

June 2017

From the 4-H Youth Development Advisor, Steven Worker



Play, Learn, and Serve in the Great Outdoors

Time spent in the natural world can help build our physical, emotional, and family fitness. ~ Louv, 2011

Summer is almost here so it's time to take advantage of our local beautiful natural environment by getting outdoors! The natural environment holds remarkable potential for improving physical, psychological, and spiritual health, as well as strengthening bonds between people. However, research has shown that children are spending less time outdoors compared to twenty years ago. Let's plan to help our youth explore the great outdoors this summer!

4-H summer camp

Youth will be attending week long camps at Las Posadas this summer. Camps can spark curiosity, reconnect youth with nature, and emphasize holistic development of life skills. Last summer, parents of 4-H campers overwhelmingly reported two benefits for 4-H summer camp: unplugging from technology & becoming more confident.

Plan 4-H picnics, hikes, and exploration

Even if 4-H youth in your Club are not attending summer camp, plan a 4-H Club picnic, hike, or family exploration day at a local, state, or national park or forest. Find a map of local parks/forests at <https://goo.gl/BfCrpS>

National Get Outdoors Day – June 10, 2017

Plan to get outdoors on June 10! Parks and forests may offer fun activities for visitors to use a fishing pole, go geocaching, help pitch a tent and more. <http://www.nationalgetoutdoorsday.org/>

Get outdoors at home

Even getting outside at home is beneficial. Unstructured play time is important for child development and well-being. Parents can supplement with simple activities; for example, find paint chips from the hardware store and invite your children find things in the backyard that match those colors. Or host a sensory scavenger hunt in the park (something spiky, something quiet, something fruity, something tall).

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