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ABSTRACT

Ecological or environmental programs integrated into science courses in the elementary grades can make children aware that they can have either a positive or a negative effect on their environment. The following bibliography was compiled from articles and dissertations on environmental education and children's awareness, attitudes, and perceptions of the natural environment. Citations were retrieved from searches of Ecology Abstracts, ERIC, Dissertation Abstracts, General Science Index, and PsycLIT using online or CD-ROM databases. Topics covered include curriculum development, promoting ecological awareness in young children, development of tests for environmental attitudes, summer nature camps, learning opportunities in nearby natural resource areas, field trips to public gardens, children's experiences with vegetation on school grounds, inner-city attitudes, rural attitudes, and waste management. Contains 67 references. (PVD)

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Environmental Attitudes in the Elementary Grades: A Bibliographic Essay

by
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ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES IN THE ELEMENTARY GRADES: A BIBLIOGRAPHIC ESSAY

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Ecological or environmental programs integrated into science courses in the elementary grades can make children aware that they can have either a positive or negative effect on their environment. Environmental awareness, concern, knowledge, and responsibility should be among the goals of early childhood education. Richard Peters suggests that an integrated curriculum of the natural and social sciences would help children acquire a social ethic that develops their awareness of the natural and social worlds around them. (Peters 1993-94) "Teachers who recognize the need for environmental education often infuse study about the environment into traditional course offerings. Many environmental educators feel that this is the best way to teach about environmental issues." (Alliance for Environmental Education 1993, p.16)

The attitudes and interests of teachers and parents affect children's perceptions of ecological issues. Classroom instruction complemented by field trips to nature centers, forest preserves, and other natural resource areas motivate children to practice environmentally responsive behavior. (Simmons 1993) Ecological experiments and science fair projects provide opportunities for parents to become involved, and recycling and other conservation efforts in the home teach children that they can have a personal impact on their environment.

T. Tanner found that childhood experience of the outdoors is the single most important factor in developing personal concern for the

environment. (Tanner 1980) These findings were reinforced by the research of Joy Palmer using a larger sample and subjects from different continents. (Palmer 1993)

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