

# Why children need nature

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Found at: <http://www.helium.com/items/398344-why-children-need-nature>

Our [children](#) will inherit the most technologically advanced society ever witnessed on this planet. They will communicate with each other in ways we can't yet imagine, at speeds that will boggle our minds, exchanging information and ideas we can scarcely conceive.

This artificial world of information and technology may, at times, seem more real to them than the physical world they occupy. Which is why, more than ever, our children need to develop a flourishing relationship with nature. They need to understand how the natural world impacts everything they do, and how their actions affect nature for both good and ill.

Think [your children](#) don't need to develop a relationship with the natural world? Think again. The benefits of educating children about nature are many:

1. As obesity rates skyrocket in this country, children are falling prey to this cruel killer in growing numbers. It's vital to engage children in healthful activity. Children are more likely to maintain an activity if they find it enjoyable and entertaining. Involving them in nature can play a vital role in fighting childhood obesity. Healthful outdoor activities such as hiking, biking, camping, fishing, even gardening, can get [kids](#) moving and keep them active.
2. Every generation becomes stewards of the earth. While our children may be highly educated about the environment and how humans affect it, unless they feel a personal connection to the natural world, they won't feel the responsibility of that stewardship. Protecting the environment is fundamental to the survival of our species. It is not hubris to state that for the first time in the planet's history, a species has arisen with the power to destroy the very world that gives it life.
3. Studies show children are increasingly experiencing high levels of stress earlier in their lives than ever before. Spending time in the natural world, engaged in relaxing activities, can help reduce stress.
4. Learning about the natural world at an early age can introduce children to a range of career opportunities they might not otherwise consider. A [child](#) who grows up in a city might never think of becoming a [marine biologist](#) or a horticulturist unless he or she is introduced to the ocean, or taken for a walk in the woods.
5. Spending time together outdoors is a great way for children to bond with their [families](#). Activities such as camping and hiking teach children the importance of

teamwork and that each member of a team is vital to the group's overall success. Outdoor activities can teach children trust, teamwork, and the satisfaction of achievement.

For the first time in recorded history, the majority of humans on the planet now live in or near cities, rather than in the country. In this environment, it's more important than ever that children experience and appreciate the natural world. It is, after all, the world they will bequeath to their own children some day.