

HEALTH NEWS

Green Is Good

YOUR YARD CONTRIBUTES TO YOUR HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Yards provide a safe place for families to gather and for children and pets to play. But did you know these living landscapes, including the everyday lawn, also provide a host of health and well-being benefits?

DID YOU KNOW?

Research says children's stress levels fall within minutes of seeing green spaces.¹

Research found that people moving to greener areas experienced an immediate improvement in mental health that was sustained for at least 3 years.²

Spending time in gardens can improve memory performance and attention span by 20%.³

Nature makes you nicer, enhancing social interactions, value for community, and close relationships.⁴

Researchers found that walking or running in green spaces, lowered anger, fatigue and feelings of depression, while increasing attention levels.⁵

Workers perform better and with greater accuracy when under the calming influence of nature.⁶

LIVING LANDSCAPES MAKE KIDS SMARTER

Researchers found that school children with more exposure to the outdoors performed better on cognitive testing.⁷

ADULTS ALSO BENEFIT

A systematic research review concluded "the balance of evidence indicates conclusively that knowing and experiencing nature makes us generally happier, healthier people."⁸

LIVING LANDSCAPES HELP YOU HEAL

Hospital patients exposed to window views of nature healed on average a full day faster.⁹

Children gain attention and working memory benefits when they are exposed to greenery.¹⁰

People who gardened for at least 30 minutes a week had lower body mass indexes (BMIs)—as well as higher levels of self-esteem and better moods, as well as lower levels of tension and stress.¹¹

Trees, shrubs, grass and flowering plants are integral to human health. They contribute to our mental and physical well-being.

SOIL IS THE NEW PROZAC?

Mycobacterium vaccae in soil mirrors the effect on neurons that drugs like Prozac provide. The bacterium stimulates serotonin production, which makes you relaxed and happier.¹²

Sources:

¹ Potential Natural Treatment for Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder: Evidence From a National Study, *American Journal of Public Health*, September 2004.

² Green Spaces Deliver Lasting Mental Health Benefits, *Science Daily*, January 7, 2014.

³ A Beauty Filled Therapy: Horticulture Management, January 1, 2016.

⁴ A Case-control study of the health and well-being benefits of allotment gardening, *Journal of Public Health*, October 29, 2015.

⁵ Can nature make us more caring? Effects of immersion in nature on intrinsic aspirations and generosity.

⁶ A systematic review of evidence for the added benefits to health of exposure to natural environments, *BMC Public Health*, August 4, 2010.

⁷ Humans and Nature How Knowing and Experiencing Nature Affect Well-Being, *Annual Reviews*, October 2013.

⁸ Green Spaces and Cognitive Development in Primary Schoolchildren, *PNAS* (May 2010).

⁹ Why Green Spaces are Good for Your Kid's Brain, *The Washington Post*, June 15, 2015.

¹⁰ "Reading Attention" Taken a Time Out in Nature, *Nature Second Step Foundation*, 2014.

¹¹ A case-control study of the health and well-being benefits of allotment gardening, *Journal of Public Health*, October 29, 2015.

¹² Sage Researchers Find Bacterium Enhances Learning, *The Sage Colleges*, June 1, 2011/Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 35, 1315-1329.

For more tips on maintaining a living landscape, even in drought conditions, go to:

opei.org/stewardship/



(NAPSA)—Your yard may do more for you and your family than you realize.