



OUTDOOR FLOORING

UK Contractor Creates Play Facilities That May Help Minimize Short-Sightedness

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A group of Chinese researchers has found that children who participate in 40 minutes of outdoor activities a day can reduce their chances of developing short-sightedness. UK contractors, Outdoor Flooring, who specialise in playground construction, have been looking into what they can do to respond to these findings. The study was conducted over three years in 12 different schools by Dr Mingguang He and colleagues.

Outdoor Flooring has been working with UK schools to help create play facilities that allow children to improve their health through increased activity. Facilities like outdoor gyms are often installed at schools for kids to improve their fitness; these can play a part in different outdoor activities as well. Dr He's theories have suggested that balancing 'close up' activities with outdoor play could reduce the chance of a child developing short-sightedness (also known as myopia) in early years.

One researcher commented, 'A delay in the onset of myopia in young children, who tend to have a higher rate of progression, could provide disproportionate long-term eye health benefits.' The study also found that the results remained consistent even when family history of myopia was taken into account. Michael Repka from Johns Hopkins University suggested that more work should be done to better understand what Dr

Mingguang He and his colleagues have found.

Playground designers and construction companies like Outdoor Flooring however, have already seen the benefits of having good quality play spaces at schools. External play facilities are continuously linked to improvements in children's physical and cognitive development.

Becca Honeybill of Outdoor Flooring explained, "Many primary schools do not have good quality recreational facilities, however with these new studies finding the added benefits of outdoor play, improvements to recreational facilities at schools could be made on a larger scale."

For more information go to <http://www.outdoorflooring.org.uk>.

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For more information about Outdoor Flooring, contact the company here: Outdoor Flooring James Dooley 01625 445760 james@softsurfaces.co.uk

Outdoor Flooring

Website: <http://www.outdoorflooring.org.uk>

Email: james@softsurfaces.co.uk

Phone: 01625 445760



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