

Other Community Benefits of Trails and Greenways

Social Benefits

- Trails are the community's front porch
- Everyone is welcome
- Connect segments of communities together, provide a place for neighbors to meet and interact
- Diversity in trail uses/users promotes tolerance
- Common positive interest in the welfare of trail
- Different motivations for trail use
- Trails are a link, not a barrier compared to some infrastructure
- Trails allow people to re-reconnect with nature



Psychological Benefits

- Confidence from competence
- Trail users choose how they want to use trail, some walk, some skate, some ride bike, some use adaptive mobility device, etc
- Opportunity to develop skills, voluntary activity
- Family/group friendly setting
- Facilitates individuality while part of a group
- Opportunity to volunteer/give back
 - Safety patrol
 - Friends group
 - Maintenance, fund raising, special projects

Knowledge Benefits

- Environmental knowledge
 - Use interpretive signage/brochures to promote discovery learning about diverse habitats and unique ecosystems
- Relate trail connectivity to environmental interdependence
- Community awareness
- Better acquaintance with businesses, neighborhoods, etc.
- Historical sense - Most trails and greenways use former railroads, waterways, Native American foot trails, etc.
 - Interpretive signage/brochures/historic sites make history come alive



Health Benefits - US Physical Activity Guidelines

- Average 150 minutes of moderate physical activity a week (30 m/day), More is even better, but any activity is better than none.
- 300 mins./week for children.
- Can be broken up.
- Reduced risk for CVD, diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis, dementia in old age, clinical depression, a growing list of cancers.

The **U.S. National Physical Activity Plan 2010** has a vision: One day, all Americans will be physically active and they will live, work, and play in environments that facilitate regular physical activity.

<http://www.physicalactivityplan.org/index.htm>