



**Leave
No Child
Inside**

Greater Cincinnati
Happier, Healthier, Smarter!

GROW OUTSIDE

A GUIDE TO OUTDOOR PLAY

Turn
over
a new
leaf!



Leave
No Child
Inside

Greater Cincinnati

Happier, Healthier, Smarter!

www.LNClgc.org



Dear Reader:

Do you remember when parents told their children to “Go Outside and Play”? A time when unstructured play in nature built healthy bodies, encouraged creativity and a sense of wonder, relieved stress, facilitated learning and developed important social skills?

In the relatively short span of thirty to forty years, we have removed our children from the natural environment that so effectively nurtured healthy child development. When Richard Louv published his book *“Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder”* in 2005, he issued a call to action for the parents and mentors of today to return children to the healthy, outdoor lifestyle that has prevailed throughout human evolution.

We hope this guide will inspire you to encourage today’s children to **“GO OUTSIDE AND PLAY”!! !**

Leave No Child Inside –
Greater Cincinnati

A Message from Richard Louv...

Author, *Last Child in the Woods:*

Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder



Today, kids are well aware of the global threats to their environment, but their physical contact, their intimacy with nature on a day-to-day basis, is fading.

A fifth-grader in a San Diego classroom put it succinctly: "I like to play indoors better 'cause that's where all the electrical outlets are."

I believe our society is teaching young people to avoid direct experience in nature. That unintended message is delivered by schools, families, even organizations devoted to the outdoors, and codified into the legal and regulatory structures of many of our communities – effectively banning much of the kind of play that we enjoyed as children. Our institutions, urban/suburban design, and cultural attitudes unconsciously associate nature with doom, while disassociating the outdoors from joy and solitude. Well-meaning public school systems, media and parents are scaring children straight out of the woods and fields.

Many parents are aware of the change, and they sense its importance. When asked, they cite a number of everyday reasons why their children spend less time in nature than they themselves did, including disappearing access to natural areas, competition from television and computers, dangerous traffic, more homework and other time pressures. Most of all, parents cite fear of stranger-danger, as round-the-clock news coverage conditions them to believe in an epidemic of child-snatchings, despite evidence that the number has been falling for years.

As a result, children's worlds, limitless in cyberspace, are shrinking in reality. As the nature deficit grows, new studies demonstrate just how important direct contact with the outdoors is to healthy human development. Most of the new evidence that connects nature to well-being and restoration has focused on adults, but during the past decade, scientists have begun to study the impact of nature on child development. Environmental psychologists reported in 2003 that nature in or around the home, or simply a room with a view of a natural landscape, helped protect the psychological well-being of the children.

Researchers have found that children with disabilities gain enhanced body image and positive behavior changes through direct interaction with nature.

Studies of outdoor education programs geared toward troubled youth – especially those diagnosed with mental health problems – show a clear therapeutic value. Some of the most intriguing studies are being done by the Human-Environment Research Laboratory at the University of Illinois, where researchers have discovered that children as young as five showed a significant reduction in the symptoms of Attention-Deficit Disorder when they engaged with nature. Could nature therapy be an added option for ADD treatment?

Meanwhile, the California-based State Education and Environmental Roundtable, a national effort to study environment-based education, found that schools that use outdoor classrooms, among other techniques, produce student gains in social studies, science, language arts and math; improved standardized test scores and grade-point averages; and enhanced skills in problem-solving, critical thinking and decision-making. In addition, evidence suggests that time in natural surroundings stimulates children's creativity.

People who care about children and the future of the environment need to know about such research, but for the most part, they do not. Today we see dramatic increases in childhood obesity, attention difficulties and depression. When these issues are discussed at the conference table or the kitchen table, direct childhood experience in nature is seldom mentioned. Yet, the growing nature deficit experienced by today's children, and potentially for generations to come, may be the most important common denominator.

I am not suggesting that we bring back the free-range childhood of the 1950's. In many neighborhoods, those days are probably over. But, with a deeper understanding of the importance of nature play to healthy child development, Greater Cincinnati can continue to lead the way in the movement to Leave No Child Inside. We can preserve the open space in our cities, and even design and build new kinds of communities, using the principles of green urbanism. We can weave nature therapy into our health-care system – as many pediatricians across the country are already doing. We can support educators who bring nature into classrooms and classrooms into nature. We can challenge environmental organizations to take this issue seriously. For if the disconnection between children and nature continues, who will become the future stewards of the earth – and who will swing on birches?

And, we can engage the creativity and caring of every community, because all children have a right to experience the wonder and healing power of the natural world.

Richard Louv, Author

Last Child in the Woods:

Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder

The Child-Friendly



*Take a minute
and imagine!
Sit back, relax &
close your eyes...*

Imagine that you are the same age
as your child....

What grade were you in?

Who was your teacher?

Your best friend?

Favorite game?

Imagine that you are outside. ...

Did you have a place that you
considered your own...

a treehouse or

a fort in the bushes?

***Remember that special place where, besides listening
for your mom's voice, your imagination was the limit?
Did you build hide outs or homes for your toys? Catch
rollypollies or fireflies? What did you feel, see, smell or
hear?***

***Remember how good you were at having fun? Your
child is gifted with the same skill!
Now that you've loosened up your imagination, join us
in encouraging kids to use theirs!***

Backyard

First, let go of preconceived notions of an outdoor play area. As a society, we have designated concrete, plastic and metal areas as the appropriate places to play. Were those your favorite childhood play areas? It's more likely that you preferred a secret hideaway under the bushes, rolling down a grassy slope or using your imagination to build a fort. By encouraging children to see the potential in their backyards and other outdoor spaces, we allow them endless, undefined and undiscovered fun.

Define safety.

Create rules for outdoor safety so children can be free within your specified boundaries. Rather than clearing away all risks (which is nearly impossible), help your children to learn caution and respect. Do your own work outside while your kids are playing. Put away your tools after using them, but also give your children appropriate and useful tools for their “work”. Teach them to observe and respect wildlife. Let them know what plants are useful and how (i.e. what is edible and that everything else is not). Get rid of poisonous plants. Do not use garden chemicals.



Allow kids to discover and use found resources.

Using objects available in nature, such as sticks and stones, to build hideouts for toys and landmarks for play will develop a child's creativity, teach them to be resourceful, build their confidence and heighten their awareness of nature's abundance. The Brooklyn Botanic Garden built collection boxes where children can collect pine cones, berries, etc. As you're cleaning the garden or yard, designate a place to collect useful sticks and stones that your children can use in their play.

Set aside some space.

You don't have to give your hopes of enjoying the backyard over to plastic sandboxes and swing sets. Designate areas for play and give control of those areas to your child's imagination! Allow your children space to dig, but hide it from view with a tall grass. Create a sand pit right in your landscape. Leave yard space for running or create a circular path – kids won't think negatively about running in circles, but will enjoy the rush of physical activity.



Create spaces.

Children are amazing; they will take a stretch of bushes and turn it into a “jungle” or turn an old tire into the center piece of a “junkyard”. It doesn't take much, but there are ways you can facilitate such a transformation. Create corners and nooks in your garden; lay out winding pathways; plant tall grasses and weeping trees; add a bubbling fountain; use a working gate to create the illusion of entering a different part of the yard; designate a hardwood tree with low branches as the climbing tree; plant bean teepees and giant sunflowers; leave a large boulder or a fallen log for climbing. Creating these inviting coves will be as much fun for you as for your children.



Invite other creatures.

There is a natural fascination with the world beyond our own. Children will spend hours looking for dirt creatures, admiring a butterfly's colors, watching a bee dance from flower to flower, or laughing at a squirrel's chase. Teaching your children to observe and respect living things will equip them with relational skills they can use throughout life. Plant fruit, nut and seed bearing plant and put out a basin of water for birds. Compost your yard waste to keep a high population of roly pollies and worms. All living things need food, water and shelter; providing these things through your yardscape is a great invitation for all sorts of creatures.

Exercise your child's green thumb.

Give your children space where they are in charge. It is a great idea to grow food so children can plant seeds, nurture the plant growth, and taste the fruits of their labor. You can create theme gardens such as: an alphabet garden (with plants representing every letter), an animal garden (with plants like elephant ears, bee balm, or lamb's ears), or a color garden (plant red tomatoes, red cabbage, and red peppers). An herb garden with different mints, basil and other plants can develop your children's awareness of different smells and tastes. Fast growing cutting flowers like zinnias and cosmos are always fun and beautiful, and a strawberry patch will stay in your children's memory. You can start by growing a few plants in containers so the gardening is manageable and rewarding for your children. Choose plants you like and will use in cooking or decorating.



Expect some damage.

As children claim your outdoor space as the ideal place to play, they will get dirty and not treat plants with a tender distance. Encourage your children to wear play clothes. "Bath nights" can follow days of outdoor play. Use hardy plants in your garden along pathways and where your children play.



Enjoy the joy!

When your child begins to discover and enjoy nature, you're bound to hear all about it! Show your child that you're interested in hearing about their adventures: ask provoking questions, encourage them and share your own experiences. Most of all, join with your child in the spirit of appreciation, wonder and joy!

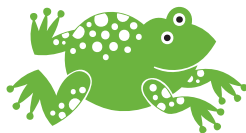


Photo courtesy Cincinnati Nature Center

Plants we LOVE to Grow in the Yard!

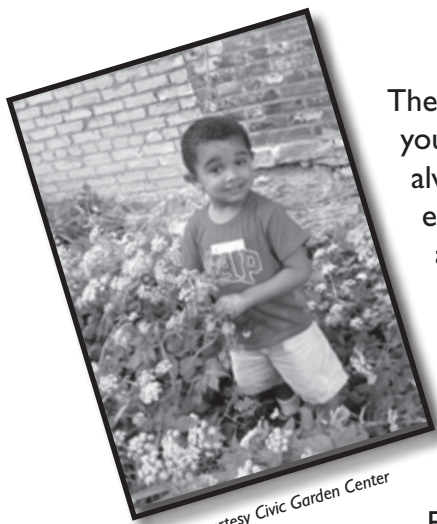


Photo courtesy Civic Garden Center

There are many plants you can use in your garden. Children and gardens are always growing and changing, so enjoy experimenting with a variety of plants. Here are some suggestions that you may want to try.

Tough plants that can take a beating: feather reed grass, lamb's ear, woody thyme, willow, arborvitae.

Plants with which to create hide-aways:

tall grasses such as sedge or wild oats; group hemlock, pine and yew together; weeping trees like mulberry, fig or willow; mulberries, apples, maples and oaks are good climbing trees; vines, including squash, small pumpkins, pole beans and scarlet runner beans, can cover bamboo teepees; sunflowers can grow into a tall fort.

Plants to grow and eat: sugarbaby watermelons, tom thumb lettuce, carrots and radishes (kids usually like root crops), dwarf fruit trees, berries, blue potatoes, peas, mints, basils, lavender and nasturtiums, which have a tasty flower.

Plants to stimulate the imagination and use in play: Snapdragons, fairy bells, sensitive plant, money plant and chinese lantern.

Flowers for bouquets: zinnias, cosmos, daisies, marigolds, sunflowers, roses, and snapdragons.

Plants to keep your child breathing deeply: various scented geraniums, roses, lavender, mints, basils, rosemary and lemon balm.

Plants to attract garden creatures: evening primrose for moths; joe pye weed, purple coneflower, sedum and columbine for butterflies; bee balm, obedient plant and cosmos for bees; fir, spruce, serviceberry, dogwood, poppy, goldenrod, sunflower and buffalo grass for birds.

Ideas for theme gardens are: dinosaur garden with prehistoric plants such as club mosses, ferns, and horsetails; an alphabet garden planting from “a” (aster) to “z” (zinnia); or a three sisters garden with beans, squash and corn.

Plants to Avoid!

Many common plants have poisonous parts. Depending on your child's age, it may be enough to tell them not to eat any part of any plant without your permission. However, here is a list of some poisonous plants.

Remember, “When in doubt - check it out” at:

<http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/> or other searchable poisonous plant websites.

Autumn Crocus	Mayapple
Black Locust	Narcissus
Bleeding Heart	Nightshade
Caster Beans (fatal)	Philodendron
Daffodil	Poison Hemlock
Elderberry	Privet
Elephant Ear	Rhododendron
Foxglove	Rhubarb
Hyacinth	Wisteria
Hydrangea	Yew
Iris	
Jack-in-the-Pulpit	
Jimson Weed	
Larkspur	
Lily-of-the-Valley	



RESOURCES



Cornell University Poisonous Plants Database
<http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/>



Dannenmaier, Molly. A Child's Garden: Enchanting Outdoor Spaces for Children and Parents. New York: Simon & Schuster Editions, 1998.



Rushing, Felder. New Junior Garden Book. Iowa: Meredith Corporation, 1999.



Beyond the Backyard... where to go outside!



The Greater Cincinnati area is rich with public parks and nature centers where families can walk, run and play in nature.

The listing in this section provides addresses for over 130 parks and preserves with green lawns, play grounds, garden paths and wooded trails that are free and open to the public.

*Refer to this alphabetical listing for full details
and then find facilities near you by referencing the zip code section.*

Challenge your boundaries!

What do you consider “yours” and what do you think of as “ours”? We are privileged to have so many shared spaces: public parks, green corridors, waterways, and more. Wouldn’t it be great for children to be familiar with the plants, animals, landmarks and waterways that are all around us? These public areas ensure that everyone will have opportunities to experience nature.

Public Parks & Nature Centers

ANDERSON PARK DISTRICT

8249 Clough Pk.
Cincinnati, OH 45244-2746
513/474-0003

BELLEVUE PARKS & RECREATION

www.bellevueky.org/parks_and_recreation1.htm

Bellevue Beach Park

Ward Ave. at the Ohio River
Bellevue, KY 41073

Swope Park

Taylor Ave. and Covert Run Pk.
Bellevue, KY 41073

BIG BONE LICK STATE PARK

3380 Beaver Rd.
Union, KY 41091
859/384-3522

BLUE ASH PARKS & RECREATION

4343 Cooper Rd.
Blue Ash, OH 45242-5614
513/745-8553

BOONE COUNTY ARBORETUM

9190 Camp Ernst Rd.
Union, KY 41091
859/384-4999
www.bcarboretum.org

BOONE COUNTY PARKS

Main Office
5958 Garrard
Burlington, KY 41005
859/334-2117
www.boonecountyky.org/parks

Boone Cliffs

4990 Middle Creek Rd.
Burlington, KY 41005

Camp Ernst Lake

7915 Camp Ernst Rd.
Burlington, KY 41005

Central Park & Arboretum

9190 Camp Ernst Rd.
Union, KY 41091

Dinsmore Woods

5700 Burlington Pk.
Burlington, KY 41005

England/Idlewild Park & Dog Park

5550 Idlewild
Burlington, KY 41005

Florence Nature Park

7200 Nature Park Dr.
Florence, KY 41042

Giles Conrad Park

7500 River Rd.
Hebron, KY 41048

Gunpowder Creek Nature Park

6750 Sperti Le.
Burlington, KY 41005

Middle Creek Park

5501 Middle Creek Rd.
Burlington, KY 41005

Shor Lake Park

505 Shorland Dr.
Walton, KY 41094

Waller-Stephenson Mill Park

2744 Verona Mudlick Rd.
Verona, KY 41092

Walton Community Park

35 Old Stephenson-Mill Rd.
Walton, KY 41094

CAMPBELL COUNTY PARKS

859/635-4423

A.J. Jolly Park & Campground

1565 Race Track Road
Alexandria, KY 41001

CINCINNATI MUSEUM CENTER*

1301 Western Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45203
513/287-7000

www.cincymuseum.org

**Admission charge for some areas*

Edge of Appalachia

3223 Waggoner Riffle Rd.
West Union, OH 45693
937/544-2880

CINCINNATI NATURE CENTER*

513/831-1711

www.CincyNature.org

**Admission charge for some areas*

Rowe Woods

4949 Tealtown Rd.
Milford, OH 45150

Long Branch Farm & Trails

6926 Gaynor Rd.
Goshen, OH 45122

CINCINNATI PARK BOARD

Visitor Center in Krohn Conservatory

1501 Eden Park Dr.

Cincinnati, OH 45202

513/352-4080

www.cincinnati-oh.gov/parks

(open 7 days per week)

Alms Park

710 Tusculum Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45226

Annwood Park

1900 Madison Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45206

Armleder Park

5057 Wooster Pk.
Cincinnati, OH 45226

Armleder Dog Park

4998 Wooster Pk.
Cincinnati, OH 45226
513/521-7275

*(joint with Hamilton County Park District
& Cincinnati Recreation Commission)*

Ault Park

3600 Observatory Dr.
Cincinnati, OH 45208

Avon Woods Nature Center

4235 Paddock Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45229
513-861-3435

Bellevue Hill Park

2191 Ohio Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45219

Bettman Nature Preserve & Accessible Paths

4 Beech Ln.
Cincinnati, OH 45208
513/321-6070

Burnet Woods

Main Entrance:

3000 Brookline Dr.
Cincinnati, OH 45220

Trailside Nature Center:

3400 Brookline Dr.
513/751-3679

Caldwell Park

Nature Center & Preserve

430 W. North Bend Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45216
513/761-4313

California Woods

Nature Center & Preserve

5400 Kellogg Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45228
513/231-8678

Daniel Drake Park

Main Entrance:

5800 Red Bank Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45213

Dunore Park

650 Ludlow Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45220

Fairview Park

2219 Ravine St.
Cincinnati, OH 45219

Fernbank Park

7001 River Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45233

Ferry Street Park

2201 Eastern Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Fleischmann Gardens

524 Forest Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45229

French Park

3012 Section Rd. (near Ridge Rd.)
Amberley Village, OH 45237

Glenway Park

3241 Glenway Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45204

Hauck Botanic Gardens

2625 Reading Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45206

Hoffner Park

4101 Hamilton Ave. at Blue Rock Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45223

Hopkins Park

207 Dorchester Ave. at Auburn Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45219

Hyde Park Square

2700 to 2734 Erie Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45208

Inwood Park

2360 Vine St. at Hollister St.
Cincinnati, OH 45219

Jackson Hill Park

2001 Eleanor Pl.
Cincinnati, OH 45219

Jergens Park

4359 Hamilton Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45223

Kennedy Heights Park

6039 Kennedy Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45213

LaBoiteaux Woods

Nature Center & Preserve
5400 Lanius Ln.
Cincinnati, OH 45224
513/542-2909

Larz Anderson Park

3035 Golden Ave. at Ononta
Cincinnati, OH 45226

Lytle Park

501 E. Fourth St. at Lawrence
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Madison Park

2501 Madison Rd. at Erie Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45208

Marion Park

3830 Reading Rd. at Marion Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45229

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

3740 Reading Rd. at Burton Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45229

McEvoy Park

6425 Daly Rd. at North Bend Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45224

Miles Edwards Park

4401 Fehr Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45238

Mt. Airy Forest

Main entrance:

5083 Colerain Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45223

McFarlan Woods Shelter:

2800 Westwood Northern Blvd.
Cincinnati, OH 45211

Mt. Airy Dog Park:

2970 Westwood Northern Blvd.
Cincinnati, OH 45211

Everybody's Treehouse:

Trail Ridge Rd. at Oak Ridge Rd.

Mt. Echo Park

Pavilion:

251 Mt. Echo Park Dr.
Cincinnati, OH 45205

Shelter:

202 Crestline Dr.
Cincinnati, OH 45205

Mt. Storm Park

660 Lafayette Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45220

Owl's Nest Park

1984 Madison Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45206

Piatt Park

1 Garfield Pl. at Vine St.
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Rapid Run Park

4450 Rapid Run Pkwy.
Cincinnati, OH 45238

Saylor Park

6601 Gracely Dr. at Monitor Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45233

Seasongood Square Park

3801 Reading Rd.
at Fred Shuttlesworth Circle,
Cincinnati, OH 45229

Stanbery Park

2221 Oxford Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45230

Stella Park

923 Lexington Ave. at Magill Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45229

Stuart Park

6899 Gracely Dr. at Laura Ln.
Cincinnati, OH 45233

Theodore M. Berry

International Friendship Park

Main Entrance:

1135 Riverside Dr.
(formerly Eastern Ave.)
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Valley Park

3250 Colerain Ave. at Bates Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45225

Washington Park

1230 Elm St. at Race St.
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Wilson Commons

2951 Bodley Ave. at Wilsonia,
Cincinnati, OH 45205

Wulsin Triangle

2401 Madison Rd. at Observatory Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45208

CINCINNATI RECREATION COMMISSION

805 Central Avenue Suite 800
Cincinnati, OH 45202
513/352-4006

www.cincinnati-oh.gov/recreation

CRC currently has 31 recreation centers,
41 swimming pools, over 2,500 acres of outdoor
athletic and playground facilities, tennis attractions,
seven premiere golf courses, athletic leagues, seniors'
programs, therapeutic programs, before-and-after
school programs, summer day camps, and special
public events on the waterfront and citywide.

CRC Facilities which include nature
trails and/or public access to the
Ohio River Water Trail are:

Durham Recreation Complex

4356 Dunham Ln.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45238

Yeatman's Cove & Bicentennial Commons

705 E. Pete Rose Way
Cincinnati, OH 45202

CINCINNATI ZOO & BOTANICAL GARDEN EDUCATION CENTER*

3400 Vine St.
Cincinnati, OH 45220
513/559-7767
www.cincinnati-zoo.org
*Admission charge

CIVIC GARDEN CENTER OF GREATER CINCINNATI

2715 Reading Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45206
513/221-0981
www.CivicGardenCenter.org
Neighborhood Gardens:
Please see website for location of 40
gardens to visit/join, or check the next
section to find a garden in a zipcode
near you.

CLERMONT COUNTY PARKS

www.ClermontCounty.org/parks

Chilo Lock #34 Park

521 County Park Rd.
Chilo, OH 45112
513/876-9013

Hartman Log Cabin

5272 Aber Rd.
Williamsburg, OH 45176

Kelley Nature Preserve

297 Center St.
Loveland, OH 45140

Pattison Park

2228 U.S. Rt. 50
Batavia, OH 45103
513/732-2977

222 Roadside Park

State Route 222
Batavia, OH 45103

Shor Park

4659 Tealtown Rd.
Milford, OH 45150

Wilson Nature Preserve

4082 State Route 132
Batavia, OH 45103

COVINGTON PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

638 Madison Ave.
Covington, KY 41011
859/292-2151

Devou Park

790 Park Le.
Covington, KY 41011
859/431-2577
www.dreespavilion.com/devou.asp

Ken Sheilds Park

847 Philadelphia St.
Covington, KY 41011

DELHI TOWNSHIP PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

697 Neeb Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45233
513/451-3300

Story Woods Park

694 Pontius Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45233

EAST FORK LAKE STATE PARK

Harsha Lake Visitor Center,
US Army Corps Of Engineers
2185 Slade Rd.
Batavia, OH 45103
513/797-6081
www.lrl.usace.army.mil/whl

EAST LOVELAND NATURE PRESERVE

c/o City of Loveland
120 West Loveland Ave.
Loveland, OH 45140

FLORENCE CITY PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

8100 Ewing Blvd.
Florence, KY 41042-7588
859/647-5439
www.florence-ky.gov/park-directory

GORMAN HERITAGE FARM

10052 Reading Rd.
Evendale, OH 45241
513/563-6663
www.GormanHeritageFarm.org

HAMILTON COUNTY PARK DISTRICT

10245 Winton Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45231
513/521-7275
www.GreatParks.org

Armleder Park

*(joint with Cincinnati Parks and
Cincinnati Recreation Commission)*
5057 Wooster Pk.
Cincinnati, OH 45226

Embshoff Woods

4050 Paul Rd.
Delhi Twp., OH 45238

Farbach-Werner Nature Preserve

3455 Poole Rd.
Colerain Twp., OH 45251

Fernbank Park

7100 River Rd./US 50
Cincinnati, OH 45233

Francis RecreAcres

11982 Conrey Rd.,
Sharonville, OH 45249

Glenwood Gardens

10623 Springfield Pk.
Woodlawn, OH 45215
513/771-4055

Lake Isabella

10174 Loveland-Madeira Rd.
Symmes Twp., OH 45140
Boathouse: 513/791-1663

Mitchell Memorial Forest

5401 Zion Rd.
Miami Twp., OH 45002

Miami Whitewater Forest

9001 Mt. Hope Rd.
Harrison, OH 45030
513/367-4774

Sharon Woods

11450 Lebanon Rd.
Sharonville, OH 45241
513/563-4513

Shawnee Lookout

2008 Lawrenceburg Rd.
Miami Twp., OH 45052
Pro Shop: 513/941-0120

Winton Woods/Parkey's Farm

10245 Winton Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45231
513/521-7275

Woodland Mound

8250 Old Kellogg Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45255
513/474-0580

KENTON COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION

3902 Richardson Rd.
Independence, KY 41051
859/525-7529

www.kentoncounty.org/parks.html

Doe Run Lake

1501 Bullock Pen Rd.
Covington, KY 41011

George Bowman Park

8895 Locust Pk.
Taylor Mill, KY 41015

Lincoln Ridge Park

420 Independence Station Rd.
Independence, KY 41051

Middleton-Mills Road Park

3415 Mills Rd.
Covington, KY 41015

Pioneer Park

3951 Madison Pk.
Covington, KY 41017

Richardson Road Park

3975 Richardson Rd.
Independence, KY 41051

LITTLE MIAMI SCENIC RIVER & TRAIL CENTER

211 Railroad Ave.
Loveland, OH 45140
513/893-4453

MASON PARKS

6000 Mason-Montgomery RD.
Mason, OH 45040
513/229-8500
www.imaginemason.org

Corwin M. Nixon Park

6249 Mason-Montgomery Rd.
Mason, OH 45040

Frank Hosea Woods

4862 Hickory Woods Dr.
Mason, OH 45040

Meadows Park

643 Lindemann Le.
Mason, OH 45040

Pine Hill Lakes Park

211 Kings Mill Rd.
Mason, OH 45040

Thomas P. Quinn Park

8800 Tradewind Dr.
Mason, OH 45040

METROPARKS OF BUTLER COUNTY

2051 Timberman Rd.
Hamilton, OH 45013
513/867-5835

<http://www.butlercountymetroparks.org>

Antenen Nature Preserve Area

2385 Treiber Rd.
Hamilton, OH 45011

Chrisholm Historic Farmstead

2070 Woodsdale Rd.
Trenton, OH 45067

Dudley Woods

5591 Hankins Rd.
Liberty Township, OH 45044

Forest Run Wildlife Preserve

1810 New London Rd.
Hamilton, OH 45013

Gilmore MetroPark

7950 Gilmore Rd.
Hamilton, OH 45011

Rentshler Forest MetroPark

5701 Reigart Rd.
Fairfield Township, OH 45011

Voice of America Park

7850 VOA Park Dr.
West Chester, OH 45069

**NEWPORT PARKS
& RECREATION**

998 Monmouth St.
Newport, KY 41071
859/292-6386

**NORWOOD RECREATION
COMMISSION**

2605 Harris Ave.
Norwood, OH 45212-2757
513/531-9798

**SAINT BERNARD PARKS
& RECREATION**

110 Washington Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45217
513/641-3137

SHARONVILLE REC & PARKS

10990 Thornview Dr.
Sharonville, OH 45214-2795
513/563-2895

**SPLIT ROCK WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION PARK**

4503 Bellevue Rd.
Petersburg, KY 41080
www.splitrockpark.org

SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP REC

9150 Winton Rd.
Cincinnati, OH 45231-3830
513/522-1410

TAYLOR MILL PRIDE PARK

5614 Taylor Mill Rd.
Taylor Mill, KY 41015
www.taylormillky.gov/index.asp?page=park_rec_pride

TRAMMEL FOSSIL PARK

City of Sharonville
Tramway Dr.
Sharonville, OH 45241
513/563-1141
www.ci.sharonville.oh.us/Trammel/direct.htm

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP PARK

2238 State Route 756
Moscow, OH 45153
513/553-2072

WOODLAWN RECREATION

10141 Woodlawn Blvd.
Woodlawn, OH 45215-1324
513/771-5745

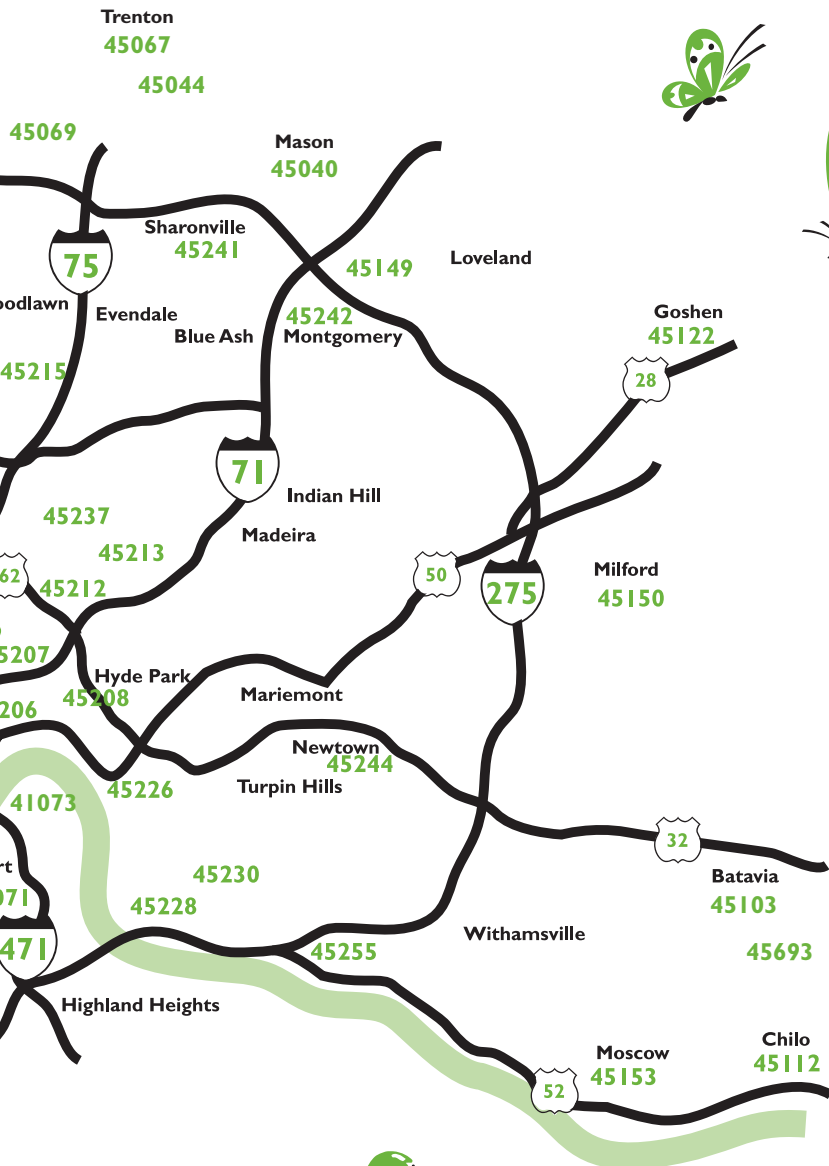
WYOMING RECREATION

800 Oak Ave.
Wyoming, OH 45215
513/821-5423

Photo courtesy Civic Garden Center



[illegible]



ZIP to your Nearest Park!

Public Parks & Nature Preserves listed by ZIP Code.



41001

Campbell County Parks

41005

Boone County Parks

Boone Cliffs
Camp Ernst Lake
Dinsmore Woods
England/Idlewild Park & Dog Park
Gunpowder Creek Nature Park
Middle Creek Park

41011

Covington Parks and Recreation

Devou Park
Ken Shields Park

Kenton County Parks and Recreation
Doe Run Lake

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Gardens
1116 Greenup St.
1032-43 Lee St.

41014

Civic Garden Center of GC
Beautification Garden
15th St. & Maryland Ave.

41015

Kenton County Parks & Recreation
George Bowman Park
Locust Pike Park
Middleton-Mills Park

Taylor Mill Pride Park

41017

Kenton County Parks & Recreation
Pioneer Park

41042

Florence City Parks & Recreation

Boone County Parks
Florence Nature Park

41048

Boone County Parks
Giles Conrad Park

41051

Kenton County Parks
Lincoln Ridge Park
Richardson Road Park

Newport Parks & Recreation

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
Ann St.

41073

Bellevue Parks & Recreation
Bellevue Beach Park
Swope Park

41080

Split Rock Wildlife
Conservation Park

41091

Big Bone Lick State Park
Boone County Arboretum
Boone County Parks
Central Park and Arboretum

41092

Boone County Parks
Waller-Stephenson Mill Park

41094

Boone County Parks
Shor Lake Park
Walton Community Park

45002

Hamilton County Park District
Mitchell Memorial Forest

45011

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
Sycamore St.
(between 720 and 730)

MetroParks of Butler County
Antenen Nature Preserve Area
Gilmore MetroPark
Rentshler Forest MetroPark

45013

MetroParks of Butler County
Forest Run Wildlife Preserve

45030

Hamilton County Park District
Miami Whitewater Forest

45040

Mason Parks
Corwin M. Nixon Park
Frank Hosea Woods
Meadows Park
Pine Hill Lakes Park
Thomas P. Quinn Park

**45044**

MetroParks of Butler County
Dudley Woods

45052

Hamilton County Park District
Shawnee Lookout

45067

MetroParks of Butler County
Chrisholm Historic Farmstead

45069

MetroParks of Butler County
Voice of America Park

45103

Clermont County Parks
Pattison Park
222 Roadside Park
Wilson Nature Preserve

East Fork State Park

45112

Clermont County Parks
Chilo Lock #34 Park

45122

Cincinnati Nature Center
Long Branch Farm & Trails

45140

Clermont County Parks
Kelley Nature Preserve

East Loveland Nature Preserve

Hamilton County Park District
Lake Isabella

Little Miami Scenic River
and Trail Center

45150

Cincinnati Nature Center:
Rowe Woods*
*Admission charge

Clermont County Parks
Shor Park

45153

Washington Township Park

45176

Clermont County Parks
Hartman Log Cabin

45202

Cincinnati Park Board
Krohn Conservatory
Ferry Street Park
Lytle Park
Piatt Park
Theodore M. Berry International
Friendship Park
Washington Park

Cincinnati Recreation Commission
Yeatman's Cove & Bicentennial
Commons

45203

Cincinnati Museum Center*
*Admission Charge for some areas

45204

Cincinnati Park Board: Glenway Park

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
2115 West Eighth St.
Oyler School (2121 Hatmaker)

45205

Cincinnati Park Board
Mt. Echo Park
Wilson Commons

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
700 Enright Ave.

45206

Cincinnati Park Board
Annwood Park
Hauck Botanic Gardens
Owl's Nest Park

Civic Garden Center
of Greater Cincinnati

Civic Garden Center of GC
Beautification Gardens
Seminary Pl. and Yale
2520 Park Ave.

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
2627 Stanton Ave.
Purcell-Marion, Woodburn Ave.
809 Beecher

**45207**

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
1733 Holloway Ave.

Civic Garden Center of GC
Beautification Garden
3204 Woodburn Ave.

45208

Cincinnati Park Board
Ault Park
Bettman Nature Preserve
and Accessible Paths
Hyde Park Square
Madison Park
Wulsin Triangle

45210

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
1720 Main St.
555 Channing St.
1412-1418 Pleasant St.
1409-1411 Race St.
406-410 East 13th St.

45211

Cincinnati Park Board
Mt. Airy Forest (McFarlan Woods
Shelter & Dog Park Entrance)

45212

Civic Garden Center of GC
Beautification Garden
Ida Street Garden

Norwood Recreation Commission

45213

Cincinnati Park Board
Daniel Drake Park
Kennedy Heights Park

45214

Cincinnati Park Board: Laurel Park
Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
Poplar & Freeman
2444-46 W. McMicken
Sharonville Recreation & Parks

45215

Hamilton County Park District
Glenwood Gardens
Woodlawn Recreation
Wyoming Recreation

45216

Cincinnati Park Board
Caldwell Park Nature Center
and Preserve

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
125 W. North Bend

45217

Saint Bernard Parks & Recreation

45219

Cincinnati Park Board
Bellevue Hill Park
Fairview Park
Hopkins Park
Inwood Park
Jackson Hill Park

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
236 Albion Pl.

45220

Cincinnati Park Board
Burnet Woods
Dunore Park
Mt. Storm Park

Cincinnati Zoo
and Botanical Gardens*
*Admission Charge

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
3737 Clifton Ave.
3522 Beldare Ave.

45223

Cincinnati Park Board
Hoffner Park
Jergens Park
Mt. Airy Forest (Main Entrance)

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Gardens
1413 Knowlton St.
1655 Chase St.
4113 Witler St.

**45224**

Cincinnati Park Board
LaBoiteaux Woods Nature Center
& Preserve
McEvoy Park

45225

Cincinnati Park Board
Valley Park

Civic Garden Center of GC
Community Garden
1882 Baltimore Ave.

45226

Cincinnati Park Board
Alms Park
Armleder Park
Larz Anderson Park

45228

Cincinnati Park Board
California Woods Nature Center
& Preserve

45229

Cincinnati Park Board
Avon Woods Nature Center
Fleischmann Gardens
Marion Park
Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
Seasongood Square Park
Stella Park

45230

Cincinnati Park Board:
Stanbery Park

45231

Hamilton County Park District
Winton Woods/Parky's Farm

Springfield Township Recreation

45233

Cincinnati Park Board
Fernbank Park
Sayler Park
Stuart Park

Delhi Township Parks & Recreation
Story Woods Park

Hamilton County Park District
Fernbank Park

45237

Cincinnati Park Board
French Park

45238

Cincinnati Park Board
Miles Edwards Park
Rapid Run Park

Cincinnati Recreation Commission
Dunham Recreation Complex

Hamilton County Park District
Embshoff Woods

45241

Gorman Heritage Farm

Hamilton County Park District
Sharon Woods

Sharonville Recreation & Parks
Trammel Fossil Park

45242

Blue Ash Parks & Recreation

45244

Anderson Park District

45249

Hamilton County Park District
Francis RecreAcres

45251

Hamilton County Park District
Farbach-Werner Nature
Preserve

45255

Hamilton County Park District
Woodland Mound

45693

Cincinnati Museum Center
Edge of Appalachia



RESOURCES

Whether it's in the backyard, a nearby park or other greenspace, there are lots of opportunities for year round outdoor fun in Greater Cincinnati. Here are some resources to help your family find outdoor adventures:

Looking for nature-based events and programs?

Go to the Green Umbrella website www.greenumbrella.org
Green Umbrella has an Outdoor Recreation and Awareness Team whose mission is to make people aware of the many outdoor recreational and nature education opportunities available in our region.
Keep an eye on the website for upcoming events and programs.

Looking for family adventure?

See the **Tri-State Guide to the Outdoors**
<http://www.ohioriverway.org/tri-state-guide/>
This wonderful guide is chock full of information on the top places to hike, cycle, paddle, rock climb, zip line, camp, horseback ride and even skydive.
It is indispensable for families looking for adventure!

Looking for detailed information on our area's best hiking trails?

Pick up a copy of **60 Hikes within 60 Miles: Cincinnati** by Tamara York at your local bookstore or order on-line.

Need a map of bicycle routes in our area?

See OKI's Bike Trail Route Guide
<http://gis.oki.org/BikeRouteGuide/>

Want to brag about your family's latest adventure and see what others are doing?

Post photos and comments on the VenturePax website, "a hub for outdoor enthusiasts to share their experiences". <http://www.venturepax.com/>

Hop
to it!



Photo courtesy Cincinnati Nature Center

NATURE FOR ALL ABILITIES

“At Camp Joy we serve children with various medical conditions and special needs. We have seen first-hand how important it is for all children to have access to the outdoors. A child who is confined to a wheelchair rode a zip line and shared that this must be what it feels like to fly.

Another child, who lost her leg due to cancer, lights up when she hits her first bulls eye at archery, catches her first fish, holds a snake. These moments in the great outdoors are life changing.”

Amy Thompson
Executive Director
Camp Joy

We are just beginning to understand how important nature is to our health, but we have enough information to know that it is good for all of us! But, nature is not as accessible for some as it is for others. And, sometimes it is least accessible for those who could benefit from it the most. We know that even a view of nature from a hospital room window helps patients heal faster than those with no windows or a view of a brick wall. We also know that children experiencing stress or suffering from attention-deficit disorder find relief from their symptoms after spending time in a natural setting. So important is the healing power of nature that many hospitals are beginning to incorporate gardens into their infrastructure designs.

If you have a special needs child, the following information might be helpful to you:



Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center has a **Special Needs Directory** with information about camps and recreational opportunities, including accessible playgrounds. You can view the Directory on-line at <http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/patients/child/special-needs/recreation/camps/>.



CCHMC also publishes a **Fun and Fit Guide** for individuals with developmental disabilities, which you can view at <http://www.cincinnatichildrens.org/service/d/developmental-behavioral/patients/fun-fit/>.



You can learn about accessibility in our National Parks at <http://www.travelmuse.com/articles/special-needs/national-parks>.



There is a national directory of Special Needs Camps available at <http://www.familyvillage.wisc.edu/leisure/camps.html>, as well as a Fact Sheet on Summer Camps for Children with Physical Disabilities that specifically addresses amputees at http://www.amputee-coalition.org/fact_sheets/Kidscamps.html.



The Children & Nature Network's **Connect** site has several discussion groups for parents of special needs children, including Nature as Therapy, Autism Outdoors and Nature for All Abilities. Visit <http://childrenandnature.ning.com/> to join those discussion groups.

Here are several links to information on designing outdoor spaces for Special Needs Children:

- ✿ Creating Inclusive Outdoor Play Environments: Designing for Ability Rather Than Disability
<http://www.adventureislandplayground.org/Keith%20Christensen%20article.PDF>
- ✿ Designing for All Children
<http://www.whitehutchinson.com/children/articles/designforall.shtml>
- ✿ Outdoor Environments for Children with Autism and Special Needs
http://www.informedesign.org/_news/april_v09-p.pdf



“At Endeavor Learning Center, we are fortunate to have lots of land to play and create on. I have seen children with special needs flourish in this environment. One autistic boy in particular stands out. Watching him hold hands with the other children as they run through our field brings tears to my eyes. Today he is doing great and is functioning well in the classroom. I like to think we had something to do with his socialization and happiness.”

Penny McGaughey
Director
Endeavor
Learning Center

Safety First!

Spending time outdoors can bring joy and many happy memories to your family. Taking a few simple precautions will assure that you enjoy the experience to the fullest.

Sun Protection (Adapted from the AAP statement at www.healthychildren.org)

Get outdoors, but be smart about sun protection. Follow these simple rules to protect your family from sunburns now and from skin cancer later in life:

- ☀️ Keep babies younger than 6 months out of direct sunlight. Find shade under a tree, umbrella or the stroller canopy.
- ☀️ When possible, dress yourself and your kids in cool, comfortable clothing that covers the body, like lightweight pants, long-sleeved shirts and hats.
- ☀️ Select clothes made with a tight weave – they protect better than clothes with a looser weave. If you are not sure how tight a fabric's weave is, hold it up to see how much light shines through. The less light, the better.
- ☀️ Wear a hat or cap with a brim that faces forward to shield the face.
- ☀️ Take special care between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., when UV rays are strongest.
- ☀️ Wear sunglasses with at least 99% UV protection (look for child-sized sunglasses with UV protection for your child).
- ☀️ Use a sunscreen that says “broad-spectrum” on the label – that means it will screen out both UVB and UVA rays. It should have an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 15. The higher the SPF, the more UVB protection sunscreen has.
- ☀️ Set a good example. You can be the best teacher by practicing sun protection yourself. Teach all members of your family how to protect their skin & eyes.

Proper Equipment: If you are bicycling, always wear a helmet. If you are on the water, wear a life jacket. When exploring rough terrain, be sure to wear appropriate footwear, and for longer adventures, it's a good idea to carry rain gear and some warmer layers in the event of an unexpected change in weather. Whistles are great to carry on the trail in the event that one of you becomes separated from the group. Carry a first aid kit with you or have one in the car.



Hydration and Energy: Be sure to drink plenty of water, especially in the hot summer months. Carry water with you and have extra water available in the car at the end of your adventure. Bring along healthy snacks for an added energy boost.



Poison Ivy

Poison Ivy: Poison Ivy can be common along wood edges and clearings. The best protection is to know how to recognize it, then avoid touching it. Poison Ivy has 3 leaflets arranged roughly like a triangle. The vine has coarse “hairs” growing out from both sides of the stem. Wearing long pants can reduce your chance of having your skin come in contact with the plant.

Do not burn Poison Ivy vines in a campfire because smoke carries the oil. It's a good idea to keep your dog on a leash so it does not run through Poison Ivy and bring the oils back to you.

If you know that you have come in contact with Poison Ivy on the trail, the juice of a Jewelweed plant can be used as a wash. Jewelweed is often found in damp, shady areas. It has a pretty yellow/orange trumpet-shaped flower and sage green leaves with hollow stems that contain liquid. Crush the stem and wash the contact area with the Jewelweed juice. As soon as you are able, wash the area several times with a strong soap.

Stinging Insects: The best defense against mosquitoes and ticks is to use insect repellent containing DEET. Do not use DEET on children under the age of 2 months. It is recommended that you wash off the repellent upon your return home. Wearing clothing with long sleeves and long pants is a good idea in wilder areas. When you return home, check for ticks, just in case. Remember to check your family pet as well.

Wasps, hornets and bees can sting, but most are not aggressive and will leave you alone unless you touch them first. The one exception is the Yellowjacket Hornet. Typically ground-nesting, these hornets will aggressively defend their nest. When you are hiking or playing outdoors, avoid the area if you see flying insects coming and going from a spot on the ground. By staying on the trail as you hike, you dramatically reduce your chances of encountering a Yellowjacket Hornet nest.



Poisonous Snakes: Poisonous snakes were eliminated from Greater Cincinnati over 70 years ago, but small numbers remain in places with sparse human populations, like Adams County. Poisonous snakes are typically non-aggressive and prone to hiding. Unless you step on one or put your hand on it while rock-climbing, you are not likely to be bitten. As a precaution, if you are lifting up a rock or log, always lift so that the opening is away from you, not pointing towards you. Then be sure to put the rock or log back gently in the same place – be courteous to wildlife.

With just a little knowledge and advance preparation, you and your family can explore the outdoors safely and with confidence.

Enjoy!

Tips

A few Guidelines for Parents & Mentors

Children need unstructured time outdoors. Allow children to explore, discover and use nature in their own way, on their own terms. Let nature be their world, not a world where grown-ups make all the rules!



If you live in a house, create a child-friendly backyard.

Provide simple tools to aid discovery – kids love tools! Include a bug box, trowel, magnifier, etc.

When you take children to parks and other natural areas, allow them to explore. Let them decide which trails to take. Stay nearby for safety, but don't interfere or help unless asked.

Take advantage of our natural resources, like the Ohio River and its tributaries! Take children canoeing, kayaking or fishing.



Take a few leaves from different trees while the children are not looking. Give them the leaves and ask them to find which trees they came from. Provide a tree identification book to help kids learn about the trees in their own neighborhood.

Some creative parents have found a way to multitask in a very positive way. Nature Clubs for Families enable both children and parents to get their exercise, de-stress and socialize with other families all at the same time. They are especially helpful for families who may not feel comfortable venturing into unfamiliar areas alone. To start or join a Family Nature Club, visit <http://www.childrenandnature.org/movement/naturalfamilies/clubs> for a downloadable toolkit in English or Spanish.



In the fall, leave the fallen leaves down for awhile so kids can run around and shuffle through them. Rake up a big leaf pile and let them demolish it. If they're not pre-schoolers, leave the rake out so they can rebuild it if they want.



If you have an appropriate area, let older children build a campfire in the backyard. Set safety rules, then stay away while they and their friends discuss “hot” topics. Check for safety by looking out the window or wandering out to ask if they need more snacks.



Put out bird feeders that can be seen easily from windows. Let children help feed the birds. Keep a bird book by the window to help them identify what they see.



If your child is in child care, talk with the provider to confirm that your child will have at least one hour per day of outdoor, physical activity. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends at least one hour per day of physical activity. It is suggested that parents discuss with the child care provider the amount of outdoor play built into the daily schedule. Child care regulations vary by state and this may not be required.



Outdoor Fun Ideas for Kids!

*These activities are separated
by season, but just because an activity*

is listed in one season, doesn't mean you can't do it any time.

There are enough ideas to have fun trying a new one every week for almost a year!



Seasons Search: Go out and find 10 things
that you will only see during the spring.

Go to a stream during a spring rain and listen for calling critters.
How many different animals do you hear? Can you identify any?

Plant bulbs, seeds or trees.

Take part in a maple syrup activity and learn about where maple syrup
comes from and how it is processed.

Take one shovel full of soil from your garden and examine it. How many worms
do you find? What other insects do you see? Why are they important?

Build It! Build a toad abode, bat house or birdhouse and place it outside.
Check on it daily and keep a journal about what you see. You can illustrate
your journal.



Seasons Search: Go out and find 10 things
that you will only see during the summer.

Make compost or talk about how worms “make” soil.

On a hot summer day, play outside in the rain in your bathing suit!
If the grass is slippery, slide on it. If there's a muddy spot, play in the mud!

Make some Solar S'mores! Line an old pizza box with some foil and make it
into an “oven” to melt your marshmallows and chocolate.
Talk about the Sun and alternative/renewable energy sources.

Have a camp out in your back yard. Use a tape recorder to record and identify all the sounds you hear through the night.

Have a star party and plan a picnic under the stars. Spend time on a blanket with some star shaped snacks talking together and “wondering” about the universe.

Sit in the grass and make a necklace out of clover for someone special.
Just tie them together with a knot.



Seasons Search: Go out and find 10 things that you will only see during the fall.

In the fall, pick 3-5 trees to observe in your backyard. Every week, observe changes in size and color of the leaves. How are the trees different? What trees keep their leaves the longest?

Plant bulbs, seeds or trees.



Seasons Search: Go out and find 10 things that you will only see during the winter.

Make a snowman kit (eyes, nose, scarf, etc.) ahead of time so it is ready for the first snow.

Catch snowflakes on a black cloth (coat, sweater, napkin).
Inspect them with a magnifier.

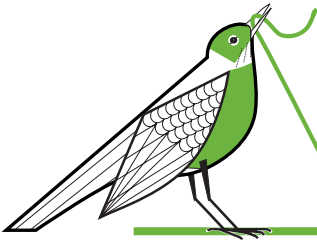
Go sled riding. Build a ski jump or snow ramp.

Throw snowballs!

Make a snow angel. Stay there for a few minutes to listen to the quiet that comes during and after a snowfall.

Look at the sky...does it seem more blue? More clear?

Look for cardinals in the trees.
The red males stand out, but can you find the lighter females?



FUN FOR ALL SEASONS

Anybody Home? Go visit your neighbors! Spend some time looking for your neighbors that live under rocks, under leaves, under anything.

Remember to be a polite visitor!

Put things back the way you found them. Move slowly and gently, taking care not to disturb any critters you find at home.

Make a bird feeder by putting shortening or peanut butter and seeds on a pine cone. Leave out bits of yarn for birds to make their nests.

What kind of birds do you see outside?

What kind of food are they eating? Are their beaks adapted differently depending upon their food?

Adopt a tree! Choose a tree to monitor for the year.

Check on it once a month. What do the leaves look like?

What about the bark? Are there signs of wildlife?

Are there plants that live near or on it?

Toss your hula hoop on a spot outside.

Count the plants and animals that are found within the hoop.

Can you identify them? Toss the hoop again in a different location and compare the findings.

With a friend, take turns being blindfolded. Whoever isn't blindfolded can bring different things from nature (like grass, leaves, dirt, sticks, seeds, bark or pinecones) to the blindfolded friend to see if they can guess what it is. Tell your friend to use his or her sense of smell, sense of touch or sense of hearing to identify the object.

Take art supplies outside with you (crayons and paper for younger children; markers, pencils or clay for older children).

Choose one natural thing (tree, rock, plant, etc.) to draw.

Draw it from a creative perspective (standing above it, lying underneath it, sitting very close to it, etc.).

Pretend to be an ant and draw it from the ant's point of view!

Creative Writing: Take a walk outside.

Choose a plant or animal that you see. Pretend you are that animal and write a letter to someone.

If you have a friend with you, write to each other!

Take a hike bringing along sheets of paper (thick paper of natural fibers works best -- you could even make your own!).

As you go, collect natural materials that appeal to you... berries, leaves, twigs, galls, soil, mud, bark, etc. Find a quiet place along the trail and create a work of art using these materials.

Rub them on the paper to see if they leave a mark.

Have fun and experiment! Draw with these natural materials.

Be sure to leave your artwork in the sun for a little while to let it dry if you've used moist material.

Take crayons and paper outside and make leaf or bark rubbings. Then, bring nature inside by displaying these pieces of art in the house.

Sit in an outdoor place with a journal and close your eyes.

Listen, smell, and feel the world around you. Write down a description of that place based on what you experienced/sensed.

Did you notice things that you would have missed if you had been just looking with your eyes?

Make a journal on a rainy day, then take it outside to compare your observations when the weather is nicer.

Play with your toys (dolls, trucks, etc.) outside!

Take a family hike with a theme: find shapes, colors and textures, or look for objects starting with each letter of the alphabet.

Take notice of nature when you are doing other things. For example, while you are walking the dog, identify leaves and birds that you see along the way.

Go rock-hunting. Can the rocks you see be found on other planets?
Get the rocks wet. Can you spot any fossils?

Install a rain gauge to keep track of how much rain falls during a storm.

Launch a model rocket. It is important to pick a large open space for this activity. When choosing your spot, think about animal habitats. The habitat for a squirrel is not going to make as good of a launch site as the habitat for a gopher.

What weather conditions do you have to think about?

Create a Constellation: Talk about some of the familiar constellations and then try to find a group of stars that looks like something to you.

Try to get a friend to see the same “picture.”

Give your constellation a name and make up a legend as to how that constellation got into the sky. (For example, the “elephant constellation”: An elephant was drinking water and got the hiccups. It hiccupped so hard that he was flung into the sky and now lives among the stars.)

Make a pair of binoculars out of toilet paper tubes!

Collect as many seeds as you can find.

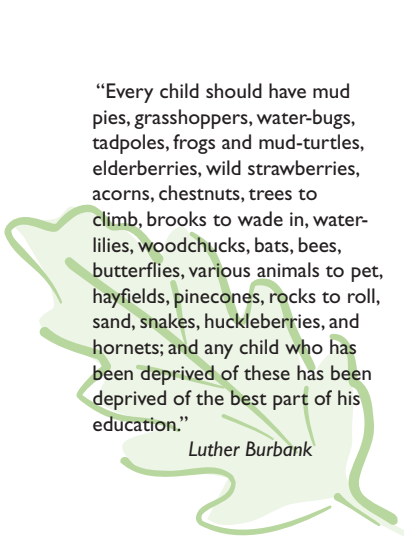
Mount and label them, if possible.

Go out and take a survey or sample of as many different colors in nature as possible.

Have a scavenger hunt.

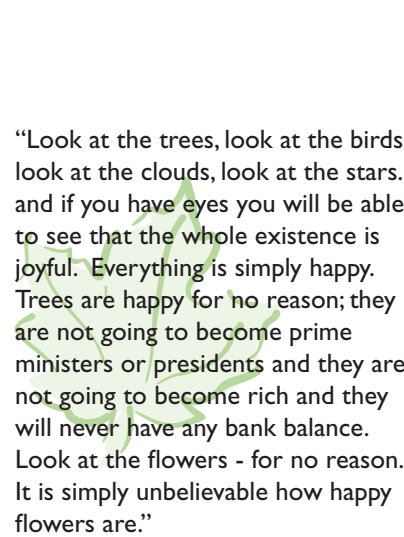
Dig in the dirt!






"Every child should have mud pies, grasshoppers, water-bugs, tadpoles, frogs and mud-turtles, elderberries, wild strawberries, acorns, chestnuts, trees to climb, brooks to wade in, water-lilies, woodchucks, bats, bees, butterflies, various animals to pet, hayfields, pinecones, rocks to roll, sand, snakes, huckleberries, and hornets; and any child who has been deprived of these has been deprived of the best part of his education."

Luther Burbank



"Look at the trees, look at the birds, look at the clouds, look at the stars... and if you have eyes you will be able to see that the whole existence is joyful. Everything is simply happy. Trees are happy for no reason; they are not going to become prime ministers or presidents and they are not going to become rich and they will never have any bank balance. Look at the flowers - for no reason. It is simply unbelievable how happy flowers are."

Osho




"Every year my family will pick all the vegetables from the garden. We use the bad ones to throw at our parents and we get points for where we hit them."

5 year old garden club member



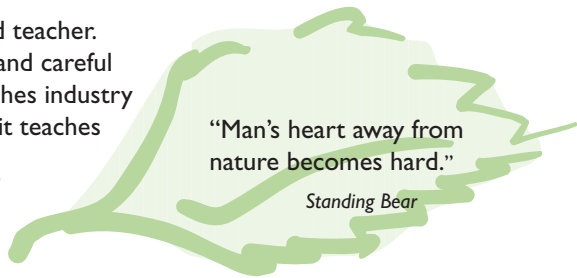
"Nature helps us eat and flowers help keep our houses pretty."

7 year old
garden club member



"A garden is a grand teacher. It teaches patience and careful watchfulness; it teaches industry and thrift; above all it teaches entire trust."

Gertrude Jekyll



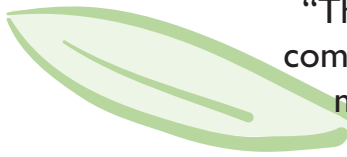
"Man's heart away from nature becomes hard."

Standing Bear



"One day I'll have a green thumb"

9 year old community gardener



"Forget not that the earth delights to feel your bare feet and the winds long to play with your hair."

Kahlil Gibran

"The joy of looking and comprehending is nature's most beautiful gift."

Albert Einstein

"If you think (the lavender) is pretty, let me show you the roses."

5 year old community gardener

DID YOU KNOW...

NATURE

is so important

that author

Richard Louv

coined the term

“Nature Deficit

Disorder”

NATURE DEFICIT

DISORDER:

a disorder describing

the human costs of

alienation from nature,

among them:

diminished use

of the senses,

attention difficulties

and higher rates

of physical and

emotional illnesses.

children who play outside are happier, healthier and smarter? Give your child a dose of Vitamin N (nature) every day!

Nature is good for physical health:

Children who spend time outside tend to be more active, which reduces the likelihood that they will be overweight.

Play in natural environments with uneven terrain improves motor abilities, especially balance and coordination.

Nature is good for mental health:

Interaction with nature increases children’s ability to focus, and therefore enhances their cognitive ability.

According to an American Academy of Pediatrics report, “Play allows children to use their creativity while developing their imagination, dexterity and physical, cognitive and emotional strength”.

After a walk in a park, some children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder experienced the same level of relief as provided by ADHD medication.

Kids learn from nature:

Real field trips provide better learning experiences than “virtual field trips”. Actual experiences create excitement, inspire curiosity and a sense of awe and wonder, as well as a desire to explore.

Students in nature-based instructional programs score as well or better in reading, math, language and spelling than students in traditional classrooms

Creative, outdoor play cultivates teamwork, cooperation and social skills.



For more details and research citations, please view the report on Ohio’s Initiative to Reconnect Children with Nature at www.LNClgc.org. Five volumes of annotated research summaries are also available at www.childrenandnature.org.

The Grow Outside Guide to Outdoor Play is brought to you by
Leave No Child Inside - Greater Cincinnati

*Leave No Child Inside - Greater Cincinnati is a collaboration of organizations and individuals
educating the community that time spent in nature is essential
for the physical, mental and emotional health of all children.*

As of the date of this printing, the collaborative consisted of the following:

Camp Joy	Greater Cincinnati Environmental Educators
Camping and Education Foundation	Green Bird House
Cincinnati Horticultural Society	Green Thumb Revolution
Cincinnati Museum Center	Green Umbrella
Cincinnati Nature Center	Greenacres Foundation
Cincinnati Observatory Center	Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services
Cincinnati Park Board	Hamilton County Park District
Cincinnati Recreation Commission	Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District
Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden	Imago
City of Cincinnati, Office of Environmental Quality	Keep Cincinnati Beautiful
City of Covington	Kenton County Parks & Recreation
City of Mason	Mill Creek Restoration Project
Civic Garden Center of Greater Cincinnati	Mother's Nature 2, Inc.
Crystal Clear Science, Inc.	Ohio River Foundation
EarthJoy	Ohio River Way
Environmental Education Council of Ohio	Oxbow, Inc.
Foundation for Ohio River Education	The Nature Conservancy in Ohio
Gorman Heritage Farm	University of Cincinnati Economics Center
Granny's Garden School	

*Special thanks to the following organizations who contributed
to the preparation of this guide:*

American Academy of Pediatrics • Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center
Cincinnati Nature Center • Cincinnati Park Board • Cincinnati Recreation Commission
Civic Garden Center of Greater Cincinnati • 4C for Children
Greater Cincinnati Environmental Educators
Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services
Hamilton County Park Board

8/12



5 - 2 - 1 - 0

Prescription for Healthy Children



FIVE

or more fruits & vegetables
every day



ONE

hour or more of
physical activity every day

TWO

or less hours of
screen time per day



ZERO

sugary drinks



Endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics,
the State of Kentucky and the pediatricians of Healthy Kids Ohio,

5-2-1-0 is a prescription for healthy children.

Incorporating nature into your family's daily life
reduces screen time and increases vital physical activity.

Your drink of choice while in the great outdoors
should always be water. And, healthy fruits and vegetables
make a great snack while you are hitting the trail.

**Make 5-2-1-0 your family's prescription
for healthy living!**

