

BENEFITS OF SCHOOL FORESTS

For schools and teachers, school forests can:

- allow teachers to try new teaching methods in an outdoor setting
- allow teachers to interact with students on a different level
- "green" your school by using sustainable and efficient ways of maintaining school property
- meet academic standards
- increase teacher motivation and enthusiasm
- decrease vandalism and increase school pride

For students, school forests can:

- make lessons more relevant by using meaningful, real-world situations
- reach students through hands-on learning
- increase knowledge gain and student achievement
- provide mentoring opportunities for older students
- encourage physical activity and improve student health
- allow students with disabilities to have frequent, safe
- contact with the natural world
- develop young people's innate interest in the natural world
- foster a sense of ownership and community connection
- increase creativity, self-esteem, and motivation

For parents, families, and communities, school forests can:

- strengthen parent-teacher relationships while working toward a common goal
- provide increased recreation and exploration opportunities
- create a more environmentally literate population who will make sound, long-term community decisions
- create a sense of ownership among parents, families, students, and community members
- engender cooperation between stakeholders
- involve community members as guest presenters and volunteers, and allow them to serve as positive adult role models
- increase community safety. Studies show that crime decreases as a community spends more time outside in a positive environment