



Resources for Outdoor Learning and Outdoor Classrooms

Benefits of Outdoor Learning— Use these resources to help demonstrate why outdoor learning is essential for students.

[8 Proven Benefits of Outdoor Learning](#) – Blog post

[Increased academic performance](#) – American Institutes for Research report

[Improve emotional, intellectual and behavioral development](#) – Evergreen report

[Improve student health - Reduce stress](#) – Improve health by diversifying physical learning experiences

[Build a sense of place](#) – Connect to nature; combat nature deficit disorder

[Children and Nature Network](#) – Research and resources to help demonstrate the benefits of learning outdoors; excellent printable graphics

[National Wildlife Federation Schoolyard Habitats](#) – Benefits to students of increasing natural habitat on school campuses and utilizing those spaces for learning

Planning and Designing Your Outdoor Space – Use these resources to help determine the best way to utilize your existing outdoor spaces, get ideas for improving your outdoor learning environments, and get expert assistance in developing plans for constructing outdoor classrooms.

Green Schoolyards America – [Creating Outdoor Spaces](#)

- [School Infrastructure Inequity](#)
- [Inclusive Design for Outdoor Classrooms](#)
- [Campus Assessment Tool](#)

Nature Explore – [Outdoor Classroom Design](#)

CDC – [Shade Planning for Schools](#)

Project Learning Tree – [Tips and Tricks for Creating an Outdoor Classroom](#)

Teaching in Outdoor Spaces – Use these resources to help get tips, tricks, and activities that can help improve educators' success in outdoor teaching.

Green Schoolyards America

- [Positive Outdoor Experiences](#)
- [Outdoor Classroom Management](#) – Good rubric for best practices in outdoor instruction

Education Outside

- [Best Practices for Outdoor Instruction](#)

National and Local Case Studies – Related specifically to reopening safely due to COVID-19, but the ideas and resources are also very helpful for general use

Green Schoolyards America – [Case Studies](#)

- [Waldorf School in DuPage](#)

Project Learning Tree – Tips for Teaching Outside

- [Early Childhood](#)
- [Elementary Grades](#)
- [Middle and High School](#)





Illinois Resources –

[Environmental Education Association of Illinois](#)

- [Mini-Grant Program](#) – Funding for supplies, plants, books, PD, etc.
- [Earth Force Illinois](#) – Environmental action civics training program; funding this coming school year for student led sustainability/green school focused projects
- [Project Learning Tree](#) – Professional development opportunities
- [Project WILD](#) – Professional development opportunities
- [Become a Member](#)

Illinois Green Alliance –

- [IL Green Ribbon Schools Program](#)

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

- [Schoolyard Habitat Grant Program](#)