

#60 INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF FOREST SCHOOL SESSIONS ON CHILDREN'S PHYSICAL ACTIVITY LEVELS

MERSEY FOREST

Journal, 2013

Topic for advocacy HEPA - Physical Activity and Health / Education and Active Schools

<http://www.merseyforest.org.uk/files/documents/1341/Austin,%20C.,%20Knowles,%20Z.%20and%20Sayers,%20J.%20Forest%20School%20Evaluation.pdf>

Description of the good example

The concept of 'Forest School' has origins in Scandinavia and got adopted in schools in the UK. Its aim is to provide children with greater understanding of the world through academic, creative and physical development and last but not least developing their personal and communication skills. This study primarily focus on the benefits of physical activity in Forest Schools, in order to investigate if these school sessions increase levels of physical activity of children.

Target - Who can best use this example or document?

School settings, local authorities, national governments, organisations and communities

Further information

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**All information in this entry is sourced from the link above and contact mentioned in the document.*

Highlights and outcomes

Why could it be useful for your organisation and advocacy?

Children of all ages spend a huge amount of their in school. Forest School is a specialist in the context of outdoor and woodland education. It aims to provide a unique combination of learning and development, promoting mindful stillness and discovery of nature through play and free choice. The practical activities of Forest School, such as using tools and fires, create many learning opportunities to enhance emotional wellbeing and resilience of children and also teach them how to regain skills, which have been lost due to the technological culture and narrowed school curriculum of today.

Learning points - What can we learn from it?

The results of this study have shown, that the Forest School facilitates interactions with the natural environment and that activities undertaken in the sessions provided opportunities to develop participants knowledge and interest in nature and the world around them. Higher sensitivity towards nature also been revealed amongst Forest School participants. However, it is hard to measure whether knowledge and interest in nature of Forest School participants also transferred throughout their family environment and influenced family's attitude towards nature.