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Nurturing Nurture?
Two Three-level Meta-analyses of the Beneficial Effects of Exposure to Nature on Children's Self-regulation

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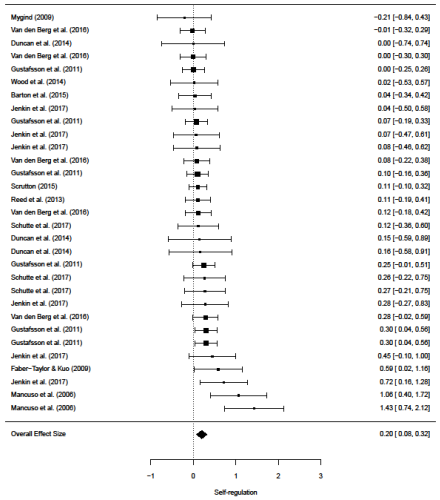
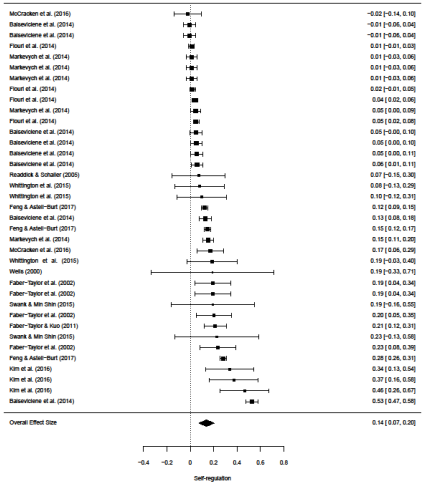
Intro: There is growing evidence that exposure to nature (vs. to a build environment) is associated with better (mental) health and wellbeing.

Methods: We conducted two three-level meta-analyses on 12 correlational and 12 (quasi-)experimental studies

Results: Small, significant and positive overall effects of nature in both correlational (r = .14; p < .001) and (quasi-)experimental (d = .20; p < .01) studies. Stronger associations were found in at-risk populations (vs. general populations), in North-American studies (vs. European studies), and in cross-sectional designs (vs. pre-post designs).

Discussion: Nature may be a promising tool in stimulating child wellbeing and functioning, and possibly preventing child psychopathology. However, our overview also shows that we are in need of more rigorous experimental studies, with a sharp conceptualization of nature, and using validated measures of nature and its putative outcomes.





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