

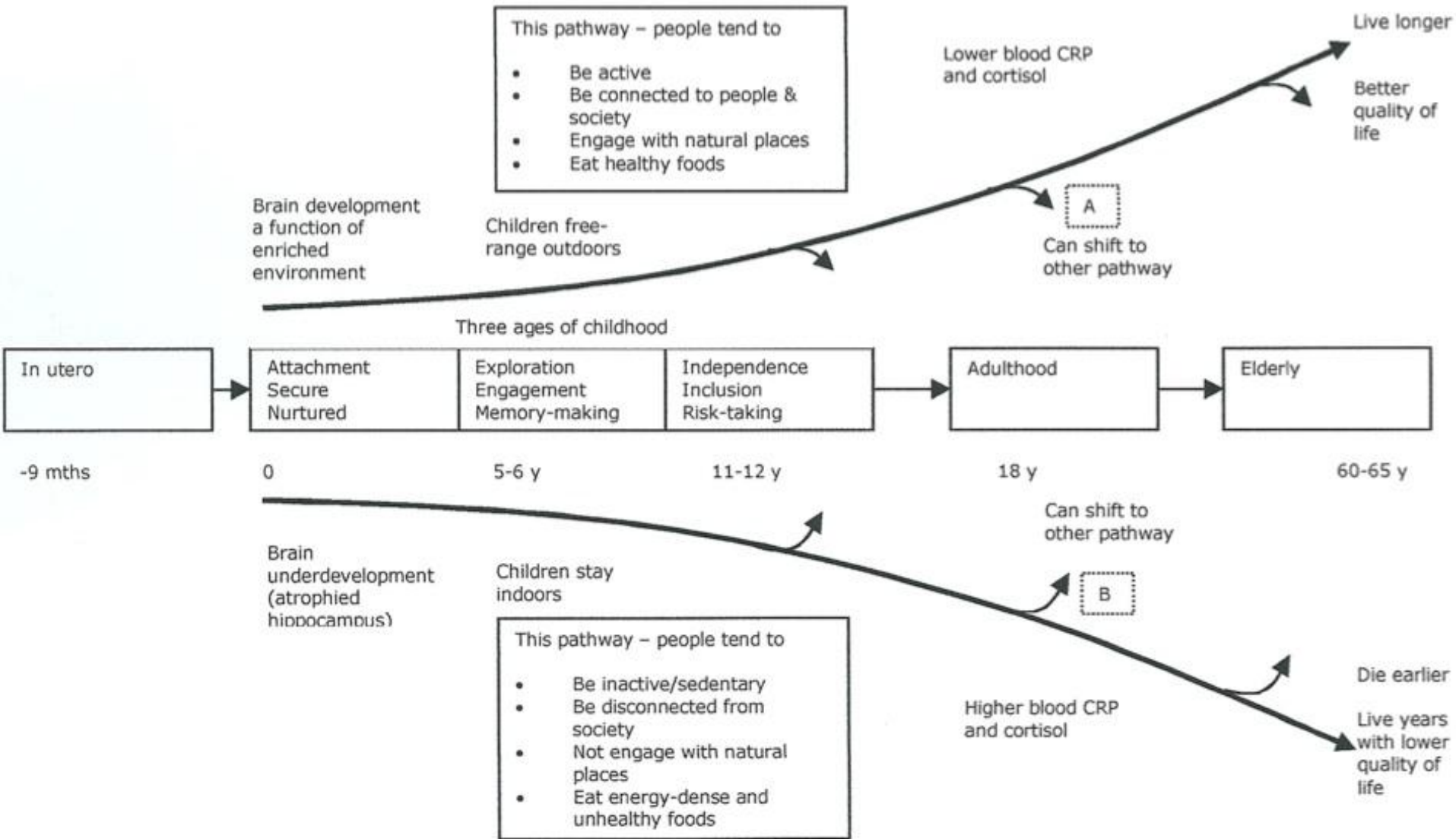
Inclusion of outdoor education in the physical education curriculum in Singapore

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WHY?

- Children spending less time outdoors (Louv, 2005; Fjørtoft, 2001)
- Playing in natural areas leads to increased levels of physical activity (Boldeman et al., 2004)
- Outdoor activity has benefits for children with ADHD (Taylor & Kuo, 2009)
- Recent research also suggests links between use of the outdoors, access to green space and human health (Muñoz, 2009; Nielson & Hansen; Mitchell & Popham, 2007; 2008; Pretty et al., 2009)

Figure: Life Pathways



Pretty, J., et al. (2009). Nature, childhood, health and life pathways. Interdisciplinary Centre for Environment and Society Occasional Paper 2009-02: University of Essex, UK.

HOW?

One way to increase children's contact with nature is within the formalised educational system, both in terms of amount of exposure to nature in the learning environment and learning about nature.

WHAT?

3 aspects

- Enhance physical health & well-being
- Build competency in assessing and managing risk
- Develop a sense of place

AIM

Teach students how to
recreate
explore
enjoy and
learn from time with (and in) nature.

Guiding Principles

- ✓ Maximise time spent in the outdoor natural environment (which includes the urban landscape)
- ✓ Increase physical activity in a progressive manner
- ✓ Leverage on repeated visits to an environment to facilitate development of connections to the place
- ✓ Focus on exploration, discovery and relationship-building (people and place)

Enhance physical health and well-being

Learning how to be comfortable in the outdoors is the first step towards enjoyment and appreciating the natural environment. Gradually, enhanced knowledge, understanding and skills gained through outdoor experiences can help our youths develop personal attitudes and intended behaviours that are based on their understanding of the interdependencies between themselves and nature.

Children will be taught skills (e.g., motor skills, outdoor skills, navigation), knowledge (e.g., basic ecological literacy, sustainable living) and attitudes (e.g., personal choices, environmental stewardship).

- skills that are needed for management of self , others and the environment
- enable a degree of comfort in various local outdoor natural environments Eg, navigation skills*, planning for the weather
- sustained physical activity, eg, a hike

Build competency in assessing and managing risk

The outdoor setting offers diverse opportunities for teaching risk assessments and management. Students will be taught **how to analyse given situations in particular contexts**. The actions and decisions of the students in the outdoor settings would have direct consequences that facilitate their learning.

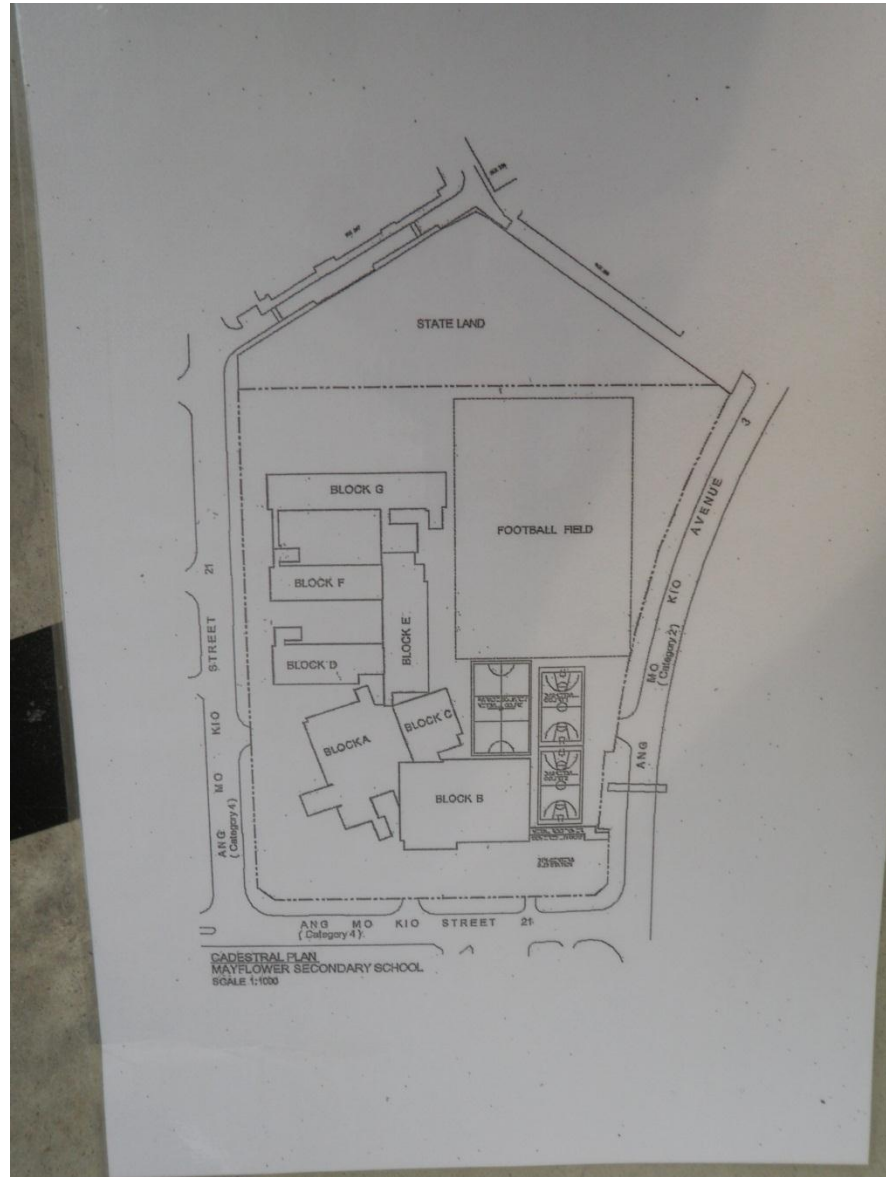
- Identify and manage risk
- Manage safety of self and others
- Exposed to varied environments
- Leverage on explicit teaching and “teachable moments”

Develop a sense of place

Our children can only care about our natural heritage to the extent they know about it. We can **help develop in our youths a strong connection with local places** such as (green) spaces around the schools e.g., park connectors, local parks. The experiential nature of outdoor education can potentially provide multi-layered opportunities for place-based education.

- Develops connections with the school/ natural environment through
 - sensory experiences
 - repeated visits
- Encourages reflection through documentation of students' responses to the experiences and the environment through journaling or other means.

Use of the School Maps



Checkpoints in the school grounds



Thank you

