# **What is the Importance of Nature in Child Development?**

**Source:** angelbearyoga.com

Since prehistoric days humans have shared a strong bond with nature. Even today, when technology surrounds you, can you think of living closed off from nature? Whether you live in the heart of the city or the outskirts, you always find a way to connect with nature. You visit a nearby park or bring a part of nature home in the form of terrace or balcony gardens. Why do you do it? You do it because being close to nature brings peace to the mind.

Most of you must have had the luck of being up close with nature. Even twenty years back, you could see more trees. You could see children playing and maybe you were one of the lucky one who played in nature’s lap. But what about your child? Does your child spend time in nature? Can they spend even an hour in the open air- on the terrace if not outdoors?

If you are close to nature, you get health, mind and heart benefits. Without being close to nature, your child may feel stressed or have anxiety issues. They may also suffer from obesity and attention deficit disorders. Studies have also proven the positive importance of nature in your child’s growth. Your child benefits when they are close to nature. They have better physical and [emotional health](https://angelbearyoga.com/child-introduction-to-nature-abundance/) along with several long term benefits.

### **Benefits and Importance of Nature in Child Development**

Nature stimulates and engages all the senses of your child. It helps in their social, emotional and intellect growth too. Here are some of the benefits of nature for your child-

##### **1. Nature Improves Children’s Attention Span**

Children who are good in studies and other activities have a longer span of attention. Today, most children have attention related problems. They can’t focus on one thing for long. This is because often they have a lot of things to attend to. Homework, revision, extra-curricular activities, extra classes- the list goes on! What do you think can help them focus better? Since the tasks that your child has to do won’t decrease, they need to expand their attention span. When your child plays in the park or tends to flowers in the garden, they create free space in their mind. They worry less. You can watch the stars and the moon at night with your child. You can take your child out on picnics. All these actions will improve your child’s concentration and lead to better grades and healthy body, mind and heart.

##### **2. Nature Lowers Children’s Stress Levels**

With so much competition now, even children feel stressed. The huge syllabus and heavy books add on to the stress level. But nature activities for kids lower their stress and anxiety.

When you take your child in wide open and green spaces, it helps them breathe and relax their senses! [Studies](https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00722/full) have shown that holding a class one day a week outside lowers cortisol levels of students. They adapted better to stress than children who only had classes inside. Research proves that children close to nature have increased self-worth. They cope with distress better.

##### **3. Time Outdoors in Nature Increases Physical Fitness of Kids**

When your child spends time in nature, they feel active and fit. Your child develops better hand eye coordination too. When they breathe in deeply their lung capacity increases. Improved physical fitness has an important hidden benefit too.

##### **4. Improves Eyesight and Bone Density**

##### A study in 2011 found that children who spent more time in nature had better eyesight. Outdoors, your child gets more exposure to sunlight. It increases their Vitamin D levels that improves bone density and dental health.

##### **5. Time in Nature Creates Well Adjusted Children**

When your child plays computer games alone, they don’t interact with other children. When you take your child to a part or a nature camp they spend time with others who are their age. Thus, nature improves your child’s social skills. If your child is overly active, they may learn to slow down and be gentle towards others. They will also learn to recognize feelings and help their friends who appear hurt or sad.

##### **6. Increases Creativity and Problem Solving Skills**

This holds the utmost importance of nature in child development. Exposure to nature increases your child’s creative spirit. It also develops their problem solving skills. Your child feels free in the lap of nature. Unlike games that come with instructions, in nature your child can create their own kingdom with twigs, stones and leaves. Nature encourages children to invent their own games. Your child finds shapes in clouds, patterns in pebbles and what not! Nature teaches your child abundance- something that no intelligent modern game can. Here are some ways in which you can [introduce your child to nature’s abundance](https://angelbearyoga.com/child-introduction-to-nature-abundance/) and grow their creativity.

##### **7. Nature and emotional intelligence**

Studies and screen time can never offer the wide range of emotions in a child that nature can. The colours of the rainbow inspire awe. The pupa- where a little caterpillar becomes a majestic butterfly creates wonder! There are several emotions that only nature can instill in your child. This is important to become emotionally intelligent. For instance, when a child finds a shell on the beach, he or she feels excited. The moment when they lose it, they feel sad. They again pick another one to get back the same excitement! Allow your child to experience such emotions in the lap of nature. Once they are aware of these emotions, they will be able to regulate it better and become emotionally intelligent.

##### **8. Some Learning Benefits**

One major importance of nature is that it offers countless learning opportunities. Children are curious as many things are new to them. They explore and experience different sights, sounds and objects. These are a thing of wonder to them. This sense of wonder turns into a sense of exploration. When you let your child learn from nature, they explore and learn new things about their surroundings. They learn about the different types of flowers, insects, birds, fish and rocks.  They take risks while playing, learn from their mistakes and try again. This way your child will also gain self-resilience and confidence.

### **Some Nature Activities for Kids**

These are some activities you can do with your children to get them closer to nature. These fun games and activities increase their love for nature. It enriches their still growing minds and bodies.

1. Ask your child to listen to birds sing and dogs bark. Ask them to point out the different sounds they listen to.
2. Dig and build mud forts with your child. Build stories around them.
3. Gaze at clouds with your child. Match them with objects like pillows, animals and other figures.
4. Observe insects flying or crawling in mud.
5. Collect fruits and seeds with your child if visiting an orchard.
6. Help your child make figures from twigs and leaves.
7. Let your child climb trees while ensuring their safety.
8. Let your child play on jungle gyms. It’s a fun activity which increases kids’ sense of balance and strength.
9. Ask your child to play cops and robbers and hop scotch.

A thing to note. If you are alone with your child then join in their games. But if your child is with friends then give them space. You can watch and observe from a safe distance.

### **Conclusion**

So, these were some examples of the importance of nature in your child’s growth. You as a parent should try to increase outdoor activities for your child.