

Little Acts with Nature:

Feeling healthier & happier through daily connections with nature



Adults Need Nature

Increasing urbanisation, busy lifestyles, our obsession with screen-based technologies, reduced access to green space, and increasing phobias about outdoor environments are all contributing to the decline in opportunities to connect with the natural world.

Urbanisation alone is emerging as one of the most important global health issues of the 21st century where cities are becoming known as being the epicenters for chronic, non-communicable physical and mental health conditions. Subsequently the role of nature in addressing this public health concern has now become a focal point, backed with over 40 years of research.¹

For every hour we spend on outdoor recreation, we spend just over seven hours in front of screens watching television or accessing the Internet.²

This decline in connection to the great outdoors has been linked to a number of mental and physical health concerns in children including obesity, anxiety, attention deficit disorder, poor cognitive development, low self-esteem, stress and even depression. Correlated with this, we are also seeing a reduction in the understanding, concern and support for the natural environment particularly amongst younger age groups.



¹ D F. Shanahan, R Bush, K J. Gaston, B B. Lin, J Dean, E Barber & R A. Fuller. (2016). Health Benefits from Nature Experiences Depend on Dose. Scientific Reports | 6:28551

² <http://treeday.planetark.org/documents/doc-1292-needing-trees-key-findings-2015.pdf>

Nature's Benefits

Research has shown that there is an array of health and wellbeing benefits associated with nature connection, including:

- **Physical health** – nature enhances our immune function, helps to improve attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), infectious diseases, surgery recovery, obesity, cardiovascular disease and many immune related diseases.
- **Mental health** – nature assists in reducing depression and anxiety disorders, improves sleep and overall wellbeing.
- **Liveability** – nature filters our urban pollutants, provides shade to lower temperatures within city environments and reduces erosion of soil into our waterways.
- **Belonging** - backyards, parks, community gardens, National Parks and State Forests all provide important places for communities to develop genuine social interactions, building a sense of belonging with place.



By choosing living and working environments that weave in opportunities to experience nature and the great outdoors, we can develop connections with nature that support a wonderful array of health, social, and environmental benefits.

Who we are

The Connective is a group of professionals from the health, environment and evidence specialist sectors that research, understand and tailor make nature -based programs so you and your community can connect better with nature. We invite you to participate in our programs, view the stories on our website, contribute to conversations and use the shared resources.



The Connective
—Living Better With Nature—
www.theconnective.org.au