OutdoorClassroomUsersGuide.pdf \(schoolyards.org\)](#)

Janet E. Dymont (2005) Green School Grounds as Sites for Outdoor Learning: Barriers and Opportunities, *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, 14:1, 28-45