

Why more outdoor time will make your kids better people – Part 2

In today's technology-saturated world, kids are spending more time looking at the screen, not playing in the green. Kids don't easily see the benefits of outdoor play like parents do. We grew up in the days of playing outdoors every day.



**BABY
READ** |

CAREN
VON HIPPEL

Follow along as we help make the case for playing outside this summer and beyond!

Kids who play outside after a down-pour develop a greater appreciation for all life. Most children won't need any coaxing to go outside after a rainstorm. But you can further coax them by going to a local park to study worms or walking through the neighborhood. Encourage the kids to play superhero and save the worms flooded out of their homes. Some kids are squeamish when the worms wiggle in their hands! For kids that are not fans of worms, try one of the sidewalk science experiments at <https://tinybeans.com/awesome-sidewalk-science-experiments/>. Search the sky for rainbows and talk to kids about how they are formed and enjoy their beautiful colors.

Kids who encounter more greenery have better focus. The digital world makes it difficult to get a kid's attention, let alone keep it for more than a few minutes. And it's especially challenging for parents with ADHD kids. Several studies published by researchers at the University of Illinois discovered that "children with ADHD who play in outdoor green spaces have milder symptoms than those who play indoors or in an urban setting." Add some fun with water games, go to a park and play a game of identifying bugs or flowers or plant a garden and watch it grow.

Children gain confidence and climb the social ladder. Summer is the perfect opportunity to reacquaint little ones with fresh air and rekindle their first love, the playground. According to Maria Magher, "Children who are allowed to explore through play can learn new skills and overcome challenges, which can promote self-confidence, resiliency and self-advocacy, all of which can help children learn how to develop healthy relationships and to become leaders."

Abstracted by Julia Robison-Schultze, a BabyRead volunteer, from "7 Reasons Why More Outdoor Time Will Make Your Kids Better People," *BabyTalk*, University of North Carolina.

BABYREAD'S MISSION is to raise the literacy level in Oconee County by encouraging moms/caregivers to read daily to children from birth. This prepares children for success in school and in life. Readers read with moms/caregivers in person at town or school libraries. We have a COVID option. Questions? Contact Caren von Hippel, Ph.D., president, at babyread@charter.net or (864) 643-8083 or visit babyread.org.