Nature Rx

The Conservation Foundation

Jan Roehll, DuPage County Program Director
- Half of the world's population resides in urban environment
- Next several decades 86% urban life
- 2 billion people considered obese
- Increase in heart disease, hypertension, Type 2 diabetes
Childhood Obesity

- Increase in childhood obesity ages 2-5 years
- Ten times more children and teens obese than 40 years ago
- Children as young as 7 years old Type 2 diabetes
Overweight kids can become overweight adults.
Hyperactivity
Disinhibition
Forgetfulness
Inattention
Disorganization
Distractedness
Why Is This Important?

This Is Your Brain on Nature

When we get closer to nature—be it untouched wilderness or a backyard tree—we do our overstressed brains a favor.


https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2016/01/call-to-wild/

The Science Behind How Nature Affects Your Health

https://www.forbes.com/sites/billfrist/2017/06/15/the-science-behind-how-nature-affects-your-health/#1c61177015ae
Disconnect with Nature
In order to connect with nature, we need to protect it.

*Paul Mukerji/The Wildlife Trust*
Nature holds the key to our aesthetic, intellectual, cognitive and even spiritual satisfaction

~ E. O. Wilson
“Nature is but another name for health...”

- Henry David Thoreau
15 minute nature nap
Reduces stress levels
Reduces anxiety
Increased concentration
Improved mood
Nature – Anti-Depressant

Forest Therapy
Shinrin-yoku

Forest Bathing
Hospital Research
30% decrease in PTSD symptoms reported by veterans being treated with nature.*

* Source: Yasmin Anwar, Rush of wild nature lowers PTSD in veterans, Berkley news [online].
Rx for Health: Walking in Nature
Lake County, Illinois

- Initiative began in 2014
- Partnership between the Lake County Health Department, the Lake County Forest Preserves, NorthShore University HealthSystem, and Live Well Lake County
- Naturalist-Led Community Walks
- A Case Study in Community Engagement

Live Well Lake County
NorthShore University HealthSystem
Lake County Forest Preserves

THE CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
PARxK Prescription
Healthy Habits for a Healthy Life

Name
Birth Date
Date

☐ walking
☐ jogging
☐ hiking
☐ bike riding
☐ horseback riding
☐ ______________

Notes

Unlimited Refills

Signature

For more information, visit: MontgomeryParksPrescription.org
What next?

- How can we combine forces with business innovators, healthcare leaders, insurance companies, scientist, and advocacy organizations to promote wellness and reduce healthcare costs?

- How can we influence a cultural shift to value outdoor open space and parks for health?
• Wilderness is not a luxury, but a necessity of the human spirit

• ~ Edward Abbey