

Sunshine and green spaces could be prescription for teen depression

Exposure to trees and other greenery has been shown to stave off depression in adults, and a new study finds the same may be true for teenagers.

Researchers looked at more than 9,000 children 12 to 18 and found those who lived in areas with a lot of natural vegetation were less likely to display high levels of depression symptoms. The effect was strongest among middle schoolers, the study team reports in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*.

...

Based on the mental-health assessments, the researchers found that 11.5 percent of children had depression symptoms. They categorized the top 11.5 percent of that group with the highest levels of depression symptoms as having “high depression” and looked at how nearby green and blue space influenced whether they fell into that category.

“We saw that living in an area that was greener was associated with lower depression among this population,” Bezold said.

Overall, after adjusting for family and economic factors, researchers found that young people living near the highest-quality green space were 11 percent less likely than peers with the poorest-quality green space to be in the high depression group.

...

[A] possibility is the biophilia hypothesis, [health geographer Kirsten Beyer] said, which argues that humans have this inherent biological tendency to respond positively to natural environments.

Read full, original post: [Being around trees and other greenery may help teens stave off depression](#)