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Healing Minds, Healing Landscape /s. A comparison of student responses to formal and naturalistic designed landscapes in the Temple University Ambler Arboretum.

There is an accepted body of work which has established the benefits of viewing nature or being in nature in a non hospital setting, the primary benefit being stress reduction. Particular landscape characteristics such as vegetation, water, and a feeling of spatial openness have corresponded to increased positive responses in tests conducted on users of urban parks (Ulrich and Addoms, 1981). Similar studies in an academic setting examined the types of landscapes that stressed students seek out, and 75 percent identified natural landscapes as their preference (Francis and Cooper Marcus, 1991). Also, children with ADHD concentrate better after spending time in a 'wilderness' landscape (Kuo, Faber Taylor, Sullivan).

A new Healing Garden has been added to the Landscape Arboretum of Temple University. In contrast to many of the more structured gardens in the Arboretum, it is a 'wild' garden including a woodland edge, a meadow and rain gardens. It also includes a labyrinth. This paper will examine the results of student responses to both the 'wild' Healing Garden and a 'formal' Perennial Garden in terms of stress reduction.

We know that 'green is good' We need to identify the type of 'green' that produces maximum benefit for students. To that end, design elements and principles for both gardens will be identified. This may have particular impact on the design of an academic campus or school landscape for the benefit of the general student population and more specifically for students with special needs.

Bibliography

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