



Ecoplay

13-hour online continuing education course

Course Description with References

All course content copyright 2020 by Charlton Hall

Ecoplay

Re-Introducing Your Children to Nature

Ecoplay Course Description

Ecoplay is an evidence-based eight-session training program designed to give parents and their children the opportunity for experiential activities outdoors that combine mindfulness, ecopsychology, play therapy, and the skills of positive parenting.

Ecoplay is an authoritative, rather than authoritarian, approach to discipline and parenting. It is a framework for guiding your child(ren) to reconnect to nature in healing ways. Ecoplay trains parents to be nature-based play therapy facilitators for their own children. It is also a theoretical framework and approach to parenting that allows children to express themselves in play, their natural language. Ecoplay allows this expressive play to happen in healthy natural outdoor environments.

This online continuing education course for mental health professionals gives you the skills you need to train parents and children in Ecoplay.

Overview of the Ecoplay Program

Session 1: Introduction to Ecoplay

Ecoplay is an evidence-based eight-session training program designed to give parents and their children the opportunity for experiential activities outdoors that combine mindfulness, ecopsychology and the skills of positive parenting. Ecoplay is an authoritative, rather than authoritarian, approach to discipline and parenting. It is a framework for guiding your child(ren) to reconnect to nature in healing ways. Ecoplay trains parents to be nature-based play therapy facilitators for their own children. It is also a theoretical framework and approach to parenting that allows children to express themselves in play, their natural language. Ecoplay allows this expressive play to happen in healthy natural outdoor environments.

Session 2: Compassion

We can talk about problems all day, but until we start talking about solutions, nothing gets solved. Ecoplay focuses on family strengths and connections. It is a solution-focused approach that looks more at what's working than what's not working. The Pygmalion Effect teaches us that people tend to become what you expect them to become. If you expect good things from your children, you generally get good things from them. However, if you expect "bad" things from your children by focusing on problems rather than on solutions, your children tend to engage in the behaviors you expect. Ecoplay's compassionate approach is a positive parenting model designed to catch your children being good by focusing on solutions.

Session 3: Communication

Ecoplay

10-hour online continuing education course

Ecoplay is based on mindful communication strategies. What we say is not always what our children hear. Many of the difficulties in parenting occur due to miscommunications. These communication errors usually occur when our children assume that we meant something different than what we actually said, or when we assume that our children mean something different than what they actually said. By learning proactive, mindful communication strategies we can learn to communicate our intentions in ways that lead to the results we want. In mindful communication we learn to be in the moment with each other, without concerns about the past or the future. In the moment we are able to truly hear and validate each other. From here healing can happen.

Session 4: Control

Ecoplay takes the stance that there is no such thing as a “wrong” feeling. What may be “wrong,” or unproductive, is the way we choose to respond to our feelings. With Ecoplay we learn to respond in positive ways to feelings so that our interactions do not become problematic. We all like to feel that we have some measure of control over our lives. Children are no exception to this rule. Parenting difficulties sometimes come when get caught up in power struggles over control issues with our children.

Session 5: Choices

Ultimately, maturing into adulthood means learning to make good choices. The only way to learn to make good choices is to have the opportunity to make not-so-good choices. Ecoplay uses the power of choice-giving and choice-making to allow your children to gain confidence on their journey to adulthood.

If we can change our thoughts and feelings, we can change our worlds. Our choices are the result of our beliefs. Our beliefs are a result of our thoughts and assumptions about the world and about our children. If our choices are leading to consequences we don't want, we can consciously change our choices by challenging the thoughts and beliefs that led to them. By changing our choices, we learn to create consequences that we do want for ourselves and for our children.

Session 6: Consequences

Every choice has a consequence. By skillful use of consequences we teach our children self-control and personal responsibility. By linking consequences to choices we teach our children to think for themselves and to take responsibility for their own actions. Every choice is the result of a belief. Each behavioral choice leads to consequences. By examining the consequences of our choices through examining the thoughts, feelings and beliefs that led to those choices, we learn to create different consequences.

Session 7: Consistency

Consistent consequences for consistent choices helps your child to learn self-confidence in a safe, predictable environment. While maintaining consistency can be hard, parents who are able to achieve a level of consistency with their children will reap the rewards. The key to developing consistency is to change the way your family thinks about things. Such a paradigm shift becomes possible by living in the moment. By shifting the focus to the present, we help

Ecoplay

Re-Introducing Your Children to Nature

our children to regain control of their behaviors in the present so that they can choose a different future.

Session 8: Confidence

Everyone has two images of self: The person they see themselves as and the person they'd like to be. Your children are no different. They are in the process of discovering who they are. With your guidance, they can gain the confidence to explore their futures. Ecoplay at its core is concerned with helping children and family members express the persons they were born to be. Doing so allows your child to live a life of confidence.

Ecoplay

10-hour online continuing education course

Ecoplay Course Objectives

After completing this online continuing education course, the student should be able to

- Define and discuss the concept of ecotherapy
- Define and discuss the concept of play therapy
- Define and discuss the concept of Ecoplay
- Differentiate among Authoritarian, Permissive, and Authoritative parenting styles
- Discuss the factors of family resilience
- Facilitate an Ecoplay session
- Train parents and individuals to conduct an Ecoplay session
- Define and discuss the Ecoplay conceptualization of Compassion
- Define and discuss the Ecoplay conceptualization of Communication
- Define and discuss the Ecoplay conceptualization of Control
- Define and discuss the Ecoplay conceptualization of Choices
- Define and discuss the Ecoplay conceptualization of Consequences
- Define and discuss the Ecoplay conceptualization of Consistency
- Define and discuss the Ecoplay conceptualization of Confidence

Ecoplay Course Instructor Qualifications & Contact Information

This course was created by Charlton Hall, MMFT, LMFT/S, RPT-S, CHt.

Charlton (Chuck) Hall, MMFT, LMFT/S, RPT-S, CHt is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapy Supervisor, a Registered Play Therapy Supervisor, and a Certified Hypnotherapist. Chuck's area of research and interest is using Mindfulness and Ecotherapy to facilitate acceptance and change strategies within a family systemic framework, and he has presented research at several conferences and seminars on this and other topics. He facilitates workshops on mindfulness and ecotherapy throughout the Southeast. Chuck's approach to therapy involves helping individuals and families to facilitate change through mindfulness and ecotherapy techniques in a non-judgmental, patient-centered, positive environment.

For a complete list of instructor qualifications, visit

<https://mindfulecotherapy.org/charlton-chuck-hall-mmft-lmft-s-rpt-s-cht/>

Instructor may be contacted at chuck@mindfulecotherapy.com

Ecoplay

Re-Introducing Your Children to Nature

REFERENCES

- Alvarsson J, Wiens S., and Nilsson M. (2010). Stress and recovery during exposure to nature sounds and environmental noise. *Int. J Environ Res Public Health*, 2010 (7) 1036-106.
- Baptiste, Jr. D.A. (1989). Using masks as therapeutic aids in family therapy, *Journal of Family Therapy* 11(1):45 - 58 · November 2003
- Bates, J. E., & Bayles, K. (1988). *Attachment and the development of behavior problems*. In J. Belsky & T. Nezworski (Eds.), *Clinical implications of attachment* (pp. 253-299). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Berger, R. 2004. Nature Therapy. Integrating Therapy, Education and Ecology pub: The Israeli Ministry of Environment (web-site)
- Bratmana, G. N., et al (2015). Nature experience reduces rumination and subgenual prefrontal cortex activation. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of America* 2015. www.pnas.org/cgi/doi/10.1073/pnas.1510459112
- Brown, Kirk Warren and Ryan, Richard M. (2003). The Benefits of Being Present: Mindfulness and Its Role in Psychological Well-Being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 2003, Vol. 84, No. 4, 822–848.
- Burgoon, J. K., Berger, C. R., & Waldron, V. R. (2000). Mindfulness and interpersonal communication. *Journal of Social Science Issues*, 56(1), 105–127.
- Caldarella, Paul, et al (2011). The Effects of School-wide Positive Behavior Support on Middle School Climate and Student Outcomes. *Research in Middle Level Education*, 2011, Volume 35, Number 4.
- Carson, Rachel (1962). *Silent Spring*. Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, NY.
- Chalquist, Craig (2009). A Look at the Ecotherapy Research Evidence. *Ecopsychology*, August 2009, 1(2): 64-74. <https://doi.org/10.1089/eco.2009.0003>
- Channick, Robert. "NU Study: dirt's good for kids." March 24, 2010. ChicagoTribune.com. February 15, 2012. http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2010-03-24/features/ct-x-n-health-dirt-20100324_1_nu-professor-northwestern-study-immune-system
- Crandall, V.C., Katkovsky, W., & Crandall, V.J. (1965). Children's beliefs in their own control of reinforcements in intellectual-academic achievement situations. *Child Development*, 33, 91-109.
- Dunlap, G., DePerczel, M., Clarke, S., Wilson, D., Wright, S., White, R., & Gomez, A. (1994). Choice making to promote adaptive behavior for students with emotional and behavioral challenges. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 27(3), 505-518.
- Emmons, R. A., & McCullough, M. E. (2003). Counting blessings versus burdens: An experimental investigation of gratitude and subjective wellbeing in daily life. *Journal of Personality and Social*

Ecoplay

10-hour online continuing education course

Psychology, 84(2), 377-389. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.84.2.377

- Ge X, Conger R, Cadoret R, Neiderhiser J, Yates W, Troughton E, et al. The developmental interface between nature and nurture: A mutual influence model of child antisocial behavior and parent behavior. *Developmental Psychology*. 1996; 32:574–589.
- Green, K. 1994. *Encouraging Nurturing Behavior of Two to Seven Year Olds by Introducing Plants and Flowers in People-Plant Relationship*. Setting Research priorities Flager, J., Poincelot, R.P. Food Products Press, New York.
- Hamman, Gwyneth & Ivtzan, Itai. (2016). 30 Minutes in Nature a Day Can Increase Mood, Well-Being, Meaning in Life and Mindfulness: Effects of a Pilot Programme. *Social Inquiry into Well-Being*. 2. 34-46. 10.13165/SIIW-16-2-2-04.
- Health Council of the Netherlands & RMNO (2004) *Nature and Health: The influence of nature on social, psychological and physical well-being*. The Hague: Health Council of the Netherlands & RMNO.
- Henderlong, J. & Lepper, M. (2002). The Effects of Praise on Children's Intrinsic Motivation: A Review and Synthesis. *Psychological Bulletin* 2002, Vol. 128, No. 5, 774–795.
- Herbert, J. T. 1996. Use of adventure-based counseling programs for persons with disabilities. *Journal of Rehabilitation*, 62, 3-9.
- Hoskins, D. H. (2000). Consequences of Parenting on Adolescent Outcomes. *Societies* 2014, 4, 506–531; doi:10.3390/soc4030506
- Hüttenmoser, M., 1995, 'Children and Their Living Surroundings: Empirical investigations into the significance of living surroundings for the everyday life and development of children', *Children's Journal of Rehabilitation, Environments*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 403–413.
- Kaminski, M., Pellino, T. and Wish, J., 2002, 'Play and Pets: The physical and emotional impact of child life and pet therapy and hospitalized children', *Children's Health Care*, vol. 31, no. 4, pp. 321–335.
- Kellert, S. 2002, 'Children and Nature: Psychological, socio-cultural, and evolutionary investigations' in S. Kellert and P. Kahn (eds), *Experiencing Nature: Affective, cognitive, and evaluative development in children*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, pp. 117–152.
- Kern, L., Vorndran, C. M., Hilt, A., Ringdahl, J. E., Adelman, B. E., & Dunlap, G. (1998). Choice as an intervention to improve behavior: A review of the literature. *Journal of Behavioral Education*, 8(2), 151-170.
- Kiff, C. J., Lengua, L. J., & Zalewski, M. (2011). Nature and nurturing: parenting in the context of child temperament. *Clinical child and family psychology review*, 14(3), 251–301.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10567-011-0093-4>
- Kimball, R. O., Bacon, S. B. 1993. The wilderness challenge model. In M. A. Gass (Ed.), *Adventure therapy: Therapeutic applications of adventure programming* Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.

Ecoplay

Re-Introducing Your Children to Nature

- Kini, Prathik et al (2016). The effects of gratitude expression on neural activity. *NeuroImage* 128 (2016) 1–10.
- Koegel, R. L., Dyer, K., & Bell, L. K. (1987). The influence of child-preferred activities on autistic children's social behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 20(3), 243-252.
- Kogan, L., Granger, B., Fitchett, J., Helmer, K. and Young, K., 1999, 'The human–animal team approach for children with emotional disorders: Two case studies', *Child and Youth Care Forum*, vol. 28, pp. 105–121.
- Kolucki, B. & Lemish, D. (2011). *Communicating with Children: Principles and Practices to Nurture, Inspire, Excite, Educate and Heal*, UNICEF Publications, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), November 2011.
- Krisberg, K., 2007, 'Movement to reconnect kids with nature growing nationwide: Working to improve children's health', *The Nation's Health*.
- Landreth, Garry (2012). *Play Therapy: The Art of the Relationship, 3rd Edition*. Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, New York, NY.
- Louv, Richard. (2005) *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, North Carolina.
- Maller, C. and Townsend, M., (2006). 'Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing and Hands on Contact with Nature: Perceptions and principles of teachers', *International Journal of Learning*, vol. 12, no. 4, pp. 359–372.
- Mallon, G., 1994, 'Cow as Co-therapist: Utilisation of farm animals as therapeutic aides with children in residential treatment', *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, vol. 11, no. 6, pp. 455–474.
- Martin, F. and Farnum, J. 2002, 'Effects of animal assisted therapy for children with pervasive developmental disorders', *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, vol. 43, no. 3, pp. 357–366
- Mehrabian, Albert (1972). *Silent Messages: Implicit Communication of Emotions and Attitudes*, Wadsworth Publishing Company, Belmont, California.
- Mon-hsin Wang Flahive & Ray, Dee (2007). *Effect of Group Sandtray Therapy with Preadolescents*, Chinese Culture University & University of North Texas.
- Moore, R., Wong, H. 1997. *Natural Learning: Rediscovering Nature's Way of Teaching*. MIG Communications, Berkeley, CA.
- Neihardt, John (2008). *Black Elk Speaks: Being the Life Story of a Holy Man of the Oglala Sioux, The Premier Edition*, SUNY Press, Albany, NY.

Ecoplay

10-hour online continuing education course

- Niaraki, F. R., & Rahimi, H. (2013). The impact of authoritative, permissive and authoritarian behavior of parents on self-concept, psychological health and life quality. *European Online Journal of Natural and Social Sciences* 2013; ISSN 1805-3602.
- Parish-Plass, N., 2008, 'Animal-assisted therapy with children suffering from insecure attachment due to abuse and neglect: A method to lower the risk of intergenerational transmission of abuse', *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, vol. 13, no. 1, pp. 7–30.
- Pretty, J. How nature contributes to mental and physical health. *Spirit. Health Int.* 2004, 5, 68–78.
- Reichert, E., 1998, 'Individual counseling for sexually abused children: A role for animals and storytelling', *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, vol. 15, no. 3, pp. 177–185.
- Roberts, F., Bradberry, J. and Williams, C., 2004, 'Equine-facilitated Psychotherapy Benefits Students and Children', *Holistic Nursing Practice*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 32–35.
- Rosenthal, R., & Jacobson, L. (1968). *Pygmalion in the classroom: Teacher expectations and pupils' intellectual development*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Schechter, H. and Faithorn, L. (1987). Speaking from the Heart, with the Talking Stick, *Vision-Action, Journal of the Bay Area OD Network*.
- Sebba, Rachel (1991). The Landscapes of Childhood: The Reflection of Childhood's Environment in Adult Memories and in Children's Attitudes, *Environment and Behavior*, Volume: 23 issue: 4, page(s): 395-422. Issue published: July 1, 1991 retrieved on November 27, 2017 from <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916591234001>
- Steinberg L, Elmen JD, and Mounts NS. 1989. Authoritative parenting, psychosocial maturity, and academic success among adolescents. *Child Dev.* 60(6):1424-36.
- Taylor, Bron (2010). *Dark green religion: Nature spirituality and the planetary future*. Univ of California Press, Berkeley, California.
- Thompson, Miles & Gauntlett-Gilbert, Jeremy. (2008). Mindfulness with Children and Adolescents: Effective Clinical Application. *Clinical child psychology and psychiatry*. 13. 395-407. 10.1177/1359104508090603.
- VanFleet, Risë, Sywulak, Andrea E. and Caparosa-Sniscak, Cynthia (2010). *Child-Centered Play Therapy*, Guilford Press, New York, NY.
- Waldron-Soler, K. M., Martella, R. C., Marchand-Martella, N. E., & Ebey, T. L. (2000). Effects of choice of stimuli as reinforcement for task responding in preschoolers with and without developmental disabilities. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 33(1), 93-96.
- Walsh, F. (2012). *Normal Family Processes* (4th ed. pp. 399-427). New York: Guilford Press.
- Wells, N. M., 2000, 'At Home with Nature: Effects of "greenness" on children's cognitive functioning', *Environment and Behaviour*, vol. 32, no. 6, pp. 775–795.

Ecoplay

Re-Introducing Your Children to Nature

Wells, N. M. and Evans, G. W., 2003, 'Nearby Nature: A buffer of life stress among rural children', *Environment and Behaviour*, vol. 35, no. 3, pp. 311–330.

Wendel, A., Dannenberg, A. and Frumkin, H., 2008, 'Designing and building healthy places for children', *International Journal of Environment and Health*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 338–355.

Williamson, D., Dewey, A. and Steinberg, H., 2001, 'Mood change through physical exercise in nine to ten-year-old children', *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, vol. 93, no. 1, p. 311.

Wilson, Neil & Fleming, Susan & Jones, Russell & Lafferty, Kevin & Cathrine, Kirsty & Seaman, Pete & Knifton, Lee. (2010). Green shoots of recovery: The impact of a mental health ecotherapy programme. *Mental Health Review Journal*. 15. 4-14. 10.5042/mhrj.2010.0366.

Yamaguchi, M., Deguchi, M. and Miyazaki, Y., 2006, 'The effects of exercise in forest and urban environments on sympathetic nervous activity of normal young adults', *Journal of International Medical Research*, vol. 34, no. 2, p.152.

Zolotor, Adam, Robinson T., Runyan Desmond, Barr Ronald, Murphy Robert (2011). The Emergence of Spanking Among a Representative Sample of Children Under 2 Years of Age in North Carolina, *Frontiers in Psychiatry* Vol 2, 2011 p 36
retrieved April 8, 2020 <https://www.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fpsy.2011.00036>
DOI=10.3389/fpsy.2011.00036 ISSN=1664-0640