

Getting Kids Outside

What's Happening in Kansas?

Kansas Built Environment and the Outdoors Summit

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Across America, More and More People are Banding Together to Get Kids Outside

- **More than 1,800 organizations are members of the No Child Left Inside Coalition, including 14 from Kansas:**
 - Climate and Energy Project
 - Dillon Nature Center
 - Dyck Arboretum of the Plains
 - Kansas Association for Conservation & Environmental Education
 - Kansas Natural Resources Council
 - Kansas Wildlife Federation
 - Kaw Valley Heritage Alliance
 - Konza Environmental Education Program
 - The Land Institute, Climate and Energy Project
 - Lee Richardson Zoo
 - Rolling Hills Wildlife Adventure
 - Sedgwick County Zoo
 - Sunset Zoo
 - WATER Center



Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

- Many states have adopted these statements as ways to encourage families to spend time outdoors.

Kansas Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights (1 Jan. 2008)

- 1 Discover Kansas' past
- 2 Splash in the water
- 3 Play in a safe place
- 4 Camp under the stars
- 5 Explore nature
- 6 Learn to swim
- 7 Play on a team
- 8 Follow a trail
- 9 Catch a fish
- 10 Celebrate their heritage

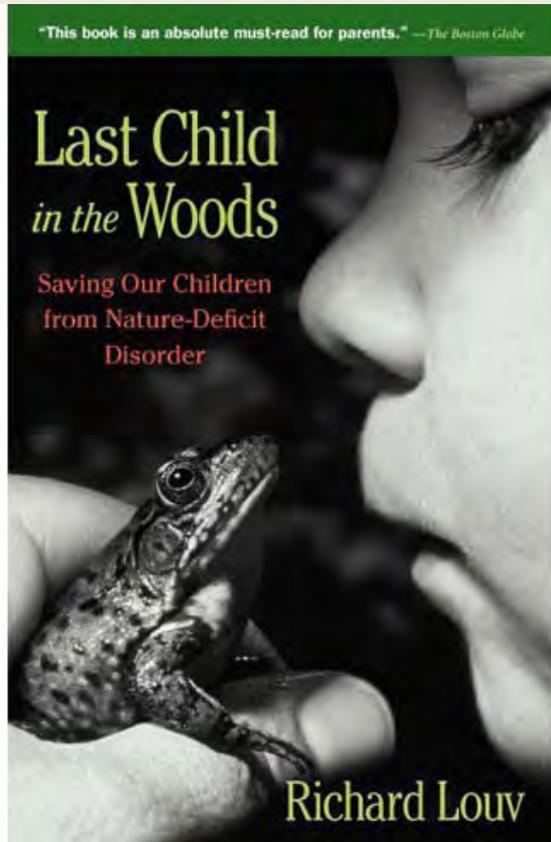


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- The number of grassroots leadership campaigns reported by the Children & Nature Network as of October 2010.
- The actual number is likely much higher.



Why Does It Matter if Kids Go Outside?



- Reduced contact with nature leading to increases in ADHD
- Correlation with rises in childhood obesity
- Negative impacts on cognitive and conceptual development
- Makes compelling case for children to spend more time outdoors in structured and unstructured settings



Who Will Care About the Outdoors?

- Estimated % of time today's children spend indoors: 90%
- Average daily hours children aged 8-10 spend on TV, video games, & computers:
6-10 hours
- Approximate decline since 1995 in the proportion of children ages 7-11 who swim, fish, or play touch football: 33%
- Drop in average annual overnight visits to U.S. national parks from 1987 – 2003: 25%
- Drop in sales of children's bicycles 2003-2004: 20%
- Drop in Little League participation since 1997: 14%



- 9 million children ages 7 to 19 are obese
- 25% of Kansas children are obese or overweight (2009)



What Kansas is Doing

- Kansans for Children in Nature
- Kansas Green Schools Program
- Archery in the Schools
- ECO-Meet Program
- OKKids
- g2g Outside
- goPLAYkansas.com
- Take Me Fishing
- Pass It On—Outdoor Mentors
- Kansas School Gardens Initiative
- Outside for a Better Inside
- Kansas WildLifer Challenge
- Kansas Wetlands Education Days
- Local Parks & Recreation Activities



Kansas Green Schools Program

- Green Schools integrate efforts to reduce schools' ecological footprints, make school environments healthier, and get the whole community thinking about solutions
- More than 330 schools are currently involved



Archery in the Schools

- Training and equipment provided to the schools



- Kids get to participate in a sport—everyone succeeds!
- Approx. 170 Kansas schools participate in the program, sponsored by KDWP
- Goals are to increase interest in shooting sports and engage students in education through an activity that interests them.



ECO-Meet

- Competition among high schools
- Tests in 4 areas: habitat, scavenger hunt, interpretation, and a focused test on a particular group of animals.
- Began in Kansas in 1991.
- 9 ECO-Meets in 2009 and 2010.
- Sponsored by KDWP and Kansas Wildscape.



Photo by Tom Hein



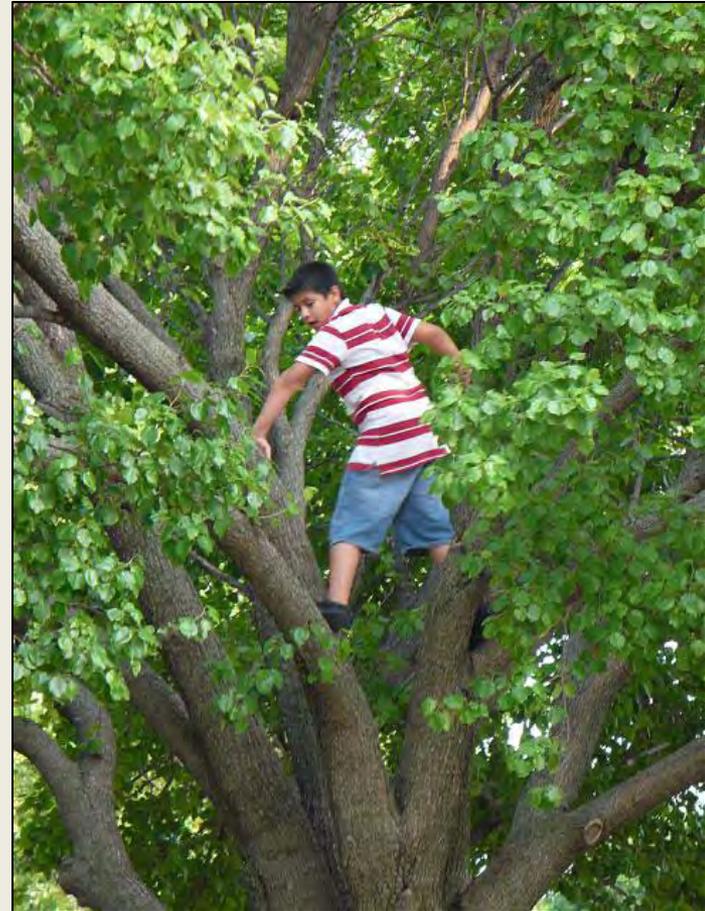
OKKids

- **Outdoor Kansas for Kids Program** provides a way for families to explore outdoor activities at local and state parks.
- Since 2001, more than 75,000 kids have participated (2009).
- Sponsored by Kansas Wildscape and KDWP State Parks.



g2g Outside

- Take a Child Outside Week
- 24 – 30 September every year
- Designed to help break down obstacles that keep children from discovering the natural world
- KSU Extension-Sedgwick Co., KDWP, City of Wichita WATER Center
- Wichita-Sedgwick Co. focus
- Grassroots—little to no funding
- Uses social marketing and contests to encourage participation
- Initiated in Summer 2009



goPLAYkansas.com

New program encouraging kids and families to play outside



- Website has a search function for recreation sites
- Electronic newsletter
- Blog



School Gardens

**Prairie Moon Waldorf
School, Lawrence**



**The number of school
gardens in Kansas and
nationwide is
skyrocketing.**

- **Green Schools Grant to prevent/reduce nonpoint-source pollution.**
- **Curriculum taught the students about water quality, nutrition, and how to take care of a garden.**
- **The garden was an intergenerational project.**
- **A new grant from KS Dept. of Agriculture will help coordinate school garden efforts.**



Take Me Fishing

- Fishing Clinics sponsored by KDWP
- Mainly geared toward younger children for whom this may be their first time fishing
- Also: Aquariums in Schools



"takemefishing"



Kansas WildLifer Challenge

- New program from Kansas Wildscape, KDWP is also a sponsor
- Challenges kids to do specific activities outdoors
- Rewards them when they complete the activities
- All ages can participate; more than 90 are already signed up!



Wetlands Education Days



- **Great Bend 2nd graders participated in the first-ever event at KS Wetlands Education Center**
- **Learned about plants and animals that depend on healthy wetlands**
- **Most activities took place outside (until it rained!)**



Pass It On-Outdoor Mentors

- Wichita-based organization provides mentors for children wanting outdoor experiences
- Partner with Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Program started with KDWP but is now nationwide



Local Parks & Recreation Programs



- Includes outdoor sports and recreation activities
- City-sponsored nature centers, which also provide environmental education



Kansans for Children in Nature



- Formed by Gov. Sebelius to identify barriers and make recommendations to get more kids outside
- Ten Convening Organizations, 3 Working Groups:
 - Environmental Education
 - Outdoor Experiences and Recreation
 - Health



Draft KCN Plan

- 8 Goals, 3 Categories:
- Early Childhood (EC) Experiences
 - Goal 1. From birth, kids engage in outdoor learning and nature play.
 - Involve parents, early childhood educators, and the health community
 - Provide professional development for early childhood educators



- Integrate EC environmental education programs into the Kansas Green Schools Program



Draft KCN Plan

- **K-12 Education Experiences**
 - **Goal 2. A Kansas Environmental Literacy Plan will help kids learn about and appreciate the environment.**
 - Education of students for environmental literacy
 - Professional development of educators
 - Creating outdoor learning environments



- Ensuring quality implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the plan



Draft KCN Plan

- **K-12 Education Experiences**
 - **Goal 3. Outdoor learning spaces at schools will become an integral part of K-12 education.**
 - 90% of schools will have outdoor learning spaces integrated into the curriculum
 - Instructional examples will be published on the KSDE website



- **Integrate outdoor classrooms into the Kansas Green Schools Program**
- **Develop an Interpretive and Outdoor Classroom Plan for state parks and public lands.**



Draft KCN Plan



- Develop a “Model Kansas Green Schools” initiative to engage schools and the community in environmental learning and green projects

- K-12 Education Experiences
 - Goal 4. Schools will have resources to implement green school projects and curriculum.
 - Establish a sustainable funding source for the Kansas Green Schools Program



Draft KCN Plan

- **K-12 Education Experiences**
 - **Goal 5. Increase physical activity and outdoor experiences in schools and on public lands.**
 - Increase the amount of physical activity, especially outdoors, in preK-12 schools
 - Increase the number of outdoor experiences in preK-12 schools



Draft KCN Plan

- **Community Experiences**
 - **Goal 6. Develop facilities and programs that encourage outdoor activity.**
 - Identify bike/ped trails, and work to connect them for increased physical fitness and outdoor experiences.



- **Adopt programs for kids to ride bikes or walk to school.**



Draft KCN Plan

- **Community Experiences**
 - **Goal 7. Increase collaboration between community organizations and schools for outdoor programming and service learning.**
 - Create opportunities for service learning projects that connect students to the land.



- Integrate outdoor service learning projects into the Kansas Green Schools Program.



Draft KCN Plan



- Hold an annual Kansas Children in Nature Summit and a Get Kids Outside Day.

- Community Experiences
 - Goal 8. Increase access to parks and other public lands.
 - Create a Kansas Youth Conservation Corps for at-risk children.
 - Recruit more adult Outdoor Mentors.



Draft KCN Plan

- **Measure the impact and accountability of the Plan through data collection and research.**
 - Available opportunities for outdoor activities
 - Kansas kids' participation in outdoor activities and where enhancements can be made
 - Health data and correlations between time spent outdoors and children's health
 - PreK-12 outdoor learning experiences





Web Links

- Kansans for Children in Nature: kcn.ksoutdoors.org
- KACEE: www.kacee.org
- Kansas Recreation & Parks Association: www.krpa.org
- No Child Left Inside: www.cbf.org
- Children & Nature Network: www.childrenandnature.org
- Kansas Green Schools Program: www.kansasgreenschools.org
- Archery in the Schools: www.nasparchery.com
- Kansas ECO-Meet: www.kansasecomeet.org
- Kansas Wildscape: www.kansaswildscape.org
- g2g Outside: <http://g2goutside.wordpress.com/>
- goPLAYkansas.com
- School Gardens: www.schoolgardenwizard.org and www.kidsgardening.com (12 Kansas schools registered)
- EE Week: www.eeweek.org
- Kansas Dept. of Wildlife & Parks: www.kdwp.state.ks.us
- Kansas WildLifer Challenge: www.kansaswildlifer.org
- Pass It On—Outdoor Mentors: www.outdoormentors.org