

The Minnesota Experience: Getting to Solutions
Large Group Session (MacMillan Auditorium)
Children in Nature: Healthy Development by Design Conference
Minnesota Landscape Arboretum - November 6, 2008

Part One: Challenges

Fear factor, safety (x 6)

Liability (x 3)

Shift in values of both family/parents, and society at large (x 2)

Parent involvement (x 2)

Funding for schools, and out of school time programs (x 2)

Built environment VS natural environment

Civic engagement - getting involved

Time crunch

Parental attitude (prioritizing)

Perception of nature

Communication & language

Accessibility

Teacher education

Space management

Restrictive programs (opposite of free range)

Lack of patience- want change now!

Fear of failure, natural consequences

Use of natural space vs. protection

Engaging participants in design process

Lack of appropriate outdoor "gear"

Toxins, allergies

Part Two: Solutions

Community gardening, local food production and preparation (x 3)

Educate teachers, health professionals about nature deficit, and potential Rx programs/ideas (x 2)

Neighborhoods - reinvest in social capital (x 2)

Counter fear with benefits of outdoors (x 2)

Use technology to engage children, cell phones pictures (x 2)

Communication: "Define Nature" as culturally appropriate to different audience groups

Education - parents, families

Educate media

Reverse education; kids educate parents

Create outside social events for children

Importance of Policy Change Cycle

Handbook for adults, educators

Develop/recruit champions for the cause, spokespersons

Use of media to raise public awareness

Time element - plan for "green" time

Engage grandparents

Desensitize fear

Create healthy balance in daily life

Youth voice

Counter fear through community building

Substitute science for nature, nature across the curriculum

Medical community helps to lead the way

We can do it here, we can do it now - models are out there

Intergenerational relationships, learning from each other

Maintaining open space to allow this to happen

Working with local municipalities, policy makers

Professional education, looking to higher education to prepare

Create demonstration models, design, and use