



Department of
Environmental
Conservation

Youth, Forests, & Health

Connections, Collaborations, and Communities

2022 SFI/PLT ANNUAL CONFERENCE

COLLABORATING

FOR COMMUNITIES AND FORESTS



The Research

Healthy Trees, Healthy Lives

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Healthy Trees, Healthy Lives

<https://healthytreeshealthylives.org/>

Support

- Southern Group of State Foresters (started)
- Northeast-Midwest State Foresters Alliance
- Western Forestry Leadership Coalition

What you can find

- Health Benefits
- Resource & Research Library
- Stories of Inspiration
- Prescriptions (actions)



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Trees care for your brain

Kids who play in nature are more relaxed and attentive, this improves learning and performance in school.

- Matsuoka, Rodney H. 2010."Student Performance and High School Landscapes: Examining the Links. 2010." Landscape and Urban Planning 97 (2010): 273-282. Elsevier. Web. 16 February 2016.



Trees care for your lungs

Trees help keep our world clean and healthy by filtering particles out of the air we breathe, decreasing the risk of respiratory illnesses.

- Donovan, Geoffrey H., David T. Butry, Yvonne L. Michael, Jeffrey P. Prestemon, Andrew M. Liebhold, Demetrios Gatziolis, and Megan Y. Mao. 2013. "The Relationship Between Trees and Human Health: Evidence from the Spread of the Emerald Ash Borer." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 44.2 (2013): 139-45. Elsevier. Web. 13 January 2016.



Trees care for your little ones

Urban trees are found to promote higher birth weights and support good health in newborn babies.

- Dzhambov, Angel M., Donka D. Dimitrova, and Elena D. Dimitrakova. 2014. "Association Between Residential Greenness and Birth Weight: Systematic Review and Meta-analysis." *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening* 13 (2014): 621-29. Elsevier. Web. 12 January 2016.



C&NN and NAAEE's eeResearch

<https://naaee.org/eepro/research/library>

Support

- Children & Nature Network
- North American Association for Environmental Education

Research on environmental education topics

- environmental literacy
- benefits of connecting to nature
- fostering environmental behaviors



The value of parks for parents with young children

High-quality parks and safe, walkable, built environments can enhance neighborhood social capital in low-income communities of color

- Mullenbach, L. E., Larson, L. R., Floyd, M. F., Marquet, O., Huang, J., Alberico, C., et al.. (2022). Cultivating social capital in diverse, low-income neighborhoods: The value of parks for parents with young children. *Landscape and Urban Planning* , 219.



Pathways

- **Citizen Science**
- **Community Gardens & Green Markets**
- **Nature Play Spaces**
- **Climate Resiliency**

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Citizen Science

- iTree, MyTree, iTree Design
- OurTrees (beta) & iTree Canopy
- iNaturalist
- Urban Wildlife Information Network
- Backyard bird counts



urban wildlife information network



i-Tree

Tools for Assessing and Managing
Forests & Community Trees



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Community Gardens & Green Markets



- Youth-led green markets
- Inter-generational community gardens
- Multicultural community gardens



Nature Play Spaces

- Dever restored South Platte playground with natureplay spaces to keep natural connections for youth
- Monroe County, NY, used trees removed due to EAB for a temporary (3-year) playspace at Seneca Park



Community Resiliency thru Youth Employment

- RISE's ShoreCorps
- VCPA's Urban EcoTeens
- Seneca Park Zoo's Urban Ecologists



Outside the Box

- Diversifying partners
- Opening discussions
- Building relationships

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Connecting with Youth Requires New Ways

- Research is there: earlier, hands-on
- Seeing themselves or at least a variety of people
- Real-world problems to solve with real data
- Support for new thinking

Who to reach out to?

- Faith-based groups
- Who is not at the table?

How to engage these groups?

- Spend the time to build relationships
- Come to table with benefits & concrete things for the organizations



Thank You

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