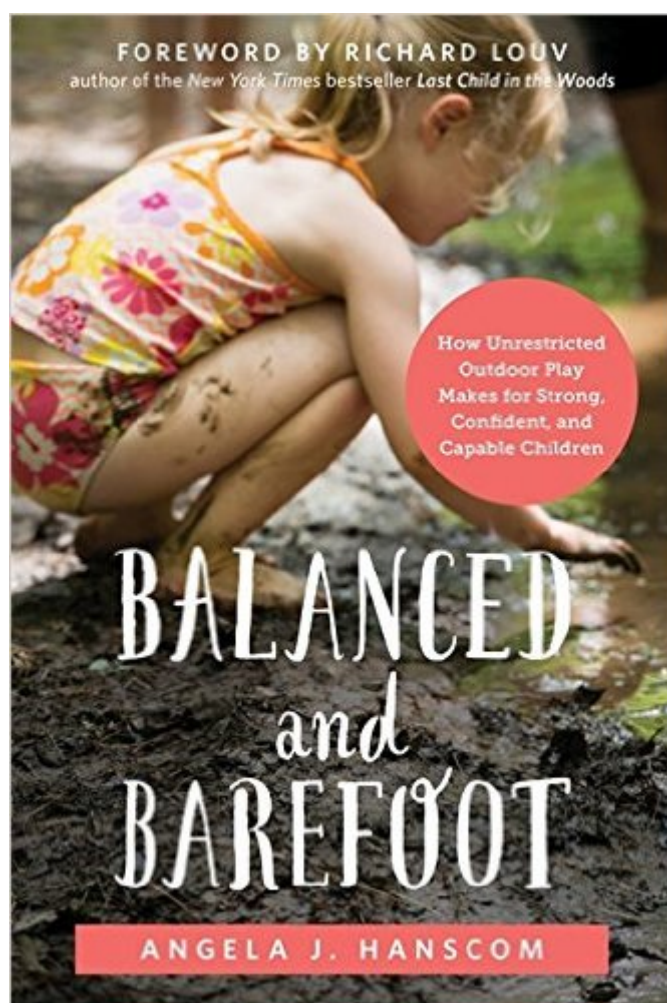


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# Balanced And Barefoot: How Unrestricted Outdoor Play Makes For Strong, Confident, And Capable Children



## Synopsis

"Angela Hanscom is a powerful voice for balance." —Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods*

In this important book, a pediatric occupational therapist and founder of TimberNook shows how outdoor play and unstructured freedom of movement are vital for children's cognitive development and growth, and offers tons of fun, engaging ways to help ensure that kids grow into healthy, balanced, and resilient adults. Today's kids have adopted sedentary lifestyles filled with television, video games, and computer screens. But more and more, studies show that children need a rough and tumble outdoor play in order to develop their sensory, motor, and executive functions. Disturbingly, a lack of movement has been shown to lead to a number of health and cognitive difficulties, such as attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), emotion regulation and sensory processing issues, and aggressiveness at school recess break. So, how can you ensure your child is fully engaging their body, mind, and all of their senses? Using the same philosophy that lies at the heart of her popular TimberNook program—that nature is the ultimate sensory experience, and that psychological and physical health improves for children when they spend time outside on a regular basis—author Angela Hanscom offers several strategies to help your child thrive, even if you live in an urban environment. Today it is rare to find children rolling down hills, climbing trees, or spinning in circles just for fun. We've taken away merry-go-rounds, shortened the length of swings, and done away with teeter-totters to keep children safe. Children have fewer opportunities for unstructured outdoor play than ever before, and recess times at school are shrinking due to demanding educational environments. With this book, you'll discover little things you can do anytime, anywhere to help your kids achieve the movement they need to be happy and healthy in mind, body, and spirit.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a nice quick resource on why it is so important to get your child outside. It offers some insight into how to combat the cultural push away from allowing our kids to be independent. This book is very simple to read and attempts to backup the claims within. It is a sort of sad reality that some of the advice is difficult to follow. Simply put, it is time to take back childhood and let children become explorers.

My children have attended Angela Hanscom's camps for several years now, and I can attest that Angela has much knowledge and experience with children, outdoor play, and sensory issues. Anyone who enjoyed the book "Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder" by Richard Louv will learn more from this book (and knowing that Louv wrote the foreword to the book is endorsement enough!)

Perhaps the author had good intentions and wanted to encourage parents to get their children out into the outdoors. However, anyone who has enough patience to read through the virtually useless 200 pages of dribble to get through to the final brief billboard message that the outdoors is good for us should be going back to school or volunteering at their local library. Let me provide an example. On page 49, when we should be well into the meat of the book's message, we receive a 2-page description of what eyesight is and how it is useful. Here is a brief excerpt. "Sight is an intricate and complex sense. Our sight comes from using light energy to interpret environmental data. It helps us investigate our surroundings and determine our location relative to objects around us. Sight reinforces what children learn through other senses. For instance, a child may smell muffins cooking in the other room. She then goes over to investigate and confirm with her sight that it was indeed muffins that she smelled." The eyesight speech continues for another page and a half. This review is intended for readers. For the author, I would respectfully suggest a more concise message that does not seek to repeat what we already know. On the contrary, I wish you would share the unique knowledge you have that supports the message contained in your title.

Angela does a great job of melding theory with practical experience. I found myself looking back at

my childhood and totally agreeing with Angela that we have somehow forgotten about what she calls "free play" I'm in my sixties, and after reading this book I feel like going outside to build a fort. As a grandparent I found this book very enlightening.

We can't wait to read Angela's book. Our son was one of Angela's patients a few years ago. He has significant sensory challenges and she had such innovative yet simple ways of delivering therapy while our son was just outdoor playing. She encouraged him to try new things in nature that he would normally assume he couldn't do, like climbing a tree or a big rock cluster. He learned to trust himself more and in the end was receiving such natural therapy. We LOVED that he was receiving much needed therapy outside of a traditional environment and we learned as parents to relax and let him explore more. This experience with Angela has also changed the way we have been raising our youngest. She has learned to love nature in all seasons and is an incredibly confident climber, explorer and "pretend" player. I think it's wonderful that Angela's approach will be available to so many families.

I cannot say enough good things about this book. What a well-written and informative book. I think all parents, teachers and childcare providers should read this! It really lets you better understand the importance of play and being outdoors, for the proper development and well-being of children. Just a fantastic read! I'm a director of a child care center and I plan to share this with my staff!

rating for the content of the book if not the editing...I suppose those who purchase this are a part of the choir so it's not news to us but I encourage you to read it, take notes, and look for more. Eye opening!

This book changed the way my husband and I parent our 3 kids. We considered ourselves "outdoorsy" (i.e., we took our kids on occasional camping and hiking trips, visited playgrounds weekly) but this book was a game-changer for us. We realized that our kids (ages 5, 3, 6 months) were not experiencing the same free-spirited, dig-your-hands-in-the-mud childhood as we had 30 years ago. Our kids weren't playing outdoors on a daily basis like we used to. Moreover, since we're both working parents, there was a tendency to overly engage with the kids on weeknights and weekends. This book made us think differently about that, too. The kids actually play better with each other (and more creatively) when we're not invading their space all the time! I can't recommend this book enough, especially to parents and teachers. LET KIDS RUN FREE. Active

free play, ideally outdoors. That's our family's new motto!

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