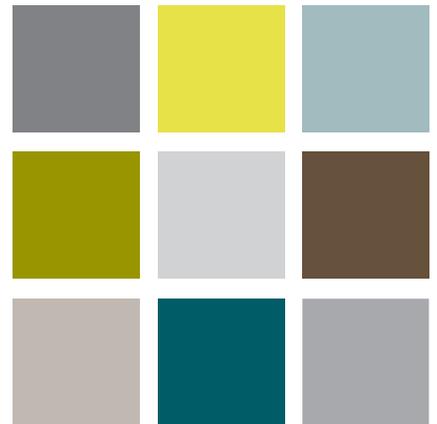


Exploring the Relationship between Childhood Experiences in Nature and Adult Environmentalism Impact Statement



SUMMARY

This work expands on the limited body of research that has associated childhood experiences in nature with environmental attitudes and behavior in adulthood. It focuses on a young adult population and examines the role of specific outdoor activities. Many of these activities are positively related to environmental attitudes and behaviors.

SITUATION

Increasing concern has been raised about the disengagement of children and youth from the natural environment and impacts this may have on environmental attitudes and behaviors in the future. Little research has been located that has examined the connection to nature from a long-term or life course perspective.

RESPONSE

Data were obtained from a two larger studies related to environmental attitudes, experiences, and curriculum interests conducted with young adults in 2010 and 2012. The data allowed for a follow up of a study conducted with adults ages 18-90 and published in 2006.



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IMPACT

The 2006 study has been widely cited in scholarly journal articles, practitioner reports, a best-selling book published in multiple languages, and environmental magazines in the U.S. and abroad; featured on a national website, The Children and Nature Network; included in a UNESCO Report; and used in Congressional testimony. It has contributed to the development of theory in the fields of environmental psychology and natural resources. Findings from the current study were presented at a national conference and a manuscript was published in 2013. In addition, an undergraduate honors thesis and Master's thesis were completed from this study.

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