

# Get the facts

## YOUR MOOD ON NATURE

### ABSTRACT

(i.e. a sample of what's to come)

Does spending more time in close contact with nature lead to a better mood? In this study researchers found that it does! Read on to get the full details.

### INTRODUCTION

(i.e. why is this research important)

In 2013 41% of grade 7-12 students in British Columbia said that their mental health was excellent, but when students were asked again in 2018, only 32% said their health was excellent (see the report [here](#)).

To figure out how to improve our mood, we need to study what leads to a good mood and what leads to a bad mood. The researchers who conducted this study chose to test whether exposure to nature affects high school students' moods.

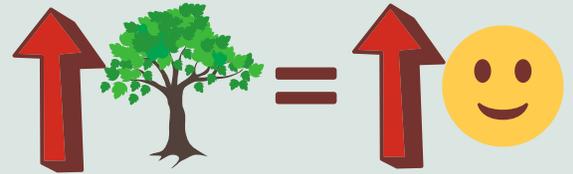
### METHODS

(i.e. how the researchers tested their question)

155 high school students in Illinois, United States, wore a GPS watch for 4 days in a row. At the end of each day they logged onto a computer and completed a survey to rate their mood. The researchers then used the data from the GPS to see exactly where the students went during those four days and, using Google Maps, they measured how much time students spent close to nature. This included if they walked past a lawn, or drove through a forest. The researchers then tested whether students who spent more time close to nature had more positive scores on their the mood questionnaires.

### RESULTS

(i.e. what the researchers found)



The more time students were exposed to nature, the more likely they were to have a positive mood at the end of the day.

### DISCUSSION

(i.e. what do the results mean?)

If you are a high school student, these results mean that spending more time close to nature might be a good way to improve your mood.

The results from this study can also be used to persuade city officials and/or organizations to add more nature to your community. Is there somewhere you spend a lot of time that could use some "greening"?

Read the original study here: [Li, D., Deal, B., Zhou, X., Slavenas, M., & Sullivan, W. C. \(2018\). Moving beyond the neighbourhood: Daily exposure to nature and adolescents' mood. \*Landscapes and Urban Planning\*, 173: 33-34. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2018.01.009>](#)

# Try it yourself

## YOUR MOOD ON NATURE

### TEST OUT THE RESULTS ON YOURSELF OR FIND A WILLING PARTICIPANT IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD

The only things you need to complete this experiment are a way of recording your mood at the end of each day (i.e. computer, or piece of paper), and safe access to nature.

Step 1: Decide on two days in a row where you won't be doing anything out of the ordinary. Pick one day to be the **Nature Day** and the other day to be the **Indoor Day** (this is a variation from the original study because we can't send out GPS watches).

Step 2:

- On the **Nature Day**, spend more time close to nature. Go out in your backyard, walk past your neighbour's lawn, or drive by a wooded spot in your community.
- On the **Indoor Day**, spend less time near nature. Stay indoors for most of the day (it's still ok to spend some time outside, just less than on your Nature Day).

Step 3: At the end of both your Nature Day and your Indoor Day, between 8:00PM and 11:59PM, write down how you are feeling. Include as much detail as possible. Make sure you also write down which day it is.

Step 4: Compare your moods from each day. Was your mood more positive one day versus the other? Why do you think that was?

### HOW DID IT GO?

Were your results the same as what the researchers found in their study?

- There are lots of different things that can affect how we are feeling throughout the day. How could you make sure that any differences in mood between the two days was due to your exposure to nature? What are some other things that affect mood? How can you control for them?
- In research it is important to repeat studies multiple times to make sure that the findings are true in different populations of people, at different times and in different places. If your results were different from the original study that doesn't mean that the first study is untrue, but it might not be the same in your specific situation. Alternatively, you might be what researchers call **an outlier**.

Read the original study here: [Li, D., Deal, B., Zhou, X., Slavenas, M., & Sullivan, W. C. \(2018\). Moving beyond the neighbourhood: Daily exposure to nature and adolescents' mood. \*Landscapes and Urban Planning\*, 173: 33-34. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2018.01.009>](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2018.01.009)

# Mood reflection

## YOUR MOOD ON NATURE

### DAY 1

This is my (check one):

Nature Day

Indoor Day

I am feeling..

### DAY 2

This is my (check one):

Nature Day

Indoor Day

I am feeling..

Read the original study here: [Li, D., Deal, B., Zhou, X., Slavenas, M., & Sullivan, W. C. \(2018\). Moving beyond the neighbourhood: Daily exposure to nature and adolescents' mood. \*Landscapes and Urban Planning\*, 173: 33-34. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2018.01.009>](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2018.01.009)