

O.D.D. - A growing disorder for children!

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Many of you have most likely heard of children being diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder or “A.D.D.”, common in children that have a hard time focusing and tend to be hyperactive. Well, there is another disorder out there that a growing number of children are also facing in today, called “O.D.D.” or Outdoor Deficit Disorder. Although this is not a professionally recognized disorder in the medical field, it is extremely important that we as adults prevent children from being labeled O.D.D.

What exactly is Outdoor Deficit Disorder.? Quit simply, it is defined as “the lack of exposure to activities in an outdoor setting”. How do you get Outdoor Deficit Disorder? It is contracted by spending too much time indoors, watching television, playing video games, or in front of the computer etc. Many children today come home from being inside a school building all day, place themselves in front of the computer or TV and stay there until dinner, and then return to the couch or computer station after dinner for some mindless entertainment. Don’t get me wrong, there is nothing wrong with a little down time, but there needs to be a balance and we all need to make an effort to get our kids back outdoors and keep them active.

It is a proven fact that being outside in the fresh air and exercising regularly can make a person healthier and happier! Isn’t that we want for all of our kids – healthy and happy? The summer months seems easy; there is plenty of time for kids to be outside and active; they are involved in summer programs, go on family vacations, go to summer camp and playing outside until dusk. Unfortunately, once the routine of school settles back in for the fall, the chances of children being diagnosed with Outdoor Deficit Disorder increases.

By encouraging our children be outdoors and remain active all year long, not only are we decreasing there chances to be diagnosed with Outdoor Deficit Disorder, but we are increasing there chances to live a longer, healthier life. Children and teens today are facing a serious crisis. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American children are becoming more inactive, over weight, and less fit. More than one in seven children were overweight in the United States in the period 1999-2002. Children who are overweight are at an increased risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular problems, stroke, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, gallbladder disease, sleep apnea, asthma, cancer, orthopedic abnormalities, gout, arthritis and skin problems (National Center for Health Statistics, 2004).

We are fortunate enough to live in a town full of options to keep our kids outdoors and active all year long. If your children are not into sports, no problem! The choices are endless; it is our responsibility as adults to show children how to be healthy and happy.

Avoid having your child diagnosed with Outdoor Deficit Disorder – keep them outside and active! If you would like more information on outdoor recreational opportunities feel free to contact Mark Pooler or Patrick Connelly at www.ctcampguys.com