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Building a Movement to  
Reconnect Children and Nature

News & Updates | June 2010



Photo by Ethan Miller/Getty Images

### [First Lady Michelle Obama adds nature to Let's Move campaign.](#)

Ms. Obama's health and wellness campaign, Let's Move, was created to improve children's health and help reduce childhood obesity. This month Ms. Obama announced plans to expand the campaign with activities and allies that include a key ingredient for optimal health - nature!

[\[+\] Find out more at Let's Move Outside.](#)

"This Month's launch of the Let's Move Outside initiative highlights the important role our public lands, and all green spaces large and small, play in the development of healthy kids, healthy families and healthy communities. It is time to band together to ensure these and additional initiatives achieve their purpose and get kids off the couch and into nature." -- [OAK coalition](#)



This announcement builds on steps the Obama Administration and Congress have taken this year to reverse the trend towards indoor sedentary lifestyles including the announcement of the [America's Great Outdoors initiative](#) and the inclusion of the Moving Outdoors in Nature component of the [Healthy CHOICES Act](#) introduced by Congressman Ron Kind.



### [Outdoors Alliance for Kids \(OAK\) Established, Brings Together Major Partners to Connect Children with Outdoors](#)

This coalition brings together the YMCA of the USA, REI, Sierra Club, National Wildlife Federation, Izaak Walton League of America, The Outdoor Foundation, National Recreation and Park Association and the Children & Nature Network, collectively



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[Can Playing in the Dirt Make You Smarter?](#)

[Active Healthy Kids Canada Releases Report](#)

[New Study Reveals Environmental Attitudes of Youth](#)

[New Report Examines Links Between Parks and Health Ideas for Getting Kids Outdoors](#)

[Green Exercise Quickly Boosts Mental Health](#)

[Research Supports Children and Nature Movement in Australia](#)

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representing over 30 million members, to address the growing divide between children and families and the natural world. [\[+\] Find out more.](#)



[US Departments of Labor, Interior and Agriculture jointly announce new federal partnership to provide \\$20 million in federal grants to help disadvantaged youth prepare for jobs in the outdoors.](#)



[NPS Kicks off "Let's Move Outside" Junior Ranger Program in 20 Parks](#)

[President's America's Great Outdoors Initiative hosts a series of Public Listening Sessions in D.C., L.A., Annapolis, Charlottesville and Seattle.](#)

#### C&NN RELEASES NEW RESEARCH AND STUDIES:



#### [2009 Independent Baseline Study](#)

"American Beliefs Associated with Children's Nature Experience Opportunities: Development and Application of the EC-NES Scale," is the first study to establish a baseline measure of the attitudes of the American public concerning the importance of direct experiences in nature for children's healthy development.

#### [2009 Grassroots Survey](#)

The second study, C&NN's Grassroots Survey, developed by the Children & Nature Network's national Grassroots Leadership Team with independent analysis of the results by professional evaluator M. Lynette Fleming, Ph.D., provides a baseline measure of the growth of the "children and nature movement" as reported by grassroots leaders and representatives of the more than 70 campaigns working to reconnect children and nature.

[\[+\] Download the Reports](#)

[\[+\] Read the Full Press Release](#)

#### C&NN's Natural Leaders Network Launches New Tool Kit at Outdoor Nation event

NLNs were busy this month getting ready for the launch of a tool kit to help youth organize and lead regional networks. With over 600 youth attending, the June 19th Outdoor Nation event provided the perfect opportunity to reach youth leaders across the country.



[\[+\] Find out more about Outdoor Nation.](#)



#### The NLN tool kit is a "by-youth, for-youth" D.I.Y. guide.

It's like a road map to figure out how to get started and where to go with your work. It offers some cool ideas and gives examples of how you might build your own Network. You will find stories of current Natural Leaders and the work they are doing, as well as the history of the Natural Leaders Network and how Natural Leaders fit into the greater movement to reconnect kids to nature.

[has a message for Urban](#)

[Teens](#)

[USA Today: Natural Playgrounds a National Trend](#)

[New York Times: Is Technology Changing Kids' Friendships?](#)

[Richard Louv: Let them climb trees](#)

[British Writer Sees Fault with "Don't Touch" Culture](#)

[Montana Offers "No Child Left Inside" License Plates](#)

[Illinois Governor Proclaims June "Leave No Child Inside" Month](#)

[Michigan Initiative Praised as Model for Other Communities](#)

[Groups Seek N.C. Children's Bill of Rights](#)

[Outdoor Preschool Takes Root on Vashon Island](#)

[Interest in Nature Deficit Growing in Twin Cities](#)

[Connection Missouri First Lady Kicks Off Nature Challenge](#)

[Reedy Creek Explorer Zone - Natural Play Setting Part of National Trend](#)

[President Obama Launches Great Outdoors Initiative](#)

[Healthy Choices Act Introduced in Congress](#)

**INTERNATIONAL:**  
[Children and Nature Movement Gets Boost in Malaysia](#)



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## Are you a Natural Leader? Do you know someone who is?

[\[+\] Go ahead, join the Natural Leaders Network, download the tool kit, and start organizing now.](#)



**The American Heart Association and Nature Rocks challenge families to take the "60 Miles in 60 Days" Summer Walking Pledge.**

[\[+\] Visit Nature Rocks and Take the Pledge](#)



### Field Notes from the Future

*Recent Writings by Richard Louv*

#### **The Bond of Shared Solitude**

Boredom has its benefits. So does solitude, that lost art in the age of wall-to-wall media. To occasionally be alone – not lonely, but alone – is an important part of parenting and of

marriage...[\[+\]](#)

[Berlin Children Build Their Own Three-Story Playground](#)

[Australians Look to Outdoor Education as Solution](#)

[Australian Government Supports Nature Play](#)

[Australia's Youth Also Lack Nature Connection](#)

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