

**New Hampshire Leave No Child Inside Forum:
A Community Conversation about Connecting
Children and Nature**



at the Capital Center for the Arts, Concord, NH

November 27, 2007



Hosted by:

Children & Nature Network

Sierra Club

New Hampshire Children in Nature Coalition

FORUM REPORT

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Forum Steering Committee:

Karen Acerno, Audubon Society of New Hampshire
Shari Colby, NH Division of Parks
John Corrigan, NH Department of Transportation
Pam Hess, Appalachian Mountain Club
Marianne O'Connor, Nashua
Judy Silverberg, NH Fish and Game Department
Ruth Smith, independent consultant
Doug Smithwood, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Chair: Marilyn Wyzga, NH Fish and Game Department

Taking Action:

The success of the New Hampshire Children in Nature Coalition (NHCINC) relies on what each of us does to reconnect children and nature. To stay informed about and involved with NHCINC, regularly check www.wildnh.com/ChildrenInNature. We will continue to post updates on actions that you can take part in. NHCINC will soon have its own website, and we'll post a link, so stay tuned.

Participate in a working group. There are currently two active working groups. Contact the chair of each to find out about joining in upcoming meetings and tasks:

Messaging/Communications:

Clare Long clong@fs.fed.us
Jessica Morton jmorton@des.state.nh.us

Mission/Organization:

Andrea Muller amuller@outdoors.org

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Forum Schedule

- 7:30 - 9:00 am: State Leaders' Breakfast
- 9:30 - 12:00 noon: Public Forum (over 600 people attended)
9:30 - 10:00 am: Keynote address – Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*, and Chairman of the Children and Nature Network
- 10:00 am - Noon: Panel Discussion
- Panelists:**
- Richard Louv (Author and Chairman Children and Nature Network)
 - Martin LeBlanc (National Youth Education Director, Sierra Club)
 - Jan McLaughlin, NH Department of Education, Science Curriculum and Assessment
 - Steven Whitman, Jeffrey H. Taylor and Associates, Planner
 - David T. Sobel, M. Ed., Antioch University New England, Director of Teacher Certification Programs and Director of the Center for Place-based Education
 - Dr. José T. Montero, MD NH Department of Health and Human Services, State Epidemiologist
- Moderator:**
- Cotton Cleveland
- 12:15 - 1:15pm: Lunch
- 1:30 - 3:00pm: Working Sessions (over 200 people took part)
- **Influencing Policy Making: How to reach decision makers and propose legislation** – Martin LeBlanc (Sierra Club) and Joel Harrington (The Nature Conservancy in New Hampshire, Director of Government Relations)
 - **Fundraising for Programs and Projects** – Kevin Peterson (NH Charitable Foundation)
 - **Strategies to Affect Educational Practices** – Jan McLaughlin (NH Department of Education, Science Curriculum and Assessment) and Esther Cowles, NH Project Learning Tree, Executive Director
 - **Public Health and Safety in the Outdoors** – Tim Soucy (Public Health Director, Manchester Health Department)
 - **Building a Nature-based Community** – Chris Northrop (NH Office of Energy and Planning, Principal Planner) and Donna Kuethe, CPRP (Town of Moultonborough, Recreation Director)
- 3:00 - 3:30pm: Wrap-up and Call to Action

Action Items from Afternoon Working Sessions

Public Health and Safety in the Outdoors Action Items

Mass media campaign, multi-pronged

- Dispel myths and fear, provide accurate information
- Identify and publicize local resources

Develop network to filter information down to local level (and across and up...)

- Build local coalitions to accomplish on community level

Work with other initiatives

- Children's Health Initiative (Governor's Office)
- Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL)
- NH Children in Nature Coalition (mission, goals, objectives)

Building a Nature-Based Community Action Items

We would have a technical assistance teams that could facilitate community profile-like processes that could lead communities to be recognized as Nature-Based Communities (NROC – National Resources Outreach Coalition – will do this):

- o Define criteria for Nature Based Community.
- o How are kids being engaged with nature?
- o Flexible definitions of nature-based community

Communicate to everyone we know.

Each of us go home to our community and start something within 6 months.

Strategies to Affect Education Practices Action Items

*** Marketing Materials ***

- Talk to local and state school boards, school administrators and primary teachers.
- Write articles for school newsletter, parent notices, and local newspaper about "Leave No Child Inside."
- Copies of books in school with condensed notes/highlights and discussion groups.

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**Influencing Policy Making
Action Items**

One-stop website

- Places
- Activities
- Educate/cooperative attitude

Community initiative – warrant article

- Coordinated push – develop/join a coalition (eg, Carbon Coalition)
- Show benefits: quality of life, health (means to end)
- Increase grass root participation
- Create policy: eg. access
- Mission statement, goals, metrics

*Starts with policy

**Funding for Programs and Projects
Action Items**

1. Awareness + PR * *
Another fundraising training
2. Find Partners and collaborate
List-serves
Email
Networking
3. Public funding -- Education is too under-funded to include this initiative. Look at alternatives way (i.e. transportation)
4. Need consensus on what we are going to do to target and aggregate funding and bring non-profits together
5. Funders can help link partners
“Funding Collaborative”

(#2, 4 and 5 are linked)

Notes from Afternoon Working Sessions

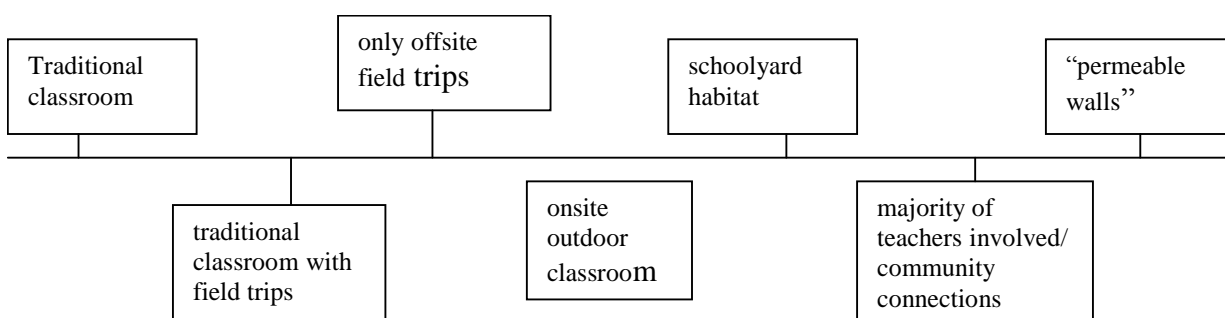
Strategies to Affect Education Practices

Presenters: Jan McLaughlin (NH Department of Education, Science Curriculum and Assessment) and Esther Cowles, NH Project Learning Tree, Executive Director

Recorder: Allison Briggaman (NH Fish and Game Department)

Notes

Spectrum of Schools



Curriculum – EIC
Recess
Schoolyard design
Academic pressure
Health concerns
Budget

Brainstorm actions

- Marketing materials to administrators, school boards and primary teachers
- Models from other countries to follow
- Action item for schools – organizations, communities
- Fund for legal defense
- Promote advantage of nature on playgrounds
- Collective place to gather information (PEEC)
- Talk at school board meetings (state school board avail)
- Copies of books in schools
- Outdoor safety day – fun day to get parents involved!
Write something for school/local papers about today’s forum
- Step It Up idea
- Move assessments out of field trip time
- Powerpoint or DVD Children in Nature Network for training
- Corps of retired teachers
- High school science standards and nature
- Master Gardener program for teachers

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- Timing for teacher training-- *Marketing*
- Principal support
- Local support – residents get kids out
- Person-to-person contact
- Schools/communities can decide schedule
- Cost
- How does curriculum fit with Project WET/WILD/Leaning Tree

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Influencing Policy Making: How to reach decision makers and propose legislation

Presenters: Martin LeBlanc (Sierra Club) and Joel Harrington (The Nature Conservancy in New Hampshire, Director of Government Relations)

Recorder: Torene Tango-Lowy (NH Division of Parks)

Notes

Coordinated effort

- Local, state, federal, NPO

Schools: no recess policy, wellness policy

Access – one stop listing; lands, camps

158 towns – “task force”

Lobby federal Congressional reps

COALITIONS: NH education/environment

BRANDING

- NH Natural leaders

- Message

* connect with communities

\$ - DIRECT CONTACT WITH CONGRESS WITH GOOD PACKAGE/IDEA (STAFFER)

* relationship

LAND USE, RECYCLING (risk)

- generate common, shared data

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Building a Nature-Based Community

Presenters: Chris Northrop (NH Office of Energy and Planning, Principal Planner) and Donna Kuethe, CPRP (Town of Moultonborough, Recreation Director)

Recorders: Susan Cox (USDA Forest Service), Judy Stokes (NH Fish and Game Department)

Notes

Questions and Answers:

How do we bring about change?

How do we define nature-based community?

Relationship, attitudes, shared commitment

Develop a “human community”

Capacity building in communities – how to?

Identify resources, gaps

Community profile (Cooperative Extension) example [linked with]
something like a local Agricultural Commission

Master Plan might be a way to make this happen by articulating the process for how townspeople can make wishes known – public participation required in Master Plan process

Outdoor area for schools

Organize – like energy committees in each town, need a nature-based community commission

How to get schools, sports, parents involved

How do we prevent ourselves from getting in the way – don’t over plan, create?

Alternative to organized sports – unorganized and supervised activities

Recreation departments under pressure to provide sports – trick parents with “Adventures with Dave” instead of “Field Hockey with Dave”

Perception that “unstructured” is not valuable – how do we fight that?

Ask kids for their input – and let them make some decisions. Kids want some structure around the ideas they come up with

Kids can design their own playground. Include them in planning towns, too.

Social marketing – changing behavior...may apply to our interests – Good mom - Bad mom

Something that magnifies our efforts – we’re all offering programs – usually full – what else should we do? Do we need more volunteers?

Notes leading to Action Plan in subgroup A

Start small – engage senses

Food!! Connect people/community to growing own food or supporting local farms

Obesity issue – corn syrup

Open farm day

School garden – connect to farmer market

Ritual of gathering around food

Farmers market becoming a gathering place with other stuff

Issue – retrofit suburban layout and auto comm. with outdoor experiences

Growth issue – preserve small town characters

Community survey – know what people want

Be sure to address all members

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How to engage neighborhood – small numbers of people
Offer those outdoor experiences
Create/refurbish promote gathering places
Build a sense of community
 Bring different groups together
Strawberry Bake – 100 mile meal
Forum to bring resources together to share
Forum at state level to share gathering successes
Share work/share tools, bring community together
State provides leadership to encourage communities to get kids outside
Get to the parents
 If you do something with kids – they bring parents

Notes leading to Action Plan in sub-group B

A Community Profile-like process for nature-based community building
 “...if we had the ideal...”
 could involve local youth
 activates the individual who might never volunteer in town
 - Tree Circle – allow building on school yard, Nature Based School
 Share what I learned today with others
 Need an awareness component
 10 Questions answered with your camera outdoors
 Involve kids!
Kids inventory our natural assets
 Trails, streams, etc.
A lack of a sense of community leads to fear
Establish safe houses with people volunteering to keep eyes open, parents feel better
Recreation Dept. advice beyond organized programs; where are trails, parks, etc.
Is there a national designation for “Nature Based Communities”?
 Develop a recognition program
 NRPA – award has been suggested
 Develop criteria of what “Nature-Based Community” means
Parents will make the difference– real marketing effort
Adults – on a consistent basis
Get to adults through the kids
CREATE DEMAND
Develop a technical assistance team

Addendum

Someone mentioned that towns might be well advised to list public lands within their boundaries that are open to public recreation. A former staff member of the LCIP noted that approximately 100,000 acres of land in New Hampshire were permanently protected through that 5-year program back in the late 80’s and early 90’s; those lands are now permanently open to passive recreation such as hiking, etc. People may want to consider including these lands in any inventory that’s promoted to the public to get people outdoors and appreciating nature

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Public Health and Safety in the Outdoors

Presenter: Tim Soucy (Public Health Director, Manchester Health Department)

Recorder: Marilyn Wyzga (NH Fish and Game Department)

Notes

Tim asked: Why did you attend this session?

- Canceling programs due to EE 9 (on the seacoast) and West Nile
- Try hand sanitizers, mosquito magnet, liability concerns
- Posting land out of fear – liability concerns
- Health statistics rates above national average
- Low/no cost solutions for low income communities
- Kids out of sight = “neglectful moms”
- Marry public health and environmental concerns for increased impact in message
- Indoor air quality not great
- Public health and safety is closely linked to community – build greater community to address
- Environmental health education – to spray or not
- Perceived versus real risk
- Pill approach versus preventative approach to health
- Requirements with outdoor recreation programs to make safe
- Deal with concerns about being out while connecting them with outdoors
- Industry standards in outdoor education
- Concerns as mom – how to help others with similar concerns
- Desire for improved mental/social health for kids

Tim Soucy presentation and Manchester statistics

20% of first graders overweight or obese, aim to get below 5%

Cause: insurance, income, access to primary care

Not same concerns about outdoors in urban areas as in rural

-nutrition

-lack of physical activity (lack of green space, safety issues – drugs, traffic, physical/built environment)

-parental behavior (how to reach, how to change)

“Shape Up Somerville” program – used multi-pronged strategy

“There are always opportunities”

Technology challenge – increasing options and variety make videogames more tantalizing

Livable communities

Community policy – zoning sidewalks, change mindset of policy makers

Kids are easiest audience – adults are barrier, get them excited and over their fears

School field trip with daughter’s class got Tim to climb his first mountain, led him to look on

DRED website for campgrounds and camping out at Monadnock with kids

Mosquito-borne illness fear is unfounded; Tim supports targeted spraying

Problem about EEE and West Nile is public education, there are effective non-DEET alternatives

Good science

Research driven policy (not fear-driven policy)

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Approach is about prevention

Enforcement tools behind education, i.e. fined for having tires on property collecting water

West Nile data relatively new – 2000

Education campaign

Environmental health (priority is human health) versus environmentalists (priority is environment)

Think far enough ahead – not build ball fields on filled wetlands

Potential conflict – public health versus environmental educators – how to address?

Crises get attention and money

Division of Chronic Disease and Neighborhood Health

“Weed and See”, Department of Justice initiative – weed out crime and seed in community hope, money is reinvented in community, used to create community garden

Strategies/Actions

- Pool of borrow-able equipment and supplies like for camping, winter coats and boots
- Coupons for people to use state parks
- Prevention campaign – no cases of diseases would mean no more spraying
- Education about how to be outside safely
- Make recess a public health issue, activity decreases obesity
- Common/consistent message – all groups/organizations in community
- Make time in school day for real health education – recess
 - Engage school nurse, public health officers/network
- Participate with existing NHCINC message/audience work group to include these messages
- Involvement with HEAL goals
- Develop your local coalition where you live – school nurse, local health officer (www.nhphn.org), drugstore, School, PTA/PTO, etc. “Think globally, act locally”
- Governor’s Children’s Health Initiative
- At schools identify community leaders (“in” group) to participate in coalition
- Utilize/promote existing resources like local trails
- Assemble lists of good, local exercise/diet related activities and advertise them collectively
- Tap into conservation commissions
 - assemble resource list – map/inventory public green spaces
- Develop comparative risk info for towns or to use in TV commercials (church bulletins, local radio stations, etc.), “your chances of contracting West Nile versus being in a car accident versus winning lottery,” etc.
- Expand NHHS info sheets and press releases beyond “how to deal with./address disease” to encouraging people to go out and play, and be prepared when they do
- Design broad campaign to tailor locally (build on HEAL and NHCINC goals)
 - with a media kit
 - messages with multiple angles, combination of both ends of spectrum

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Fundraising for Programs and Projects

Presenter: Kevin Peterson (NH Charitable Foundation)

Recorder: Johanna Lyons (NH Division of Parks)

Notes

Challenges

Money

Partnerships!!

Human resources

Access to existing land base

Getting more people to our facility

Creative technology to access our (sometimes inaccessible) facility (on a mountain)

Getting kids *out* of schools

Creating a lure for kids *out* of media-centric world

Reaching out to “masses”

Non-peak utilization

Perceived NCLB impediments – teachers

Connection between technology and nature

More money means greater accessibility to programs

Keeping *existing* (urban) programs *funded*

Professionalism of EE field – can’t “give away” high quality programs

Bridging the time gap – people who *know* how important nature is but don’t take the *time* to go *outside*

Find *new* pools of funding

\$ to train volunteers

\$ for government sponsored programs

Reaching nearby constituents

Can’t afford to “walk the talk” – resources to fund high end “green” features

Kevin Peterson presentation

Charitable Foundation Center

Lamson Library, Plymouth; concord Library, Online subscription – all free

Know what you want and find a funder to match

Talk to a program manger

Follow the format the funder ahs given you

Don’t say “see proposal” on the cover sheet

In-kind contributions are very appropriate

Estimate 7-15% for overhead as in-kind or funding for programs

Q: granting organizations can’t use grant to for-profit organizations – may need a non-profit partner

Grantors don’t want to be sole source funder – partners and diversify

Q: grant writing is proportional to the \$ amount – leave yourself time

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Questions & Answers

- Collaborate – build over time
- When you collaborate, give lots of staff time
- Be clear about what you are proposing – sometimes it takes a year
 - Logic Model:
 - Outline
 - Timeline
 - Outcomes
- Google
- Output (# of people, # of storie: work comp) vs. Outcome (changes in human behavior over time)
- build an evaluative component into your budget
- engage the front line, the grants written will be delivered by someone
- recognize funders; usually get a publicity packet but if unclear ask how to recognize – press releases, logo on website, etc., newsletter article (internal/external)
- Organizations – known/unknown
 - organizations can build funding over time from grantors
 - Call program officer and introduce your program; find a partner
- Multiple applications is appropriate to several grantors, be upfront with funder(s)
- NCLI not a lot of hard data that supports the effort; “feel good”
- 85% of all philanthropy is individual
- portfolio development

www.Peecworks.org

www.NHNonprofits.org (foundation resource guide)