



Children and Nature Initiative Prescriptions for Outdoor Activity

Our children are suffering from a variety of chronic health conditions such as obesity and asthma. Research indicates that unstructured outdoor activities may improve children's health by increasing physical activity, reducing stress, and serving as a support mechanism for attention disorders. The National Environmental Education Foundation's (NEEF) Children and Nature Initiative is taking action for children's health by addressing two important issues:



- Preventing serious health conditions like obesity and diabetes
- Connecting children to nature

NEEF is educating pediatric health care providers about prescribing outdoor activities to children and connecting health care providers with local nature sites so that they can refer families to safe and easily accessible outdoor areas.

R_x for Outdoor Activity

Name _____
Date _____

My Schedule (when and where will you play outside this week?)

Weekdays _____
Weekends _____

Parent/Child signature _____
Health Care Provider signature _____

Go Outside and:

- Play!
- Visit a park, forest, wildlife refuge, fish hatchery, playground, or nature center
- Take a walk around the block
- Ride bikes (wear a helmet), go bird watching, or just explore.

Comments: _____



Nature Champions

- NEEF is building capacity among pediatric health care providers by creating Nature Champions who train other health care providers about prescribing nature.
- The health care providers refer families to parks or nature centers in their communities where NEEF's partners provide active nature programming.
- NEEF's nature partners include:
 - National Audubon Society
 - National Park Service
 - U.S. Forest Service
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

A Program of

Tools and Resources

- **Prescription Pad:** for health care professionals to “prescribe” nature (English and Spanish)
- **Patient Brochure:** connecting families to a local nature site (English and Spanish)
- **Pediatric Environmental History Form** (English and Spanish)
- **Fact Sheet:** highlights of current scientific literature on the importance of time in nature to children’s health
- **Children & Nature Infographic**
- **Nature Champion Training PowerPoint**
- **NEEF’s study** “Using Nature and Outdoor Activity to Improve Children’s Health” (Published in *Current Problems in Pediatric and Adolescent Health Care* 2010;5:102-117.)



www.neefusa.org/health/children_nature

Children and Nature Advisory Committee

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- Lois Wessel, CFNP- *Association of Clinicians for the Underserved*
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The goal of the **Health & Environment Program** is to advance environmental knowledge among health professionals to improve the public’s health with a special emphasis on children and underserved populations.

At the **National Environmental Education Foundation**, we provide knowledge to trusted professionals who, with their credibility, amplify messages to national audiences to solve everyday environmental problems. Together, we generate lasting positive change.