Climate is an Environmental Justice Issue Monthly Planning Guide for LINKS Chapters

May 2023

Overview

Monthly Theme	Environmental Awareness Days	Cultural and Identity Awareness Days
Barriers to Accessing the Outdoors	-Garden for Wildlife Month -National Wildfire Awareness Month -American Wetlands Month National -Bike to School Day (4) -International Migratory Bird Day (14) -World Climate Change Day (15) -World Bee Day (20) -Endangered Species Day (21)	-Asian, Pacific Islander Heritage Month -Jewish Heritage Month -Malcolm X Day (19) - African Liberation Day (25)

Elementary	1. Activity 1: How Much Nature in Your Neighborhood? 2. Activity 2: Biodiversity at School or in My Neighborhood Using SEEK by iNaturalist 3. Activity 3: Plan a Bike, Walk, or Roll Event 4. Activity 4: Explore the Outdoors with Community Groups, Friends, and Family
Middle and High School	1. Activity 1: How Much Nature in Your Neighborhood? 5. Activity 2: Plan a Bike, Walk, or Roll Event 6. Activity 3: Explore the Outdoors with Community Groups, Friends, and Family

Mentoring Moment Suggestions

seek out passionate volunteers, activists, elders, and Indigenous members of the community, consider accessing the expertise of racial justice leaders, elected officials, city planners, community safety experts, park managers, social justice advocates, social scientists, community organizers, ecologists, outdoor recreation specialists, or journalists.

Barriers to Accessing the Outdoors

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY

During these activities, students will explore the barriers that prevent people of different communities, races, genders, immigration status, ability, and income levels from safely accessing and enjoying the outdoors. They will examine how easy it is to access nature spaces in their own neighborhoods and explore different ways to organize or join groups to participate in outdoor activities together.

MATERIALS

- Internet connection and computer or tablets
- National Wildlife Federation Safe Spaces Initiative [4-part roundtable discussion webinar series]
- SEEK app by iNaturalist
- Walk, Bike, and Roll to School
- Family Nature Guide (attached)
- Every Kid Outdoors

BACKGROUND

Access to nature should be a right, not a privilege. Public parks, green spaces, and the outdoors in general belong to everyone. Unfortunately, access is often not equitable for people of all races, genders, immigration status, ability, and income levels. By identifying and then eliminating barriers, we can assure all communities receive the healing power of nature.

What Makes the Outdoors Inaccessible and for Whom? [i]

In better understanding the intersection of racism, policy, segregation, and access, one can argue that outdoor and recreational activities in general, have traditionally served white communities. A combination of economic inequality, legalized segregation, and other forms of historical and present-day overt/covert racial violence has perpetuated a diversity gap in the outdoors. Statistics collected from the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service show that although people of color make up nearly 40 percent of the total U.S. population, close to 70 percent of people who visit national forests, national wildlife refuges, and national parks are white, while Black people remain the most dramatically underrepresented group in these spaces.

Racialized economic policies, employment discrimination, unequal access to quality education, and other fundamental tools that can build a person's economic standing have historically been denied to BIPOC communities; which makes camping, hiking or any similar ventures inaccessible. Costs of camping gear, entrance fees, lack of vacation days, unpaid leave, and other factors make it difficult for families to participate in outdoor recreation, particularly, BIPOC individuals who are more likely to face these economic barriers. However, even though access to capital reduces the likelihood of a person visiting a park or forest, the underlying issue to acknowledge is race.

To delve deeper into the systemic issues that prevent people from safely accessing the outdoors, check out these articles and resources:

- National Wildlife Federation Safe Spaces Initiative [4-part roundtable discussion webinar series]
- Nature Gap: Why Outdoor Spaces Lack Diversity and Inclusion

BOOKS

- Black Faces, White Spaces by Carolyn Finney
  Why are African Americans so underrepresented when it comes to interest in nature, outdoor recreation, and environmentalism? In this thought-provoking study, Carolyn Finney looks beyond the discourse of the environmental justice movement to examine how the natural environment has been understood, commodified, and represented by both white and black Americans.
- Running While Black by Alison Mariella Desir | Reading book guide
- Black Nature: Four Centuries of African American Nature Poetry. Edited by Camille Dungy

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Activity 1: How Much Nature in Your Neighborhood? [complete instructions and student worksheet are attached] (60-90 minutes)

This simple assessment tool—which can be used during a neighborhood walk or with google maps— will help determine if your school and/or community has equitable and safe access to nature.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Locate and identify nature areas within a 1-2-mile radius of their community.
- Assess the accessibility (or lack of) to nature areas within their immediate community.
- Analyze possible solutions to improve/promote safe and equitable access to nature within their community.

WHAT TO DO

Begin the activity with a discussion using these guiding questions.

- How much time do you spend outdoors (at a beach, nature center, playground, forest, community garden, etc.)?
- What are the benefits to spending time outdoors?
- How often do you and your family or friends visit a public park? Is this important for you and your family?
- Is it easy or hard for you and your family to get to a park or outdoor space? How do you get there (walk, bus, car, etc.)? How far away is it? Does it cost money to get in?

- Why do you think it is important to have access to the outdoors and nature?
- After students complete the investigation below, consider: Do people in your community have equitable access to the outdoors and nature? If not, why and how could this be changed?

Option A - *Needs to be accompanied by an adult*
1. Go outside and take a 10-20 minute walk in any direction.
2. Complete the *How Much Nature in Your Neighborhood* worksheet.

Option B - *Internet connection necessary*
1. Using Google Maps (satellite view) or the Google Earth app, look for green spaces within a 1- to 2-mile radius of your home or school.
2. Complete the How Much Nature in Your Neighborhood? worksheet, page 20.

Activity 2: Biodiversity at School or in My Neighborhood Using SEEK by iNaturalist [complete instructions and student worksheet are attached]

Students will learn how to identify and document biodiversity in their neighborhood.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:
- Observe nature and biodiversity to support native species like the monarch butterfly.
- Recognize observation as an essential first step in the process of science.
- Practice data analysis and visualization skills.

WHAT TO DO

1. *Download the SEEK by iNaturalist app.*
This app will help identify the wildlife and plants seen as you explore nature. If downloaded on a personal or family device, you can earn badges and participate in challenges.

2. Draw, or use your phone, tablet, or camera to take pictures of organisms. Use the SEEK by iNaturalist app to help you identify at least one organism.

Identifying organisms in the field is a skill that requires practice – and this starts with looking closely at what you see! In your school garden, backyard, or on a walk in your neighborhood, draw or take a photograph of an organism. What does it look like? How big is it, and what things are around it? Do you know what the organism is called? ***Share your observation with your classmates.***

Activity 3: Plan a Walk, Bike, and Roll Event

www.walkbiketoschool.org/

Walk, Bike & Roll events invite participants to celebrate the joy of active commuting while building a sense of community and school spirit. Whether addressing the need to make routes to school safer for active trips or encouraging children and teens to be more active, these events can be powerful tools to inspire lasting change. Of course, they are also fun!

WHAT TO DO

Plan an Event

Walk, Bike & Roll to School Day events can be simple or elaborate. A school might start with hosting a big event, and then move to a low-key celebration over time as students become more accustomed to walking and rolling on a regular basis. Another school might start simple and then build efforts in subsequent years. Use the following links to find resources for planning many different types of events.

First Time Tips
Celebrating Walk, Bike & Roll to School Day for the first time? Read through these tips from event organizers to help jump start your planning.

Getting Started Guide
Use this guide to help make your ideas reality. Follow these steps for a complete guide on planning and holding an event.

Plan an Event in 7 Days
Many successful events were started with little time to spare. An event can be simple. In fact, it's possible to plan a Walk, Bike & Roll event in one week.

Safety First
Safety is a priority for any Walk, Bike & Roll to School Day event. Here you'll find a guide for emphasizing safety when planning a route as well as specific tips for pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Access for All Students
Walk, Bike & Roll to School Day events are open to all. Read through this guide to plan for an accessible event for all who wish to participate.

Activity 4: Explore the Outdoors with Community Groups, Friends, and Family

There are many resources, organizations, and community groups that work to bring people together, teach skills, and increase equitable access for outdoor recreation, nature experiences, and environment-based education and leadership training for adults, children, and people of all abilities. Below are ideas for joining or organizing a group to spend time in the outdoors in community!

WHAT TO DO

1. Organize outdoor activities with the class, family, or friends: You don't have to be an expert naturalist, or do it all alone to spend time in the outdoors. The Family Nature Guide written by Children and Nature Network can help you get started. In addition, all 4th graders are eligible for a free pass to federal parks, lands and waters using the **Every Kid Outdoors** pass.

- **Family Nature Guide:** From exploring local parks to hiking, paddling and even camping adventures, this guide makes it easy and fun for families to enjoy healthy outdoor activities together. Family Nature Clubs are self-organized and self-directed.
- **Every Kid Outdoors:** Supplies 4th graders with a pass that gives them free access to all national parks, lands, and waters. With the pass, fourth graders can bring family and friends on adventures free for a full year. Educators of 4th graders can download and print passes HERE.

2. Connect with outdoor activity groups in your region: The organizations below may engage specific populations or focus on specific outdoor activities; they work nationally, regionally, or within local networks and chapters. Research your community to find out if there are additional groups that engage people in outdoor activities in your town. Find even more national and regional outdoor groups in the BIPOC Outdoor Resource Guide compiled by Melanin Base Camp.

Justice Outside | https://justiceoutside.org/
Justice Outside's programs provide both established and aspiring outdoor professionals with the skills necessary to transform the environmental field into a more equitable and culturally relevant sector.

Latino Outdoors | https://latinooutdoors.org/
Latino Outdoors inspires, connects, and engages Latino communities in the outdoors and embrace *cultura y familia* as part of the outdoor narrative, ensuring our history, heritage, and leadership are valued and represented.

Melanin Base Camp | https://www.melaninbasecamp.com/
Your home base for diversity in outdoor adventure sports. Our purpose is to inspire you with weekly content from Black, Latinx, Asian, Indigenous and Queer People of Color who love the outdoors.

Outdoor Afro | https://outdoorafro.org/
Outdoor Afro celebrates and inspires Black connections and leadership in nature. Outdoor Afro volunteer leaders guide their communities through intergenerational activities that help strengthen relationships and possibilities in the outdoors and create safe, diverse adventures for all age groups to enjoy. These outdoor experiences range from fishing, kayaking, backpacking, skiing, boating, gardening, biking, hiking, horseback riding, birding, and swimming.

Black Girls Run
The goal of "Black Girls Run" is to encourage and motivate Black women to practice a healthy lifestyle.

Black Surfing Association
A non-profit organization based in Rockaway Beach, Queens that was founded in 2016 by Lou Harris. They give free lessons to local children.

Brown Girl Surf
Brown Girl Surf is increasing access to surfing and amplifying the voices of women of color surfers to create a diverse women's surf culture in the Bay Area.

Disabled Hikers
Disable Hikers is a disabled-led organization that celebrates disabled people's experiences in the outdoors. We help facilitate those experiences with information, resources, and events, including trail guides and group hikes.

The Feminist Bird Club
The Feminist Bird Club is dedicated to promoting inclusivity in birding while fundraising and providing a safe opportunity for members of the LGBTQIA+ community, BIPOC, and women to connect with the natural world.

HBCUs Outside
HBCUs Outside is a nonprofit group that aims to inspire underrepresented collegiate youth to get outside.

Outdoor Alliance for Kids
OAK is a national strategic partnership of organizations from diverse sectors with a common interest in connecting children, youth and families with the outdoors.

Outward Bound Adventures
The institute provides meaningful nature-based education that promotes positive self-development, environmental responsibility, and outdoor career pathways for urban youth of color.

Pride Outside

Pride Outside is dedicated to connecting the LGBTQ community around the outdoors. They host hikes, outdoor skills classes, LGBTQ history working tours, discussions, and more.

Soul Trak
A D.C.-based nonprofit organization that connects communities of color to outdoor spaces while also building a coalition of diverse outdoor leaders. They run a variety of programming to serve hands-on, experiential programming.

Venture Out
This organization offers backpacking and wilderness programs for lgbtq+ people of all ages, including specific programs for girls and young women.

Barriers to Accessing the Outdoors

MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY

During these activities, students will explore the barriers that prevent people of different communities, races, genders, immigration status, ability, and income levels from safely accessing and enjoying the outdoors. They will examine how easy it is to access nature spaces in their own neighborhoods and explore different ways to organize or join groups to participate in outdoor activities together.

MATERIALS

- Internet connection and computer or tablets
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BACKGROUND

Access to nature should be a right, not a privilege. Public parks, green spaces, and the outdoors in general belong to everyone. Unfortunately, access is often not equitable for people of all races, genders, immigration status, ability, and income levels. By identifying and then eliminating barriers, we can assure all communities receive the healing power of nature.

What Makes the Outdoors Inaccessible and for Whom? [ii]

In better understanding the intersection of racism, policy, segregation, and access, one can argue that outdoor and recreational activities in general, have traditionally served white communities. A combination of economic inequality, legalized segregation, and other forms of historical and present-day overt/covert racial violence has perpetuated a diversity gap in the outdoors. Statistics collected from the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service show that although people of color make up nearly 40 percent of the total U.S. population, close to 70 percent of people who visit national forests, national wildlife refuges, and national parks are white, while Black people remain the most dramatically underrepresented group in these spaces.

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even though access to capital reduces the likelihood of a person visiting a park or forest, the underlying issue to acknowledge is race.

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- Nature Gap: Why Outdoor Spaces Lack Diversity and Inclusion
- Barriers to Nature Engagement [Children and Nature Network]

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WHAT TO DO

Activity 1: How Much Nature in Your Neighborhood? [complete instructions and student worksheet are attached] (60-90 minutes, can be completed in 2 session)

This simple assessment tool—which can be used during a neighborhood walk or with google maps— will help determine if your school and/or community has equitable and safe access to nature.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Locate and identify nature areas within a 1-2-mile radius of their community.
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[i] https://nationalhealthfoundation.org/breaking-down-lack-diversity-outdoor-spaces/
[ii] https://nationalhealthfoundation.org/breaking-down-lack-diversity-outdoor-spaces/

How Much Nature in Your Neighborhood?

Safe and Equitable Access to Nature

Summary

Students assess their community's safe and equitable access to nature.

Grade Level

3-5, 6-8, 9-12

Time

2 class periods (60 minutes)

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Locate and identify nature areas within a 1-2-mile radius of their community.
- Assess the accessibility (or lack of) to nature areas within their immediate community.
- Analyze possible solutions to improve/promote safe and equitable access to nature within their community.

Subjects

Social Studies, Geography, Math, Technology

Skills

Observation, description, analysis, research, data collection, measurement

Materials

Option A

- Clipboard and pencil
- Worksheet (provided)

Option B

- Computer and Internet access
- Worksheet (provided)

Background

When addressing social and environmental inequities in our communities, access to nature needs to be part of the conversation. Gentrification and housing discrimination are symptoms of systematic racism. Many families of color have been pushed into impoverished urban areas, far from parks and green spaces.

Public parks, green spaces, and the outdoors in general belong to everyone. Unfortunately, access is often not equitable for people of all races, genders, immigration status, ability, and income levels. By identifying and then eliminating barriers, we can assure all communities receive the healing power of nature. Access to nature should be a right, not a privilege.

Guiding Questions

1. How much time do you spend outdoors (at a beach, nature center, playground, forest, community garden, etc.)?

2. What are the benefits to spending time outdoors?

3. How often do you and your family or friends visit a public park? Is this important for you and your family?

4. Is it easy or hard for you and your family to get to a park or outdoor space? How do you get there (walk, bus, car, etc.)? How far away is it? Does it cost money to get in?

5. Why do you think it is important to have access to the outdoors and nature?

6. After students complete the investigation below, consider: Do people in your community have equitable access to the outdoors and nature? If not, why and how could this be changed?

Photo: Tina Wong.

This simple assessment tool will help determine if your school and/or community has equitable and safe access to nature. For a more in-depth study, explore the engaging, interactive links below.

Green STEAM!

Trust for Public Lands: Explore Park Access in Your Neighborhood. How many people in your community can access green space within a 10-minute walk? Learn this and much more!

Model My Watershed. Learn about the plants, animals, streams, soils, terrain, climate, and water quality in your community.

Procedure

Option A - *Needs to be accompanied by an adult*

1. Go outside and take a 10-20 minute walk in any direction.

2. Complete the *How Much Nature in Your Neighborhood?* worksheet, page 20.

Green STEAM!

Option B - *Internet connection necessary*

1. Using Google Maps (satellite view) or the Google Earth app, look for green spaces within a 1- to 2-mile radius of your home.

2. Complete the *How Much Nature in Your Neighborhood?* worksheet, page 20.

Explore Solutions

Brainstorm with students at least three actions that could improve access to nature and the outdoors in your community. *Example, the city can improve/add public transportation routes to parks and public lands.*

Student Worksheet

Name Date Grade

How Much Nature In Your Neighborhood?

Are parks and other natural places in easy reach of the people in your community?

Note: While designed for a teacher or other adult to lead the whole class, this activity can be adapted for older students to complete individually.

Choose one of the following ways to explore this:

1. With an adult, go outside and take a 10-20 minute walk in any direction and record your findings in the chart below.
2. Use Google Maps (satellite view) or the Google Earth app to look for natural areas within a 1-2 mile radius of your home. You'll need internet connection to do this. Record your findings in the chart below.

Steps for using Google Earth

- Go to the Google Earth application and click on the project tab. Watch the tutorial video on how to set-up a project.
- Once you have saved your project, click on the ruler icon (bottommost icon) on the left-hand side of the screen. When you do, a gray box will appear in the upper right corner. Click the drop-down arrow and select "miles." Click on your starting point on the map, then use the tool to measure a 1-2 mile distance from there in any direction. Double-click on your chosen end point. Zoom in to see what parks, green spaces, and gardens you see along the route.

Distance: How many miles is the green space from your school/community?

Pathways: Are there uninterrupted sidewalks, bike lanes, or trails to safely reach the site?

Accessibility: Can people with physical limitations or baby strollers safely access the space?

Safety: Do you feel safe? Is the site free from unlawful activity, vandalism, etc.?

Type of Green Space	Distance	Pathways (yes/no)	Accessibility (yes/no)	Safety (yes/no)
Parks				
Nature Playground				
Community garden, botanical garden				
Lakes and rivers				
Beaches - ocean				
Nature trails or habitats				
Private green spaces, open to the public				
School garden or playground open to the community				

Biodiversity at School or in My Neighborhood Using SEEK by iNaturalist

Grades 3 – 5

OBJECTIVES

- Observe nature and biodiversity to support native species like the monarch butterfly.
- Recognize observation as an essential first step in the process of science.
- Practice data analysis and visualization skills.

INSTRUCTIONS

Step 1: Let's Prepare!

Watch the following videos:

1. What is Citizen Science?
2. Learn Outdoor Safety
3. Observe Nature Like a Scientist

Answer the following questions:

Q1. What is biodiversity?

Q2. Why do we want to have high biodiversity at our school?

Q3. How have you and your peers increased biodiversity at your school or in your community?

Q4. How do citizen scientists help scientists with their studies (projects/research)?

Q5. Where (geographically) can monarchs be found?

Step 2: Let's Observe

Download the SEEK by iNaturalist app.
This app will help identify the wildlife and plants seen as you explore nature. If downloaded on a personal or family device, you can earn badges and participate in challenges.

Draw, or use your phone, tablet, or camera to take pictures of organisms. Use the SEEK by iNaturalist app to help you identify at least one organism.

Identifying organisms in the field is a skill that requires practice – and this starts with looking closely at what you see! In your school garden, backyard, or on a walk in your neighborhood, draw or take a photograph of an organism. What does it look like? How big is it, and what things are around it? Do you know what the organism is called? ***Share your observation with your classmates.***

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ECO-SCHOOLS USA
NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION
FOUNDATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Step 3: Observation Bingo!

iNaturalist identifies categories of species that are in nature. Below is a bingo card for you to fill in with these categories. Using Seek by iNaturalist, go on a nature walk at school, at home, or in your neighborhood. ***Draw or insert photos of the organisms you find below.*** Can you complete your bingo card? Can you identify the organisms you saw using Seek by iNaturalist?

BIRD	**REPTILE**	**PLANT**
MAMMAL	**FREE SPACE**	**FUNGI**
INSECT	**ARACHNID (SPIDER)**	**AMPHIBIAN**

Extension Activity:

1. Watch the video Biodiversity with National Wildlife Federation at Home!
2. Discuss with your classmates: What are our ideas for increasing biodiversity at school or at home?
3. Check out and complete one of Ranger Rick's® Nature Notebook activities.

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Children & Nature Network

FAMILY NATURE CLUB

Step-by-Step Guide and Resources

childrenandnature.org

STEP 1: SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR DECISIONS

Good planning is key to a successful Family Nature Club. Set a schedule that works for you and your family. Are you interested in hosting a single event or ongoing events each week, month or season? Plan each event well in advance and be aware of other local activities that may affect people's ability to attend. It's also important to let people know how long they should plan for your event; is it a half-day hike or two hours of exploration at dusk?

PLANNING GUIDE

HOW OFTEN:

Once a week on _____ (day)

The first _____ (day) of each month

The first _____ (day) of each season

Once a year on _____ (date)

HOW LONG:

From _____ (month) to _____ (month)

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Consider your local landscape and seasonal weather conditions.
- Find out what other outdoor or nature events take place in your region.
- Gather a list of local nature clubs and other resources and find out whether educators or special guests are available to speak to your club while you are out.
- Consider places you've been and places you've always wanted to explore; include your favorite activities.

CREATE A LIST OF POSSIBLE OUTINGS:

DATE	LOCATION	ACTIVITY	TIME

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PHOTO: JON BEARD

STEP 2: PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

With each outing you choose, there are several factors to plan and consider before you begin. Below is a checklist to help you think through the many factors involved with planning an outing. These considerations will vary according to your location, experience and conditions.

LOCATION LOGISTICS:

- ○ Travel time to location: _____
- ○ Convenient meeting location: _____
- ○ Food, water, restroom facilities: yes /no, details: _____
- ○ Fees: _____
- ○ Adequate parking for a large group: Yes / No
- ○ Need permission for groups over 10: Yes / No

TYPE OF HIKE/LOCATION:

- ○ Loop hike ○ Out and back ○ Easy ○ Moderately rigorous
- ○ Seasonal features: _____
- ○ Water feature: lake, stream, pond or puddles _____
- ○ Clothing considerations for this destination: _____
- ○ Educational opportunities: _____
- ○ Accessibility features: _____
- ○ Possible saftey or accessibility issues (small children, elderly, all, etc): _____

_____

PLAN FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER:

- ○ Alternate meeting location: _____ Alternate activity: _____

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

_____

_____

_____

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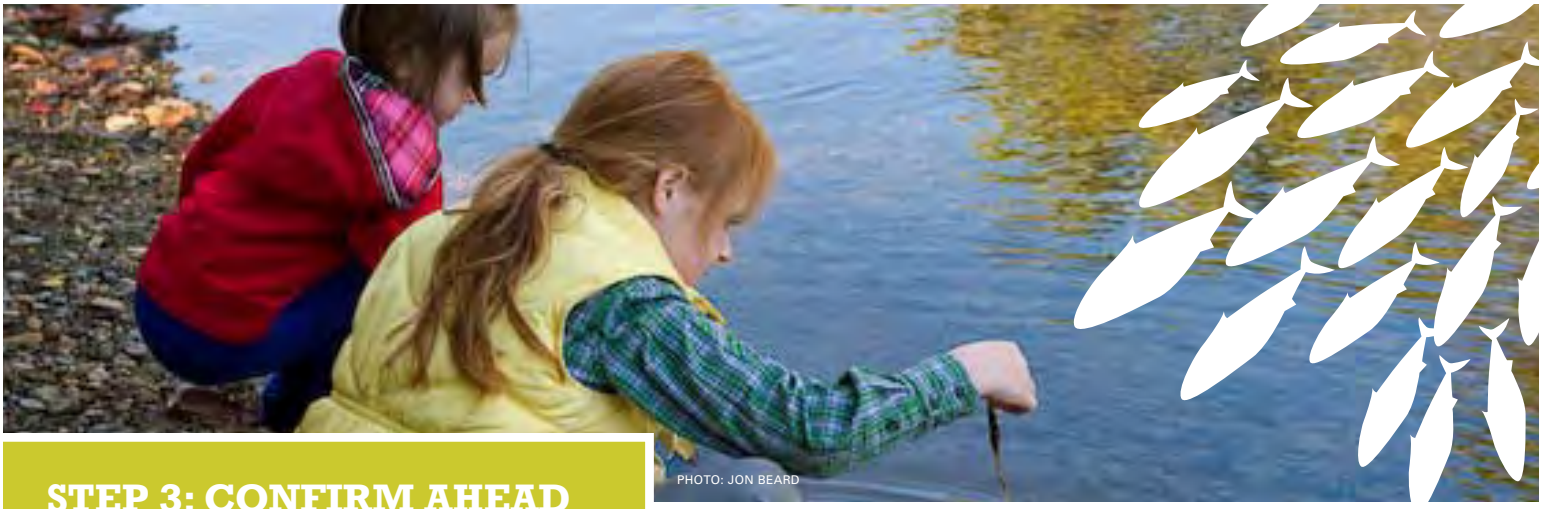

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STEP 3: CONFIRM AHEAD

It's useful to connect with the park manager or agency that manages the locations you'll be visiting. Tell them your plans and request permission to hold your outing at their location, especially if the group is large. Provide information about the benefits they'll receive as a host site.

Use these prompts to craft your message before you mail, e-mail or call, then log any pertinent notes below.

HELPFUL PROMPTS

1. Introduce yourself and your Family Nature Club. Provide a link to your Facebook or other social media page, if applicable.
2. Date of visit: _____
3. Time of visit: _____
4. Estimated number of participants: _____
5. Ask if you need a permit or if any other special arrangements need to be made for a group visit.
6. Is there any other information about your group the park manager should know in advance?
7. Are there any materials (calendars or flyers for upcoming events) that the site would like you to distribute to the group?
8. Thank them for welcoming your group and let them know you appreciate their commitment to helping families get outdoors.

FOLLOW-UP NOTES

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STEP 4: GET THE WORD OUT!

There's no "right" size for a Family Nature Club; choose what works best for you. Start with your existing networks of friends, family, neighbors and co-workers. There are lots of great ways to spread the word, including these listed below. Add notes to take these ideas further.

WAYS TO INVITE MEMBERS TO JOIN	NOTES
1. Share your Club's plans on social media.	
2. Visit parenting websites and blogs in your region to get on their calendars and in their newsletters.	
3. Contact the host of other groups, like your local REI or other outdoor recreation store, neighborhood association or homeowners' association, your school's PTA, scouting groups, 4-H clubs and church groups.	
4. Post a flier at the library, recreation centers or outdoor sports and camping supply stores.	

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STEP 5: PLAN FOR SAFE, FUN AND HASSLE-FREE

Age-appropriate risk-taking is good for children's healthy development but keeping everyone safe is a critical part of your outing.

- **BE PREPARED:** Bee stings, poisonous plants and allergies don't have to hold you back. Make sure to bring a first-aid kit and let everyone know where it is.
- **SET EXPECTATIONS**: Remind participants that the natural world is full of surprises and paying attention is part of getting to know nature.
- **USE THE BUDDY SYSTEM:** Group families with similarly-aged kids together so they can adjust activities to fit their ability level

There are many good resources for safety tips in the outdoors. Review your plans in advance of your outing and always bring appropriate first-aid supplies. When you announce the event, make sure to mention any special supplies that people should bring or safety precautions they should consider. If your group will be near water, suggest a change of clothes. If you are hiking in the woods, encourage tick checks. These bits of information help families be prepared, leaving everyone to have a more enjoyable experience.

ESSENTIALS

- ○ Water
- ○ Layered clothes appropriate for weather
- ○ Backpack
- ○ Snacks or picnic lunch
- ○ Sunscreen
- ○ Hat

SAFETY

- ○ Whistle
- ○ A CPR trained participant
- ○ First-aid kit

EXTRAS

- ○ Change of clothes
- ○ Pad and pencil
- ○ Magnifying glass
- ○ Bug box
- ○ Butterfly nets
- ○ Binoculars
- ○ Field guides or ID cards
- ○ Flashlight for night hikes

PHOTO: JON BEARD

STEP 6: LEADER'S EVENT DAY CHECKLIST

The day is here. Time to enjoy the outdoors! After all the planning, you want to make sure the day of goes smoothly. Here is a list of things to bring, forms to sign, and reminders: everything you need to build community and enjoy the many proven benefits of nature. A note: with the forms to sign, make sure you keep all the originals so you have them for your files. Make copies or share via shared files if others want copies.

- **SIGN-IN SHEET:** Having participants sign-in can help you in future marketing efforts or to help if you need head counts during the event.
- **PHOTO RELEASE FORM:** If you plan to take pictures and use them in your marketing, you must get permission from participants who may appear in those photos by having them sign and date a release form.
- **LIABILITY WAIVER FORM:** Beyond bee stings, scraped knees and poison ivy, accidents do happen. Have participants sign a liability waiver, which is a common practice for outdoor events involving young children. Some organizations provide liability insurance to groups visiting their property or going on outings under their auspices. That kind of arrangement can be very helpful to your Family Nature Club.
- **COMMENT AND SUGGESTION FORM:** Gather comments and input from participants after the event to help in planning the next one. Online surveys work well too!

THINGS TO BRING:

- Pens and pencils
- All forms for participants to sign
- Special equipment needed for the day's activities (field guides, nets, magnifying glass, etc.)
- Extra water and snacks
- First-aid kit
- A list of housekeeping announcements for the beginning of event, including reminders such as; requiring that parents and guardians stay with their children, where bathrooms are, the route map, etc.
- A team of Leads. A couple of people working together can make the event run more smoothly. Make it a family affair or ask a friend to help lead.
- Energy, curiosity and joy!

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STEP 7: MARKETING FOR THE NEXT EVENT!

You'll want to spread the word about your upcoming events, share tips and stories about your adventures and keep everyone informed and inspired. The best way is to create a social media group (such as Facebook), a website or blog to share news, schedules, stories and ideas. You know your community best so maximize what works in your area. That may include printed fliers, events on community calendars, notices on school or church newsletters. Ask your friends and other parents for tips on how they learn about events in your community.

MARKETING ENGAGEMENT TIPS:

Marketing doesn't have to consist of only ads and flyers; a lot of great marketing comes in the form of relational engagement. Using a platform like a Facebook Group can build community with your group in real-time. Here are some ways you can easily grow your club's engagement:

- **Post weekly ideas** of places that might be of interest for future events. By observing the likes and comments, you'll see which places intrigue the most people.
- **Post articles** or resources from our Finding Nature News (findingnature.org) site that reinforce the link between health and nature for our family and children.
- **Ask kids to post drawings** of their findings from past events.
- **Ask parents to post videos** of their family reflecting on what they liked best about a past event.
- **Ask parents (and/or kids) to reflect on different prompts** such as: *What was your favorite childhood memory in nature? What was the most amazing animal you've seen in the wild?*

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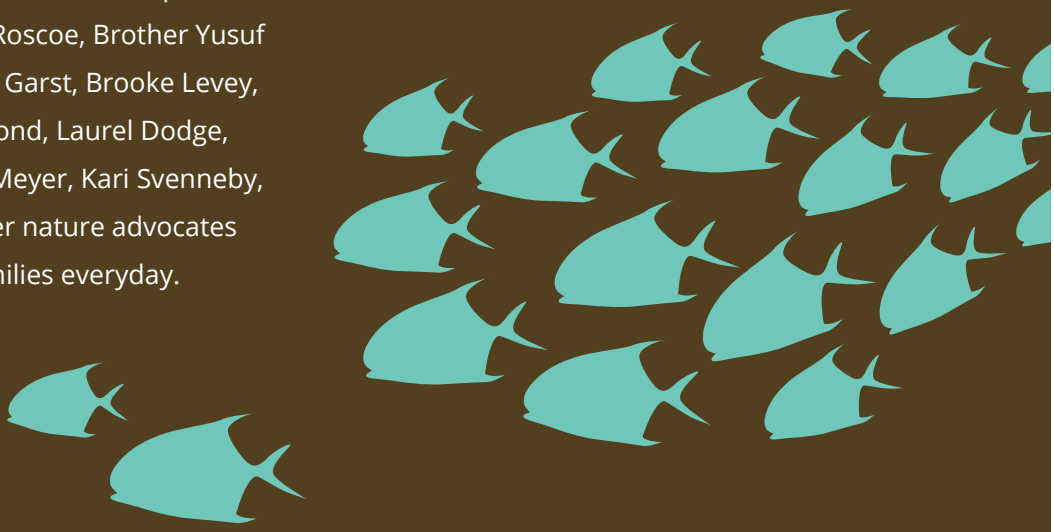
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Children & Nature Network's Nature Clubs for Families Toolkit is a publication of the Children & Nature Network (C&NN). We'd like to thank the people who contributed to the original Families Toolkit through strategic support, guidance, content creation and time and enthusiasm: C&NN Chairman Emeritus Richard Louv, Co-Founder and President Emerita Cheryl Charles, Amy Pertschuk, Avery Cleary, Chip and Ashley Donahue, Kelly Mortenson, Kellie Tharp, Lori Kiesser, Mary Hardcastle, Mary Roscoe, Brother Yusuf Burgess, Judith Silverberg, Barry Garst, Brooke Levey, Sara St. Antoine, Kathleen Diamond, Laurel Dodge, Wendy Sparks, Jodi Hiland, Kay Meyer, Kari Svenneby, Chris Kiewra, and the many other nature advocates who inspire us, children and families everyday.



RELEASE OF LIABILITY:

Family Nature Clubs act independently. Neither C&NN nor our Family Nature Club sponsors shall be held liable for the actions of specific groups, group leaders or individual participants.

When taking part in any outdoor activity, be aware of changing conditions in terrain or weather. These and other variables may increase risk. At any time, when children are outside on their own, or with families and friends, everyone should take safety precautions and be mindful of risks.

COVID-19:

When undertaking any activity, be aware of health advisories in your community. Consult CDC and local health department guidelines and take recommended measures to mitigate risk.

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