

OCTOBER, 2014

“I believe that those boys who take part in rough, hard play outside school will not find any need for horse-play in school.”

Theodore Roosevelt

Therakids

ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF EDUCATORS AND PLANTING THE SEEDS OF CLASSROOM WELLNESS.

IMPORTANCE OF OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Outdoors is a great place for children to play and explore while developing social independence and creativity. Outside play provides a variety of sounds, colors, textures, and a place to discover. When a child is outside, they have an opportunity to learn problem-solving skills, motor-function, social-skills, self-awareness and confidence. While a child explores his/her environment, they develop muscle strength, coordination, flexibility, fine and gross motor skills. These are important to help encourage a child to learn and to have the physical skills needed for sports and everyday tasks. Children are able to work out emotional aspects of everyday experiences through unstructured play. Children, who are allowed to play outside, freely with peers, learn skills like: cooperation, sharing, problem solving, and empathy (seeing things through another person's perspective).



Playing with peers, a child will express and work out emotional aspects of every day experiences. They see things through another person's perspective. A child learns cooperation, sharing, and problem solving.



Outdoor play increases flexibility, fine and gross motor skills.



Exploring the outdoors allows children to be adventurous. Children may be open to new ideas.



Playing with objects help enhance imaginative and creative play.



Swinging engages muscles, balance and coordination of the body, cause and effect, and spatial leaning.



Children, who laugh and play with a friend, can reduce blood pressure and the stress of everyday occurrences. It strengthens their immune system and enhances muscle function.



Climbing and moving across structures help encourage bilateral coordination, problem - solving, self-confidence, and body awareness.

Body & Mind & Spirit

- Outdoor play increases fitness levels and builds active, healthy bodies.
- Spending time outside raises levels of Vitamin D, helping protect children from future bone problems, heart disease, and diabetes.
- Being outside improves distance vision and lowers the chance of nearsightedness.
- Exposure to natural settings and lighting may be widely effective in helping to reduce symptoms of ADHD.
- Children's stress levels fall within minutes of seeing green spaces.
- Play protects children's emotional development whereas a hurried lifestyle can contribute to anxiety and depression.
- Nature can help enhance social interactions, value for community and close relationships.

http://www.nwf.org/pdf/Be%20Out%20There/MindBodySpirit_FactSheet_May2010.pdf
<http://www.healthyalberta.com/729.htm>
<http://benefitof.net/benefits-of-outdoor-play/>
http://www.nwf.org/pdf/Be%20Out%20There/MindBodySpirit_FactSheet_May2010.pdf
<http://ezinearticles.com/?The-Benefits-of-Outdoor-Play&id=300733>
<http://www.letthechildrenplay.net/2012/04/play-outside.html>
<http://www.toolstogrowot.com/blog/2014/07/10/outdoor-play-praxis>

Therakids P.C. provides specialized occupational, physical and speech therapy services to help children overcome developmental concerns. Services are provided in the school setting throughout southwestern Illinois by licensed occupational therapists, occupational therapy assistants, physical therapists, physical therapist assistants and speech-language pathologists. **Email: www.Therakids.org**

