

# Is outdoor play and learning important for kids?

## Key insights from parents around Australia

99% of Aussie teachers agree that time outdoors is critical for children to reach their full potential.<sup>1</sup>

But do parents agree it's important for kids to spend more time outdoors?

A new study by IPSOS of 1000+ parents across Australia for Outdoor Classroom Day found:

While **80%** of parents encourage their child to get outdoors as much as possible, just over half (**55%**) of parents say their child regularly plays outside

**75%** are concerned for their safety playing outdoors, while **68%** are feeling over-scheduling children's lives is getting in the way of free play outside

Technology is the greatest challenge to spending more time outdoors: Parents report their children are spending three times as much time on devices or watching TV than playing outdoors.

**83%** of parents agree children are losing connection to the natural world and **83%** of parents wish their children had a more simple, carefree childhood.<sup>2</sup>

Research shows when we love something, we care for it.  
So let's get our kids outside!

69% of parents believe outdoor play keeps children physically healthy, makes them happier (65%) and keeps them mentally healthy (63%)

**This means 1 in 3 don't believe in or aren't aware of the most basic benefits to playing outdoors.**

Parents have low levels of confidence for the benefits of outdoor learning for academic performance (1 in 10) engagement in school subjects (1 in 6); increasing resilience (14%) or regulating behaviour (11%)

Yet research shows that outdoor learning can actually create improvements across all academic disciplines<sup>3</sup> and 78% of children who spend regular time in unstructured play are better able to concentrate and perform better in the classroom.<sup>4</sup>

**Overall, the majority (83%) of parents agree there should be more outdoor learning and play in schools.**

## So how can we make this happen?

Get as many children learning and playing outdoors for Outdoor Classroom Day, led by Nature Play and supported by OMO, to turn one day of outdoor learning now into every day in the future.

Learn more at:

[www.outdoorclassroomday.com.au](http://www.outdoorclassroomday.com.au)



### Notes:

Outdoor Play and Learning in Australia: A summary of parental attitudes from around the nation report was undertaken by IPSOS 28 August to 6 September 2018 as an online quantitative survey of 1000+ parents, men and women aged 25-60 years, with at least one child between the ages of 5-16 years. The survey is nationally representative across gender, age and location (metro/regional areas, states).

1. Outdoor Classroom Day Survey 2017, accessed 17 October 2018 <<https://outdoorclassroomday.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/FINAL-Project-Dirt-Survey-Outdoor-Play-and-Learning-at-School-2018-15.05.18.pdf>>

2. Prisk, C. and Cusworth, D. (2018). From muddy hands and dirty faces... to higher grades and happy places, Hackney, UK.

3. Sobel, D. 2004, 'Place-based education: Connecting classrooms and communities', Great Barrington, MA: The Orion Society and The Myrin Institute, vol.31, no.1

4. Coyle, K. J. (2010). How Outdoor Education and Outdoor School Time Create High Performance Students, London: National Wildlife Federation.