



ENVIRONMENT

Getting Dirty Outside©

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Words are explained alongside the text

Stressed syllables are underlined and in bold*

A well known brand of **laundry detergent** had a big **campaign** last March about how little time kids spend outside - and how little they get dirty. The **ad** started off in a **prison**. Prisoners **actually get to** spend on **average** two hours a day outside. In **interviews** they say how **vital** this time outside is to them. It **allows** them to **relax**, to **flush out** frustrations, to keep their minds right and their bodies strong. When asked how they would feel if that time was **reduced** to only one hour, the reactions were sadness, **anger**, **torture**...

According to the brand's worldwide 12,000-**participant survey**, one hour is the average time per day that children spend outside. *One single hour*. Even more worrying than that, a UK survey found that one in three children spent less than 30 minutes per day outside while one in five did not play outside at all on an average day. And it's about the same for the rest of us...

Everyone knows the **physical** and mental health **benefits** of being outside, of playing outside. The **wholesome** stimulation you get from playing **outdoors** cannot be **replaced** by **board games** or by **virtual** games. However with more and more space and time **constraints**, and higher **availability** of **Smartphones** and **tablets**, getting kids (and **grownups**) outside is a huge **challenge**.

Some people agree that the **tremendous success** of the Pokemon Go App does have the **advantage** of getting people moving outdoors. Players keep their eyes down on their Smartphones but at least they're doing that outside and getting some fresh air and **exercise**. However, long before Pokemon Go there was **Geocaching**. The **official** definition of geocaching is a real-world, outdoor **treasure** hunting game,

laundry (n.) items to be washed

ad (n.) advertisement

actually (adv.) in fact

to get to (got-got) (vb.) to have an opportunity to do something

to flush out (phrasal vb.) to eliminate

survey (n.) examination made by asking people questions

wholesome (adj.) healthful

board game (n.) game (such as chess) that is played by moving pieces on a special board

grownup (n.) mature adult

tremendous (adj.) extraordinary

using GPS-**enabled devices**. Participants **navigate** using a **specific** set of GPS **coordinates** and then **attempt** to find the container (called a geocache) hidden at that **location**.

It started in 2000 with one guy hiding a **bucket** in a wood. According to Groundspeak, the group that runs Geocaching.com, there are now more than 3 **million** geocachers around the planet, looking for one of the few million caches hidden all around the world. Pokemon Go is actually a simpler more virtual version of Geocaching.

The advantage of Geocaching is that it is **collaborative**. Anyone can hide geocaches, they are everywhere. Whereas Pokemon Go is mostly **urban**, even the most **remote** locations are very **likely** to have a geocache not too far away. It's also more challenging as you get **riddles** and puzzles to solve along the way. And when you get to your final location it's actually just the **beginning**. Instead of waiting for virtual monsters to **show up** there's a real treasure to look for. You get to put your Smartphone down and climb up a tree, **dig** into the soil ... get dirty...

So now that Pokemon Go has **popularized** location-based gaming, it's the **opportunity** to try out **different** and more complex outdoor location-based games. Your Smartphone might actually take you from the virtual to the real world for a change and help you, your friends or your kids to get more fresh air and exercise.

As a long-time **avid** geocacher myself I've noticed that my friends are now **way** more **receptive** to the idea of heading out to **random** outdoor places and looking for stuff. It's a great **excuse** for a weekend **outing**. Geocaching is just one of those games but it's also the most **developed** and **straightforward**. So thank you Pokemon Go for making it a **trend** to head outside!

-enabled(suffix) used to describe a piece of equipment that is able to use the technology mentioned

to navigate (vb.) to find a direction across an area of land

location (n.) position, place

bucket (n.) container for liquid

remote (adj.) distant, isolated

likely (adj.) probable, expected

riddle (n.) enigma

to show up (showed-shown) (phrasal vb.) to be present, visible

to dig (dug-dug) (vb.) to form a hole by moving soil

way (adv.) to a great degree

random (adj.) unexpected

outing (n.) trip, excursion

straightforward (adj.) unambiguous, easy to understand

trend (n.) tendency

*** Tip!**

Note the stress pattern in the following two-syllable verbs:

allow, attempt, begin, excuse, reduce, relax, replace