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Field Biology

### Why Children are Not Going Outside

Children today are not getting outside nearly as much when I was young and my parents were young. Teachers today need to encourage their students to go outside and get exercise after school, and if possible they need to be able to teach a lesson plan outside. This would put the students in a different environment. These children are using their free time inside watching television, playing on the computer, and worst of all playing video games. These are activities that are ruining the youths experience with nature.

What's wrong with today's youth is they are not getting outside enough because of the television and the games that are located in the house. Students are not getting outside for more than one television show. As children spend more and more time indoors, "their senses narrow physiologically and psychologically, and this reduces the richness of human experience "(Louv). They do not run around outside, and make mom or dad yell from the foot step for them to come in because dinner is ready. If students enjoy playing violent video games, then they can develop a game outside that has fake guns. For example, they could play cowboys and Indians. This would fill their violent need and they would get a good amount of exercise, and they would be outdoors in the wild. In an article written by Oliver Pergams, he says "In the study, researchers pointed out that outdoor play and nature experienced have proven beneficial for cognitive

functioning, reduction in symptoms of Attention Deficit Disorder, and an increase in self discipline, and emotional well being at all developmental stages”(Pergams). The more students play outside and are outside there is a significant difference in the student’s mental state. These kids will be more emotionally well rounded and be less at risk to suffer from Attention Deficit Disorder.

The youth is not all to blame; the parents of these students are also at fault. These parents are the ones buying these games for their kids. They are encouraging their kids to stay inside. They are encouraging this because they do not want to go outside. The kids will follow the example of their parents. My parents always went outside in the summer and anytime it was nice out. There was a rule in my family, if it was nice out then we played outside and came in the house only for something to drink or to go to the bathroom. My parents knew the importance of children being outside as much as possible. I enjoyed being outside, I would play games with my friends on the street. It kills me today that kid’s are not getting the same experience I got when I was younger.

How can we make improvements and get kids back outside. There are lots of options but they require communication between the teacher and the parents. Parents can limit video games and television time. In my experience for every hour when I was younger I watched television I would have to play outside for that amount of time as well. For kids who watch four hours of television they must be outside for four hours as well. Another way for parents to limit their children’s video games is to set a limit on how many hours in a day they can play those games. They can play the games or watch television for two hours on a school day and five on the weekends. This will make the children control their shows they want to watch. It also will teach the student how to use time management at a young age. They will plan their day and plan

around the certain shows or the games they want to watch or play. They do not necessarily have to be outside for the rest of the time but they could be a reading book, or a writing poem.

Anything is better than being than the consistent brain damage the television causes.

Teachers can help getting student s out into nature. They can control what the student does at home to a degree. They have the ability to make students do things for a grade. They can give homework that could cause the students to find fifteen leaves, or play outside and have the parents sign off on their planner. Another example would be have them take a walk and write down what they see and hear. Teachers can do just as much as the parents it is important for the teacher to change the learning environment of the student so they do not get bored.

Students are not getting outside enough. If we do not do anything about this soon people will forget about nature. Nature as we know it will be nonexistent. As a teacher, I will encourage my children to go outside and will assign homework that takes place outside. I hope other teachers will follow this lead, and we can get young students back into the great outdoors.

Work Cited

Louv, Richard. Last Child in the Woods. Chapel Hill : Algonquin books of Chapel Hill, 2005.

Pergams, Zardick, Oliver, Patricia. "Kids picking TV over trees." The Nature Conservancy 2007: