

Children and Outdoor Recreation Are a Perfect Match

The Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation releases a new video highlighting the connection between outdoor recreation and human health.

CAMP HILL, PENNSYLVANIA, THE UNITED STATES, September 14, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Pennsylvania's state parks and forests are free public resources that allow children and youth to "be outside exploring, being active, and engaging in physical activity in a safe and structured manner," says Colby Wesner, DO, a pediatric hospitalist, "the more active you are, the lower your BMI (Body Mass Index), the lower the risk for cardiovascular disease. So, it's very beneficial to engage kids in outdoor recreation at a very young age."

Such is the opening of the newly released, informative 4-minute video released by the [Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation](#) (PPFF). Funded through a Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Community Conservation Partnership Program grant, the video explores the important role access to the outdoors plays in the physical, mental and emotional health of Pennsylvania's children and youth.



"This video is one in a series of videos that PPFF has completed showcasing the important role

outdoor recreation plays in human health,' said Marci Mowery, President of PPF. "Investments in parks and forests are really investments in the health and well-being of the citizens of the Commonwealth."

Cassy Amour, chair of Harrisburg Inspiring Connections Outdoors (HICO), cameos in the video. Her organization seeks to share their love of nature and the outdoors with youth. Cassy says "our goal is to expose children to experience the outdoors. The biggest health movement you have is just pure exercise and movement."



Amori Melendez, a HICO member, agrees about the positive effects of outdoor exercise. "Especially on hiking trips, you are getting a good workout because there are some days that I've gone home and I'm like wow," she says.

However, outdoor recreation doesn't just impact physical health. In addition to the physical benefits, outdoor recreation has been shown to improve mental and emotional health. Colby Wesner says, "Being out in nature has a strong association with mental benefits, reducing stress, reducing anxiety, improving concentration, and decreasing hyperactivity."

Student Kevin Bustami describes the benefits, saying, "after going on a HICO field trip, I feel like I can study better because I have had peace. There is a lot more open-mindedness to studying and memory retention, remembering what you study."

Recreation and Children - A Perfect Match highlights how physical health, mental health, and emotional well-being are all intertwined. Just being outside for a half hour to an hour a day can be enough to reap the myriad of benefits that outdoor activity brings. The array of experiences you can find in Pennsylvania state parks and forests, from quiet contemplation of nature to family fun, is conducive to improving your children's wellbeing.

Mowery continues, "With so many health benefits it's clear, we all need access to reliable and well-maintained parks and forests systems."

To view Recreation and Children - A Perfect Match, visit PPF's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/c/PAParksandForests>. The video will also be shared on PPF's social media channels. A page helping parents explore the outdoors can be found on the PPF webpage at PaParksAndForests.org

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