Improving Public Health With Trees
Practical Applications

Kathleen Wolf, Ph.D.
Research Social Scientist

University of Washington (Seattle)
School of Environmental and Forest Sciences

Chesapeake Tree Canopy Summit
14 January 2020
Evidence to Action

40 years of research
nearby nature for health benefits
1,000s of published articles
ready for research to application
ADHD and nature contact

- 17 children aged 7-12 with diagnosed ADHD
- 20-minute guided walks
  - Park
  - Neighborhood
  - Downtown
- Pre-walk puzzles
- Post-walk cognitive test

Faber Taylor & Kuo. 2009. Journal of Attention Disorders
Healthy Microbiome

- control obesity & asthma
- boost immune function
- improve mental health

need contact with ‘Old Friends”

Bloomfield et al. 2016 Perspectives in Public Health

put aside the Hygiene Hypothesis
Create Forests!
Fiddleheads Forest School
Washington Park Arboretum (Seattle)
cognitive social & physical learning
health agencies recommend moderate activity for health promotion & disease prevention

parks, active living, active transit
Walking Programs

children
elders
families
Walking Meetings

creativity, energy, communication, health
Parks Prescription

Date: ____________________________
Dr: ______________________________
Name: ____________________________

I recommend:
☐ Walking  ☐ Other: ________________

______________ minutes a day
______________ days per week

* Health Canada suggests moderate activity of 30 minutes per day | 5 days a week

Benefits of daily activity
- Improve overall physical and mental health
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Reduce the risk of diabetes and other chronic conditions
- Lower cholesterol levels
- Manage stress and anxiety

Signature: ________________________
Green Streets for Walkability

evidence of lower frustration and higher meditation when moving into the greener streets

Experience the restorative powers of nature and join us for Strolls for Well-Being, a free 10-week program offered at Bloedel Reserve. If not already a member, participants are given a temporary membership to

**DAY-USE STROLLS:**
Since introducing the Strolls for Well-Being program in 2014, hundreds of people have benefited from the healing effects of nature.
Shinrin yoku (forest bathing)
Shinrin yoku (forest bathing)

- extensive research
- restorative experiences
- workers retirees
- networked system, 52 bases in Japan
The medicine of being in the forest

We are the leading global voice for forest bathing and forest therapy

Santa Rosa, California
Shinrin-yoku (forest bathing)
Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Bethesda, MD

- Iraq/Afghan wars: Brain injury and PTSD in 30% of force
- Military/Vet suicides: 20% of all U.S. suicides
- Drugs and surgery relatively *ineffective*

**project support:** The TKF Foundation, Nature Sacred program

**slides credit:** Frederick Foote, M.D.
Project Manager for the Green Road Project
The Green Road Project
A model program of the Institute for Integrative Health
Naval Support Activity Bethesda
Home of Walter Reed National Military Medical Center
woody debris :: fallen tree trunks symbolize the fallen soldiers’ legacy in conflicts
Human Dimensions of Urban Forestry and Urban Greening

featuring research on peoples' perceptions and behaviors regarding nature in cities

What's New?
Nature and Consumer Environments
Research about how the urban forest influences business district visitors.

Trees and Transportation
Studies on the value of having quality landscapes in urban roadsides.

Civic Ecology
Studies of human behaviors and benefits when people are active in the environment.

Policy and Planning
Integrating urban greening science with community change.

Green Cities: Good Health
human health & well-being research

Urban Forestry and Human Benefits
More resources, studies and links...

Projects Director
Kathleen L. Wolf, Ph.D.