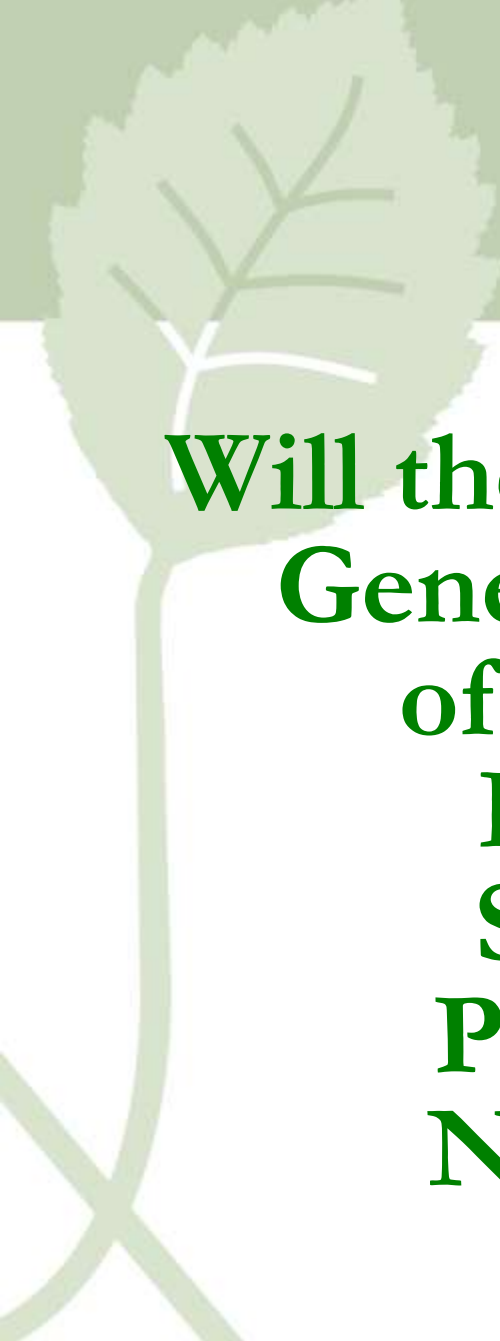




Nature Play for Parents

Martin LeBlanc
Vice-President, Children & Nature Network



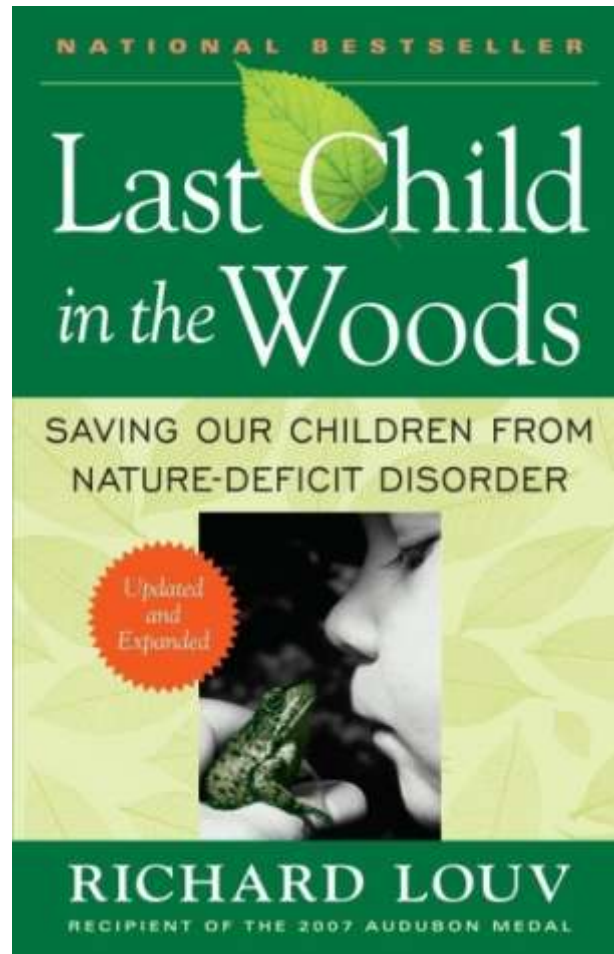
Will the Next Generation of Youth Have a Special Place in Nature?



Amelie: My Inspiration



The Book that Launched a Movement





Hope



The Problem

- Children are spending 42.5 hours or more a week connected with electronic media. (Kaiser Family Foundation)
- Fewer than 1 in 5 children walk or ride a bike to school. (Centers for Disease Control)
- Childhood obesity and severe overweight in children and youth has increased from 4% in the 1960s to about 20% today, and is substantially higher in some communities. (Centers for Disease Control)

Challenges We Face In Connecting Children with Nature

- Fear
- Structured Lives
- Planned Communities
- The Indoor Classroom
- Electronic Media

Leave No Amelie Inside



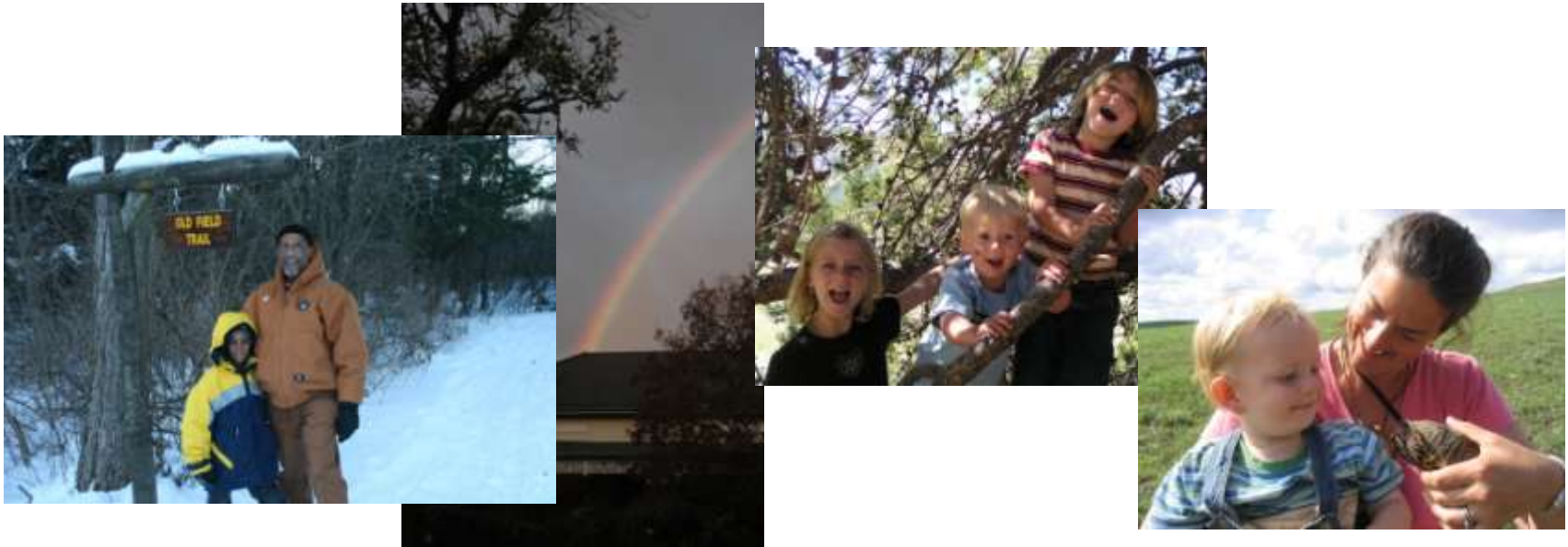
Benefits of Connecting Children to the Outdoors

- Outdoor classrooms and nature-based education is associated with significant student gains in academic achievement 27% increase in science test scores. (American Institutes for Research)
- Study in England in 2002 found that children who are suffering from ADD and other mental health disorders got decreased depression and tension from outdoor experiences

The Vision of the Children and Nature Network

www.childrenandnature.org

- Beyond programs and legislation, our ultimate goal is deep cultural change—changing the cultural norm—by connecting children to nature, so that they can be happier, healthier and smarter.



C&NN Resources



Natural Leaders: Youth are the leaders of today not tomorrow

<http://www.childrenandnature.org/movement/naturalleaders/>



Nature Family Clubs

- **NATURE CLUBS FOR FAMILIES: Do It Yourself! Do It Now!**
- A few key benefits
- Nature Clubs for Families can be created in any neighborhood — whether inner city, suburban, or rural — and in any economic setting.
- Nature Clubs for Families can be joined or created by any family—single parents, extended families, friends who feel like families.
- The Nature Clubs for Families approach can break down key barriers, including fear of strangers, since there is safety in numbers.
- There is the motivation factor—it's much more likely you and your family are going to show up at a park on Saturday morning if you know there's another family waiting for you.
- Shared knowledge: Many parents want to give their kids the gifts of nature, but they don't feel they know enough about nature to do so.
- And, importantly, there is no need to wait for funding. Families can do this themselves and do it now.

Nature Family Clubs Getting Started



QUICK-START GUIDE

Get Inspired.
Get Organized.
Get Out.

1

CREATE A PLAN

Where, when, what, how often and how long? Putting it all in writing can help you relax and enjoy the process.

→ [TOOL / TEMPLATES \(P.12\)](#)

2

CHECK IT OUT

It's a good idea to visit each location yourself before you send out invitations. Note any special features for each destination including details on where best to meet and what to do once there.

→ [TOOL / TEMPLATES \(P.13\)](#)

3

INVITE AS MANY PEOPLE AS YOU LIKE

Start small or invite them all. Just invite a couple of friends to join you for a family hike. Or reach out to neighborhood families, classmates, and community groups like the scouts, 4-H and boys and girls clubs.

→ [TOOL / TEMPLATES \(P.15\)](#)

4

MAKE IT EASY

Informed and prepared parents are happy parents. You'll make it easy to say "Yes" when you minimize prep-time and maximize fun by giving parents a check list for hassle-free outings.

→ [TOOL / TEMPLATES \(P.16\)](#)

5

READY, SET, GO!

Start your adventure on time with a 15-minute grace period for latecomers. Record the number of participants at each event and collect contact information for new participants.

→ [TOOL / TEMPLATES \(P.17\)](#)



KNOWRE-GUIDE FOR FAMILIES: Go It Yourself? Do It Now!
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Let's Start a Nature Family Club

– Outline of Nature Family Plan

- » Resources needed?
- » How and what partners will you engage?
- » How will you recruit other families?
- » Give quick overview of what Nature Family Club will look like after six months in your community?

Juan Martinez



The Time is Now



Children and Nature Network

For Additional Information, contact:

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