

# Children, Nature, and Outside Play

Kara M. Jones  
M.S. Candidate  
University of Tennessee  
Department of Forestry, Wildlife and Fisheries



October 19, 2011  
12:20 pm Room 160 PBB

<http://www.genesis-chiropractic.com>

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Outline:

- Introduction
- Why study?
- Research Objectives
- Proposed Methods and Analysis



<http://www.superstock.co.uk>

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# “How come it was more fun when you were a kid?”

(Louv, 2005)

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Introduction

- 2005: Book "Last Child in the Woods" published
- 2006: National Park Service & National Assoc. of State Park Directors signed a joint "Children and Nature Plan of Action"
- 2007: U.S. Forest Service launched "More Kids in the Woods"
- 2008: No Child Left Inside Coalition endorsed by over 60 organizations
- 2009: Federal Bill "No Child Left Inside Act" proposed
- 2010: Kaiser Foundation: two-thirds of children under age 6 watch 2 hours of television daily. Age 8-18: 11 hrs. of television and computer time daily.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What Is Nature Deficit Disorder?

**Definition:** A way to describe children who are spending less time outdoors which is resulting in a wide range of behavioral problems.

### Symptoms:

- Parental Fears
- Restricted Access to natural areas
- Increases in ADHD and obesity




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## What does the future hold?

### Health Concerns:

Lifespan

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Continued Increases in Obesity



<http://www.drpinna.com>

---

---

---

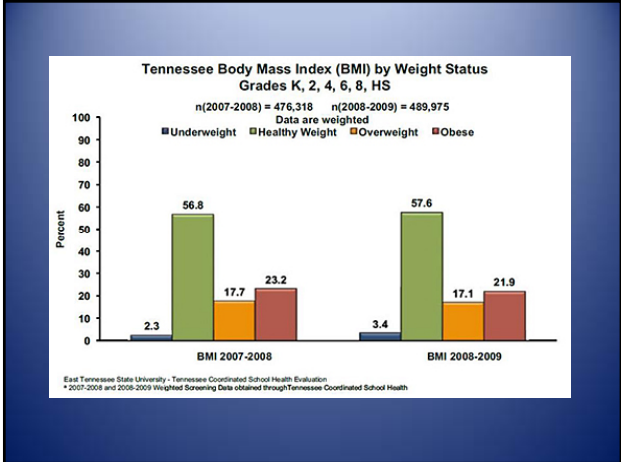
---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

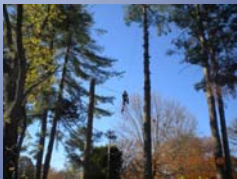
---

---

## What does the future hold?

Careers

Why did you choose this field?



Where are future workers going to come from?

If no one cares about nature, why keep wildlands and parks?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Research Objectives

How do children spend their time and what are the reason(s) children don't spend more time outside?



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Research Objectives

What types of outdoor activities do children engage in?

Structured



VS.

Unstructured



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Research Objectives

To what extent are children engaged in outdoor related organizations and how does this involvement vary by age and gender?



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Research Objectives

Where do children play outdoors and how satisfied are caretakers with the places available for the children to play?



<http://www.electricscotland.com>

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Methods

### Survey Design

Random Digit Dial (RDD)  
Survey Dates: July 2, 2009 through August 6, 2009  
1,137 interviews with 244 responses for children (age 5-17)



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Sample of Survey Questions Asked

General Demographic Information

Types of outdoor activities that the child has participated:

Team Sports

Individual Sports

Active Outdoor activities such as: Rowing, Hiking, Biking

Passive Outdoor activities: Bird watching, wildflower ID

Where does this person play the most often?

Why doesn't this person spend more time outside?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Sample of Survey Questions Asked

How many hours a day does this person:

Watch television

Spend on a computer

Play electronic games

How many hours a day does this person spend outdoors?

How many hours a day would you like to see them spend in outdoor play?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Statistics

Tests run:

- Simple difference of means (t-test)
- Chi-squared

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 19)



<http://www.alohafoundation.org/aloha-hive/activities>

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

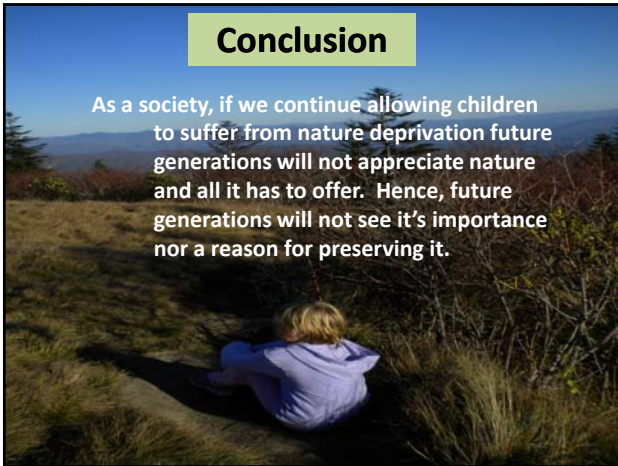
---

---

---

## Conclusion

As a society, if we continue allowing children to suffer from nature deprivation future generations will not appreciate nature and all it has to offer. Hence, future generations will not see it's importance nor a reason for preserving it.




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Works Sited

- [Boy jumping in leaves] [Photograph]. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://genesis-chiropractic.com>
- [Camp fire] [Photograph]. (n.d.) Retrieved from <http://www.alohafoundation.org/aloha-hive/activities>
- [Girls in tent reading] [Photograph]. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.superstock.co.uk/stock-photos-images/1555R-22859>
- [Playground surrounded by razor wire] [Photograph]. (n.d.) Retrieved from <http://www.electricscotland.com/history/mckelvie/080207.htm>
- [Television destroys children] [Photograph]. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.drpinna.com/televisiondestroys-children-5126>
- Childhood obesity prevention. (2010, Fall). Retrieved from TN Dept. of Health website: <http://www.tn.gov/education/schoolhealth/Obesity.html>
- Koch, S., and T. Waliczek. "The Effect of a Summer Garden Program on the Nutritional Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors of Children." *Journal of Horticultural Science and Biotechnology* 16 2006):620-624
- Louw, R. (2008). *Last Child in the Woods*. Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Paperbacks. (Original work published 2005)
- Tucker, P. (2006, May/June). Children's "nature deficit disorder" is a growing health threat. *World Trends & Forecasts*, 13.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Acknowledgements:

### Committee Members:

Dr. Mark Fly, Professor University of Tennessee  
Dr. David Ostermeier, Professor University of Tennessee,  
Dr. Stephanie Bohon, Associate Professor University of Tennessee

### Human Dimensions Lab:

Susan Schexnayder, Associate Director  
April Griffin, Research Specialist

Primary Funding Agency:



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Questions?



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---