

Adolescents and Nature Connectedness

By Zsuzsanna Telekesi

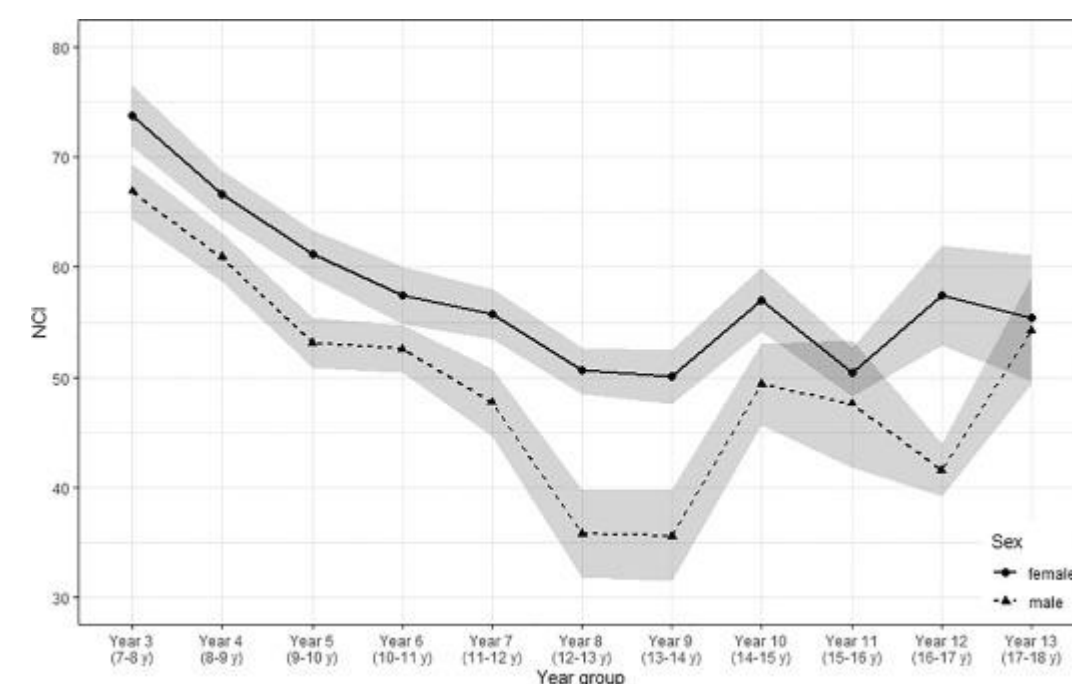
What is Nature Connectedness

The term "nature connectedness" describes a person's feeling of affinity, connection, and bond with the natural world. The relationship between people and nature includes not just their physical interactions but also their emotional, cognitive, and spiritual aspects. (Asher, 2021)

Introduction

Growing research shows that nature is very important regarding mental health and wellbeing. As small as 30 minutes a week spent outdoors has positive effects on mental health among adolescents. (Piccininni, 2018)

There seems to be a big dip in nature connectedness after the age of 10, just the beginning of adolescence. (Price, 2022)



Decrease in nature connectedness during COVID (Jackson, 2021)

Li et al., 2018.

They investigated the relations between the adolescents' moods and daily level of connectedness with nature.

- 155 participants wore a GPS for 4 days and completed a mood questionnaire every day
- used Google Street View to evaluate the environment where the participants went



Findings:

- Average 50 minutes outdoors on weekdays, 61 minutes on weekends
- The bigger the concentration of nature was, the less depression, anger, and fatigue were reported
- Adolescents' mood has a positive correlation with their exposure to nature.

Owens et al., 2023.

- 76 adolescents (61 female, 15 male)
- Two conditions: urban and nature.
- A brief, 6-minute virtual exposure



Influences

Adolescents' sense of connection to nature can be influenced by several factors, such as early exposure to the outdoors (Rosa, 2018), accessibility to green areas, societal and cultural perspectives on nature, and the role that families and educators play in encouraging healthy relationships with the natural world. (Cleland, 2010)



Conclusion

Encouraging teenagers to engage with nature is not only good for their immediate health but can also help them grow into responsible, environmentally aware adults. A strong bond between teenagers and nature can be fostered by promoting outdoor activities, introducing nature-based teaching into school curricula, and developing easily accessible green places.

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