

Addressing Racism in Outdoor Education: Supporting Student Well-Being Through Nature Connection

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Photo by Jaclyn Angotti

Findings: Q2. How does racial inequality impact students' access to and participation in OE and EE?

- ▶ **Mainstream outdoor and environmental education erases the experiences and realities of youth from Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) communities** (Calderon, 2014; McLean, 2013; Oliveira, 2016; Paperson, 2014; Smith, 2015; Stapleton, 2020; Warren et al., 2014)

Findings: Q2. How does racial inequality impact students' access to and participation in OE and EE?

- ▶ Many BIPOC youth feel unwelcome, unsafe, unprepared, and unimportant in outdoor and environmental education (Calderon, 2014; Stapleton, 2020; Warren et al., 2014)

- ▶ Mainstream OE/EE are dominated by:

- ▶ Eurocentric perspectives of nature and learning

- ▶ Environmental issues relevant to white people

- ▶ White environmental heroes

(Calderon, 2014; McLean, 2013; Oliveira, 2016; Paperson, 2014; Smith, 2015; Stapleton, 2020; Warren et al., 2014)

Findings: Q3. How can educators provide inclusive nature connection activities that support the wellness of all students?

Social interaction with adult mentors

Social interaction with peers

Novel, sensory, nature connection



Cultural history and knowledge

Practicing environmental action

Findings: Q3. How can educators provide inclusive nature connection activities that support the wellness of all students?

Positive, inclusive outdoor and environmental education:

- ▶ is rooted in culture and traditional knowledge (Acosta-Meza, 2016; Calderon, 2014; Friedel, 2011; Stapleton, 2020; Thomas et al., 2014; Warren et al., 2014);
- ▶ provides novel, sensory, nature experiences (Carrasco, 2020; Thomas et al., 2014; Tseng & Wang, 2020); and
- ▶ allows students to play, explore, socialize, learn, and reflect with peers and mentors (de Hoop, 2017; Friedel, 2011; Stapleton, 2015; Thomas et al., 2014; Tseng & Wang, 2020)

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How can we incorporate Indigenous perspectives into EE programs?

- ▶ Do the internal work (learning, strategies/policies)
- ▶ Hire and consult Indigenous people
- ▶ Teach true histories
- ▶ Centre Indigenous voices, stories, and teachings
- ▶ Include Indigenous languages