Children & Nature
Being active in nature makes kids healthier.

- Children living within a 1/2 mile of a park are more likely to have higher levels of physical activity.
- There are more than 20,000 parks and 11,000 playgrounds—totaling over 1.5 million acres—in cities across the U.S.
- Children living within 2/3 mile of a park with a playground can be 5 times more likely to have a healthy weight.
- Exposure to nature can reduce stress levels by as much as 28% in children.
- AAP recommends children be physically active for at least 60 minutes throughout a day and limit time with electronic media to 2 hours per day.
- Even a 20-minute walk in nature can help children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) concentrate better.
- Kids spend more than 7 hours a day with various electronic media.
- More than 1 in 3 children in the U.S. are overweight or obese. Minority and low-income children are disproportionately affected.
- 3,600 youth are diagnosed each year with type-2 diabetes for which obesity is a major risk factor.
- 7 million children in the U.S. have asthma and overweight children are at higher risk.
- Parents, friends and family are the most influential to youth participation in outdoor activities.
- Time spent outdoors is predictive of higher levels of physical activity in children.
- Children have lost 25% of playtime and 50% of unstructured outdoor activity over recent decades.
- Outdoor exercise improves mental & physical well-being more so than indoor activity.
- Children who spend more time outdoors are less likely to be overweight by 27-41%.
- Nature Deficit Disorder was coined by author Richard Louv in 2005 to describe how children are spending less time outdoors and its impacts.

Sources:
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- The Trust for Public Land

Find out more: www.neefusa.org/health