



# Health & Environment

A National Environmental Education Foundation Program

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[www.neefusa.org/health.htm](http://www.neefusa.org/health.htm)



## Our Program

The goal of the Health & Environment Program is to advance environmental knowledge among health professionals in order to improve public health. Through a variety of initiatives, we facilitate the integration of environmental health into healthcare provider education and practice, with a special emphasis on children and other populations disproportionately impacted by environmental pollutants.

## New Tools and Resources for Health Professionals to Encourage Outdoor Time for Children Helping Children to Reconnect with Nature

Recognizing the importance of outdoor play to children's health and well-being, NEEF has updated its [Pediatric Environmental History Screening Form](#) to encourage more outdoor time for children. Today's sedentary lifestyle has contributed to many health problems impacting our children, possibly putting them at risk of having a shorter lifespan than their parents. Time spent outdoors and in nature can potentially increase levels of physical activity, reduce stress, aid in healthy development, and serve as a coping mechanism for attention disorders, helping children to lead healthier lives.



NEEF's Screening Form now includes questions on the amount of time children spend outdoors, and watching TV, using a computer, or playing video games. This one-page form is designed to be administered by the primary health care provider in less than five minutes in order to capture most of the common environmental exposures to children. The [Pediatric Environmental History Primer](#) provides background information on issues included in the history form and has been revised to include a section on exposure to the outdoor environment.

In addition, our [Children and Nature webpage](#) contains helpful online resources, a comprehensive [Fact Sheet](#), and a [PowerPoint presentation](#) related to the health benefits of nature.

**Pediatric Environmental History Initiative Advisory Committee:** James Roberts, MD, MPH (chair); Sophie Balk, MD; Ruth Etzel, MD, PhD; Joel Forman, MD; Christine Johnson, MD; Lillian Mood, RN, MPH; and Bonnie Rogers, DrPH, FAAN.

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