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## **Study finds nature exposure leads to better health** *People who went outside as children more likely to have better mental health in adulthood*

**BARCELONA, Spain** – European researchers found that adults who did not spend much time in nature as a child are more likely to have worse mental health.

“Staying cooped up inside addicted to a tablet or watching television can negatively impact a child’s mental health in the future, and no parent wants that,” said Sandra Marquez, a researcher from the Barcelona Institute for Global Health, also referred to as ISGlobal.

Four European cities were chosen for the study including Barcelona, Spain; Stoke-on-Trent, England; Doetinchem, Netherlands; and Kaunas, Lithuania.

“We wanted a diverse range of responses to see if nature exposure truly impacted one’s mental health,” said researcher Marta Cirach from ISGlobal.

Over 3,500 respondents were surveyed between the ages of 18 and 75. They were asked questions about their age, gender, childhood, adulthood and perception of nature.

“Barcelona residents had the closest available greenspace and a greater regard for natural outdoor environments,” said Marquez. “This could be why many Barcelona respondents had better mental health.”

According to the study, adults who spent less time in nature as children were less appreciative of the outdoors, and they were less likely to make experiencing nature a priority in their lives.

“This may be a motivator for parents to encourage their children to go outside. Find a park, let them explore. Teach them to appreciate the outdoors,” said Cirach.

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This study was published in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health on May 22, 2019.

Further studies need to be done to confirm these findings.

More information can be found at [mdpi.com](https://www.mdpi.com).

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