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Call for Abstracts:

Special Issue on Greening Early Childhood Education

Guest Editors:

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Keywords:

early childhood, early childhood education, nature-based early education, education for sustainability, child care, nature preschools, green schools, green schoolyards, forest kindergartens, natural outdoor classrooms

Aims:

Renewed interest in nature-based programming for young children has led practitioners in primary schools, preschools and child care centers to reevaluate their methods and settings. Some have started nature preschools and forest kindergartens. Others have naturalized their outdoor play areas and designed green buildings to house their programs. New early childhood environmental education alliances are forming and new conferences on green schools, nature preschools and forest kindergartens are being organized. The purpose of this special issue is to explore settings that provide nature experiences for young children, with attention to the effect that these initiatives have on the holistic development and environmental awareness of the children involved, their teachers, and staff. Research articles that advance theory, methods and empirical knowledge related to this theme are invited, representing various disciplinary perspectives and all regions of the world. Field Notes that describe lessons learned from practice are also welcomed.

Possible topics for exploration:

Topics for exploration include, but are not limited to:

- Intentional practices and curricula at nature preschools and forest kindergartens
- Early childhood education for sustainability projects
- Naturalized outdoor areas for young children



- Green buildings specifically adapted to the needs of young children
- Teacher and staff training to enable teachers/child care staff to engage young children in learning about nature.

Expressions of interest:

You are encouraged to send an abstract of about 200 words to Patti Bailie (pattibailie@mac.com), Nancy Rosenow (nancyr@natureexplore.org) and *Children, Youth and Environments* (louise.chawla@colorado.edu). Abstracts should specify your paper topic; methods, setting and sample if it is a research paper; and applications to research or practice. You are encouraged to send your abstract as soon as possible for an early response, but abstracts will be accepted through **July 20, 2013**. A selection of authors will be invited to submit full papers for peer review or consideration as field notes. Full papers will be due by **November 1, 2013**. Book review suggestions are also welcome.

Illustrative questions:

Authors are invited to submit papers that address one or more of these questions, or related questions, and where appropriate draw out implications for design and programming.

- What is the impact of greening a childcare center on the children who attend?
- What is the effect of naturalizing outdoor areas for young children who learn and play there?
- What effect do forest kindergartens or nature preschools have on children's learning and development?
- What is the impact of green schools, green schoolyards, and nature-based preschools and child care centers on early childhood educators and staff?
- Do green schools have an impact on young children's learning and behavior?
- How do nature preschools integrate early childhood goals with environmental education goals in teaching young children?
- Do sustainability projects for young children increase their environmental awareness?
- How do we train teachers to be able to engage children in connecting to nature?
- How do naturalized settings in early childhood education compare with conventional settings on measures of safety and risk?

Children, Youth and Environments is the leading journal in its field, with online readers in more than 160 countries. For further information, see www.jstor.org/page/journal/chilyoutenvi/forAuthor.html