

How to Get Kids Pumped About Nature When They'd Rather Be on Their Phones

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"Focus on making one small change at a time, and gradually move the needle in the right direction."

One walk at a time

The amount of time kids spend on screens today is a huge issue. The average teenager is on a screen for 7 to 9 hours a day, which is just way too much. I'm not against screens—they're a part of our lives—but the problem is that while they're on screens, they're not getting outside, they're not moving, and they're not spending time in the community with friends.

To get kids off screens and into nature, I think it's really important to **start small and build from there**. Every child is different, and some might resist going outside at first, but that doesn't mean we should give up. It's about finding solutions that work within what's reasonable for you as a parent. Maybe you start with just one walk a week, and then gradually increase that to two walks. You'll likely find that once they're out there, they enjoy it, and it starts to become part of their routine.

How nature outshines meds

Exercise is a key way to get that dopamine hit that kids often seek from screens. Almost every study shows that **physical activity works better than any other medication** meant to improve mood and mental health. Whether it's playing in the park, going for a hike, or just taking a walk, these activities help ground kids and balance their mood in a way that screens just can't.

To help kids get started with exercise, don't overcomplicate it. Start with something simple, like a family walk after dinner or playing catch in the yard. It doesn't have to be a big deal—just get them to move a little bit. The key here is consistency. You want to ease them into being more active without any pressure.

Sure, it's not going to happen overnight, but if you keep at it, these little changes will start to add up. Over time, you'll see that getting your kids into nature and off their screens will significantly improve their behaviour and overall health.