

# GREEN SCHOOLYARDS CAN PROVIDE MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

**THE ISSUE**



1 in 5 children has, or has had, a serious mental health disorder at some point in their lives.<sup>1</sup>

MENTAL HEALTH PLAYS A CRITICAL ROLE IN THE COGNITIVE, EMOTIONAL, & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH.

Green schoolyards can enhance mental health and well-being and promote social-emotional skill development.

## GREEN SCHOOLYARDS HELP KIDS FEEL:

### CALMER & LESS STRESSED<sup>2,3</sup>

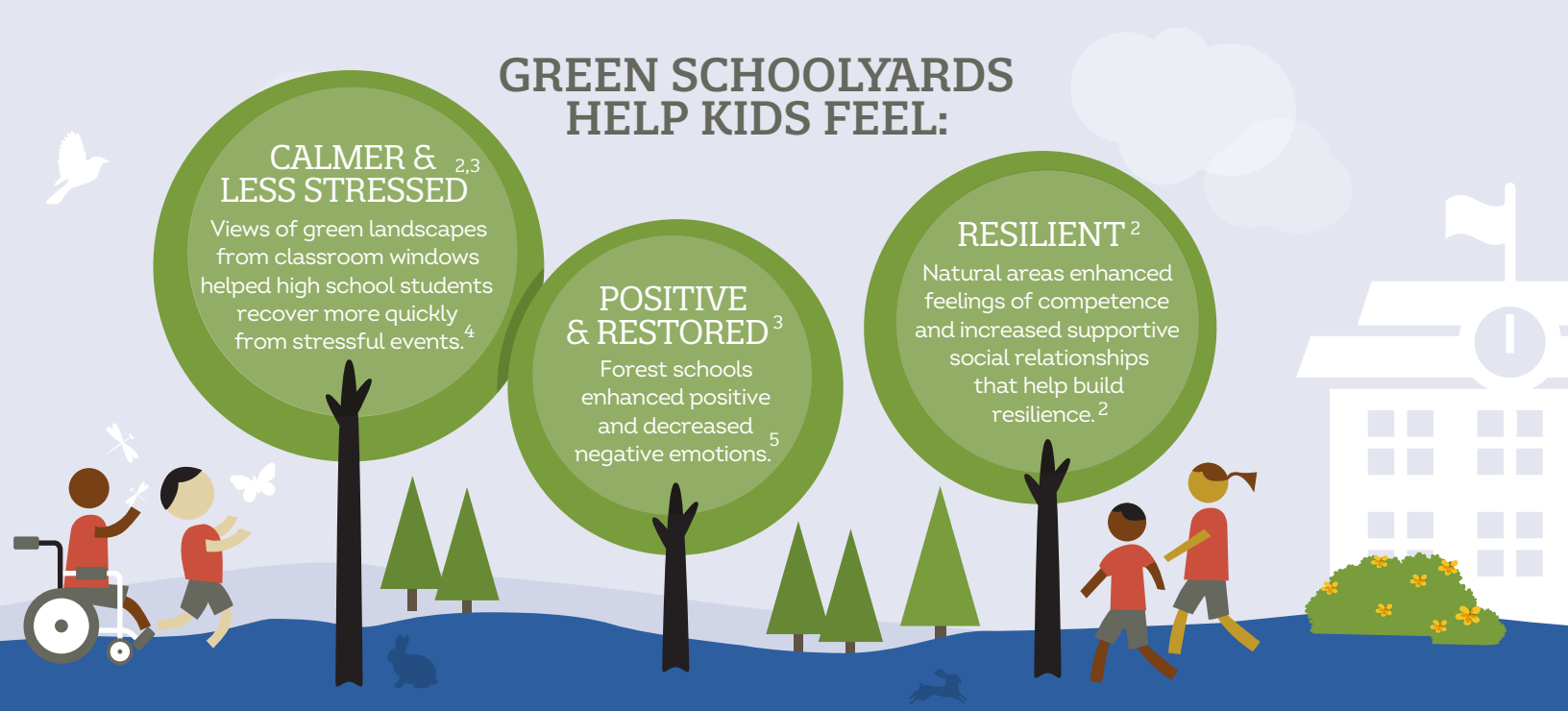
Views of green landscapes from classroom windows helped high school students recover more quickly from stressful events.<sup>4</sup>

### POSITIVE & RESTORED<sup>3</sup>

Forest schools enhanced positive and decreased negative emotions.<sup>5</sup>

### RESILIENT<sup>2</sup>

Natural areas enhanced feelings of competence and increased supportive social relationships that help build resilience.<sup>2</sup>



## GREEN SCHOOLYARDS PROMOTE SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SKILLS

PRACTICE

### RELATIONSHIP SKILLS<sup>2</sup>

Children demonstrated more cooperative play, civil behavior and positive social relationships in green schoolyards.<sup>6,7</sup>

DEVELOP

### SELF-AWARENESS & SELF-MANAGEMENT

Green schoolyards can reduce aggression and discipline problems.<sup>6,7</sup>

Gardening at school helped students feel proud, responsible & confident.<sup>2</sup>



**SUPPORTING RESEARCH**

<sup>1</sup>www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/prevalence/any-disorder-among-children.shtml <sup>2</sup>Chawla et al. (2014). Green schoolyards as havens from stress and resources for resilience in childhood and adolescence. *Health Place*, 28, 1-13. <sup>3</sup>Kelz et al. (2015). The restorative effects of redesigning the schoolyard: A multi-methodological, quasi-experimental study in rural Austrian middle schools. *Environ Behav*, 47(2), 119-139. <sup>4</sup>Li & Sullivan (2016). Impact of views to school landscapes on recovery from stress and mental fatigue. *Landscape Urban Plan*, 148, 149-158. <sup>5</sup>Roe & Aspinall (2011). The restorative outcomes of forest school and conventional school in young people with good and poor behaviour. *Urban For Urban Cree*, 10(3), 205-212. <sup>6</sup>Bell & Dymont (2008). Grounds for health: The intersection of green school grounds and health-promoting schools. *Environ Educ Res*, 14(1), 77-90. <sup>7</sup>Nedovic & Morrissey (2013). Calm, active and focused: Children's responses to an organic outdoor learning environment. *Learn Environ Res*, 16(2), 281-295.