**Topic: Green spaces in the city and in the school**

**1.- Why are green areas important in the city?**

They are important because they provide us with numerous physical and psychological benefits. For example, they improve mental health and reduce the stress and anxiety of urban life. A study by the city of Toronto (Canada) revealed that the mere fact of having 10 more trees in a city block improved the perception of the health of its inhabitants. And he did it in a way comparable to a $ 10,000 increase in personal income, or to feeling seven years younger. [[1]](#footnote-2)

They also improve the environmental quality of our cities and consequently contribute positively to our health. Among its benefits.

1. They produce oxygen
2. They filter out harmful pollutants and help mitigate the effects of climate change.
3. They act as buffers, reducing noise levels in the city.
4. They improve our final comfort by regulating temperature and humidity, and reduce the need for heating and cooling in homes.
5. They offer recreational opportunities (walk, leisure, relaxation) to their inhabitants
6. They maintain and increase biodiversity in urban environments, and serve as a refuge for fauna that also performs an important function in urban environments.

The World Health Organization (WHO) considers that urban green spaces are essential due to the benefits they bring to physical and emotional well-being, and recommends that municipalities have, at least, between 10 and 15 square meters per inhabitant. [[2]](#footnote-3)

However, most of the Spanish capitals (55% of them with 2011 data) lack the minimum amount of green areas recommended by the WHO. A problem that also affects in many cases small cities and towns, where parks, gardens, etc. They are "modernized" with urban projects in which the "greens" lose their presence compared to concrete works.

**2.- …and in schools?**

In addition to the above benefits (and which are obviously also applicable to the school environment) green areas have a positive effect on the academic performance of students. A study carried out in the city of Barcelona (2015) showed that children who go to schools with abundant trees and green areas have better cognitive development than those who study surrounded by asphalt, cement and concrete.[[3]](#footnote-4) The study, published by the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, involved 2,715 primary school students from 39 schools in Barcelona and Sant Cugat del Vallès (Spain).

Another study conducted in 905 Massachusetts public elementary schools indicated that students who had a greater presence of green areas in their environment had higher scores on standardized tests in English and Mathematics. [[4]](#footnote-5).

Despite all this, in many cases our schools (in Spain, and particularly in our region) continue to be designed and built without giving importance to the creation of green areas, which in many cases have a testimonial presence. In many school environments the gray of asphalt and concrete is the protagonist in the patios / outdoor spaces. And all this despite the evidence about its importance in the educational process and in the development of minors.

**3.- Posters about the benefits of urban trees**

Many infographics or posters can be found on the web that show the benefits of urban trees (and by extension also green areas in general). We leave here some links that may be useful:cases have a testimonial presence. In many school environments the gray of asphalt and concrete is the protagonist in the patios / outdoor spaces. And all this despite the evidence about its importance in the educational process and in the development of minors.

<http://www.fao.org/resources/infographics/infographics-details/en/c/411348/>

<https://www.cnu.org/publicsquare/2018/12/14/benefits-urban-trees>

<https://saaccionasostenibilidad.blob.core.windows.net/media/44333/benefits-trees-cities.jpg>

**4.- Other links.**

**What happens if you cut down all of a city's trees? -**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zarll9bx6FI>

**Green cities, healthier people**

<https://elpais.com/elpais/2016/02/05/planeta_futuro/1454691187_882284.html>

**Cities with trees, healthy (and happy) cities**

<https://elpais.com/elpais/2018/03/20/planeta_futuro/1521540752_368543.html>

**Green Spaces Make Kids Smarter.**

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2015/06/green-spaces-make-kids-smarter/395924/>

**Benefits of urban trees**

<https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C3%81rbol_urbano#Beneficios>

**Trees to cool urban 'ovens'**

<https://www.eltiempo.com/vida/ciencia/arboles-para-enfriar-los-hornos-urbanos-60442>

**Trees dampen the city's temperature by an average of 10 degrees**

<https://www.diariodesevilla.es/sevilla/arboles-atenuan-temperatura-ciudad-grados_0_833316936.html>

1. **Cities with trees, healthy (and happy) cities. El País (21/03/2018)**

   <https://elpais.com/elpais/2018/03/20/planeta_futuro/1521540752_368543.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. **Green areas improve well-being, but few cities highlight this value. La Vanguardia (02/08/2011)**

   <https://www.lavanguardia.com/medio-ambiente/20110802/54195361614/las-areas-verdes-mejoran-el-bienestar-pero-pocas-ciudades-resaltan-este-valor.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. **The green of nature favors the cognitive development of children. La Vanguardia (15/06/2015)**

   <https://www.lavanguardia.com/ciencia/20150615/54432312398/escuela-arboles-verde-escuela.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. **Proven: students improve their performance in schools with green areas. Ministerio de Medio Ambiente de Chile.**

   <https://mma.gob.cl/comprobado-los-alumnos-mejoran-su-rendimiento-en-colegios-con-areas-verdes/> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)