

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY FORESTRY

P R O G R A M

GEORGIA FORESTRY
COMMISSION



Making the Shade: Planting Trees for Health and Shade

Program Overview

Traditional elementary school campus design often eliminates the health benefits provided by shade trees. *Making the Shade*, a program of the Sustainable Community Forestry Program of the Georgia Forestry Commission (GFC), helps school administrators, parents, teachers and students grow a healthy urban forest at their school by providing landscape plans, recommended species and planting assistance. Schools must have strong local partnerships, a commitment to maintenance and a corporate sponsorship or monetary match to participate.

Tree Benefits to Children

Trees provide many environmental, economic and social benefits. Some of these benefits include cleaner air and water, cooler temperatures in shaded parking lots, energy savings, enhanced learning opportunities, creating a sense of place at school and a calming landscape.

Trees provide significant **health** benefits to students. On playgrounds, trees reduce:

- Surface temperatures of play equipment and rubberized surfaces which can cause serious and painful burns.
- Sun exposure and ultraviolet radiation which can cause skin damage.
- Susceptibility to ground level ozone on hot, muggy days.
- The symptoms of AD/HD.
- Risk for children with asthma and lung-related illnesses by keeping the air clean.

Maintaining a Healthy Lifestyle with Trees in Mind

With increasing health care costs, Georgians have a growing concern for maintaining a healthy lifestyle for their family. By planting shade trees, GFC is creating healthy places for children to play, a new subject matter and physical activity.

GFC encourages school board members, developers, state and community officials and business owners to examine development trends on school campuses in their community and find ways to preserve existing trees and participate in tree planting programs.

Success = Kids + Shade

Since 2005, 31 schools and park playgrounds have benefitted from tree-shaded playgrounds through *Making the Shade*.

More than \$191,000 has been donated through local contributions of time and supplies to *Making the Shade* schools. Milliken & Company has been a generous supporter.

Approximately 1,200 shade trees have been planted and maintained since 2005.



Leaving a Legacy

The Georgia Forestry Commission is continuing to fund *Making the Shade* with support from the USDA Forest Service. GFC provides education and urges school districts to preserve, maintain and plant trees.

GFC's partners across the state are replanting Georgia's urban areas and maintaining healthy forests. Help us leave a legacy of trees where we live, work and play by participating in the GFC's Arbor Day Legislative Seedling Program in February. Simply select a species and planting location, and 10 seedlings will be planted in your name.

For more information about the Georgia Forestry Commission, visit gatrees.org or call 800-GATREES.