

# YOUR YARD

## CONTRIBUTES TO YOUR HEALTH & WELL-BEING

Yards provide a safe place for families to gather and for children and pets to play. But did you know these living landscapes, including the everyday lawn, also provide a host of health and well-being benefits?

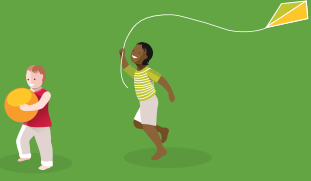
### DID YOU KNOW?

Research says children's stress levels fall within minutes of seeing green spaces.<sup>1</sup>



Research found that people moving to greener areas experienced an immediate improvement in mental health that was sustained for at least 3 years.<sup>2</sup>

Spending time in gardens can improve memory performance and attention span by 20%.<sup>4</sup>



Nature makes you nicer, enhancing social interactions, value for community, and close relationships.<sup>5</sup>



Researchers found that walking or running in green spaces, lowered anger, fatigue and feelings of depression, while increasing attention levels.<sup>6</sup>



Workers perform better and with greater accuracy when under the calming influence of nature.<sup>3</sup>



### LIVING LANDSCAPES MAKE KIDS SMARTER

Researchers found that school children with more exposure to the outdoors performed better on cognitive testing.<sup>8</sup>



### ADULTS ALSO BENEFIT

A systematic research review concluded "the balance of evidence indicates conclusively that knowing and experiencing nature makes us generally happier, healthier people."<sup>7</sup>



### LIVING LANDSCAPES HELP YOU HEAL

Hospital patients exposed to window views of nature healed on average a full day faster.<sup>10</sup>



Children gain attention and working memory benefits when they are exposed to greenery.<sup>9</sup>



Trees, shrubs, grass and flowering plants are integral to human health. They contribute to our mental and physical well-being.



### SOIL IS THE NEW PROZAC?

Mycobacterium vaccae in soil mirrors the effect on neurons that drugs like Prozac provide. The bacterium stimulates serotonin production, which makes you relaxed and happier.<sup>12</sup>



People who gardened for at least 30 minutes a week had lower body mass indexes (BMIs)-as well as higher levels of self-esteem and better moods, as well as lower levels of tension and stress.<sup>11</sup>

#### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> A Potential Natural Treatment for Attention- Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder: Evidence From a National Study, American Journal of Public Health, September 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Green Spaces Deliver Lasting Mental Health Benefits, Science Daily, January 7, 2014

<sup>3</sup> A Beauty Filled Lifestyle, Nursery Management, January 1, 2016.

<sup>4</sup> A case-control study of the health and well-being benefits of allotment gardening, Journal of Public Health, October 29, 2015

<sup>5</sup> Can nature make us more caring? Effects of immersion in nature on intrinsic aspirations and generosity.

<sup>6</sup> A systematic review of evidence for the added benefits to health of exposure to natural environments, BMC Public Health, August 4, 2010

<sup>7</sup> Humans and Nature: How Knowing and Experiencing Nature Affect Well-Being, Annual Reviews, October 2013

<sup>8</sup> Green Spaces and Cognitive Development in Primary Schoolchildren, PNAS (May 2015)

<sup>9</sup> Why Green Spaces are Good For Your Kid's Brain, The Washington Post, June 15, 2015

<sup>10</sup> Feeling Stressed? Take a Time Out in Nature, Nature Sacred (TKF Foundation), 1984

<sup>11</sup> A case-control study of the health and well-being benefits of allotment gardening, Journal of Public Health, October 29, 2015

<sup>12</sup> Sage Researchers Find Bacterium Enhances Learning, The Sage Colleges, June 1, 2010 Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 35, 1315-1329

For more tips on maintaining a living landscape, even in drought conditions, go to:

[opei.org/stewardship/](http://opei.org/stewardship/)



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