

RICHARD LOUV

11142 Saunders Court • San Diego, Ca. 92131

December 21, 2015

Mr. Stephen Karp
Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Boston Children's Hospital
3 Possum Road
Weston, Massachusetts 02493

Dear Mr. Karp:

I am writing in support of the Prouty Garden at Boston Children's Hospital, as it relates to the care and well-being of your patients, and to your leadership in the Boston region and beyond.

By way of introduction, I'm the author of nine books about family, nature and community, including *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder*, and as co-founder and chairman emeritus of the non-profit organization Children & Nature Network, I have for several years worked to expand public knowledge about the profound effects that experiences in the natural world have on children, families and communities.

As you probably know, a growing body of scientific evidence supports what we inherently know to be true: outdoor experiences are essential to the psychological and physical health of children, as well as their ability to learn. We know nature-based therapy has had success healing patients who had not responded to treatment. Studies show exposure to natural environments enhances the ability to cope with and recover from stress and recover from illness and injury. Pennsylvania researchers found that patients in rooms with tree views had shorter hospitalizations (on average, by almost one full day), less need for pain medications, compared to patients with brick views. Among other health benefits of time in nature, as indicated by research, are improved resistance to depression, increased confidence, reduced myopia and symptoms of ADHD, and lower child obesity. Here's a link to a large number of studies, abstracts and reports on the Children & Nature Network Web site that relate to nature and its benefits:

<http://www.childrenandnature.org/learn/research-resources/>.

In *The Nature Principle*, I make the case that the future will belong to the nature-smart, the individuals, families, business and political leaders who develop a deeper understanding of the transformative power of the natural world. Like many within and beyond your community, I hope that Boston Children's Hospital will send a message to and lead the country in advocating regionally and nationally for incorporating nearby nature not only into therapies but through the creation and preservation of restorative natural environments, especially in cities.

I hope you will see the great value that the Prouty Garden provides and reconsider removing it.

Sincerely,



Richard Louv, Chairman Emeritus, Children & Nature Network, rlouv@cts.com