

Michigan No Child Left Inside

A BRIEF HISTORY:

The Michigan No Child Left Inside Coalition was established to ensure that programs and policies are put in place for our children to have access and opportunity to experience Michigan's natural wonders. The Coalition began as a group of partners working towards a presentation at the 2008 Michigan Alliance for Environmental and Outdoor Education conference, but the group quickly realized that much more could be done to get Michigan's children back outdoors. On October 22, 2008, Richard Louv spoke to a crowd of 2000 enthusiastic listeners gathered at the MSU Auditorium. His visit was made possible with funding from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, the Kalamazoo Nature Center (a MI NCLI Coalition member), Michigan State University and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (also a Coalition member). The event also served as a public announcement of the creation of the Michigan No Child Left Inside Coalition.

The Michigan No Child Left Inside Coalition is committed to promoting activities and policies that will help our children reconnect with nature through outdoor play and exploration, recreational opportunities, and hands-on environmental education.

No Child Left Inside Workgroup Information

WORKGROUP COMMITMENTS:

By participating in a workgroup on June 25th, an individual or organization is committing to attending at least 3 additional meetings (in person, by phone or web) throughout the summer. These meetings will focus on developing an action plan in one of five areas identified by the Coalition: Environmental Literacy Plan, Environmental Education Teacher Education (formal and informal), Mentoring Outdoor Experiences, Health Connections, and Community Planning.

The goal of the first summit meeting on June 25th is to identify interest and capacity in each workgroup and to develop a timeline for the creation of a workgroup action plan between the summit and the MAEOE conference in October 2009.

The long term goal is to establish effective, sustainable workgroups that will develop and implement action plans that will ultimately get Michigan kids outdoors and advance quality environmental education for teachers. The Coalition has identified five different areas in which work can be focused:

Environmental Literacy Plan Workgroup

National legislation supporting a "No Child Left Inside" program would provide funding to the Michigan Department of Education if Michigan has an Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP) in place. Although this legislation is still winding its way through the House and Senate, Michigan currently has no such plan. The ELP Workgroup is looking for those with interest and skills who can join the team that will draft a plan for Michigan. The plan will provide a comprehensive strategy encouraging Michigan youth to play, recreate, learn, and study their outdoor environment while becoming informed and responsible stewards.

Workgroup Champion: Kevin Frailey

Environmental Education Teacher Education (formal and informal)

This workgroup will draw upon best practices in formal and informal environmental and outdoor education. They will seek ways to increase the impact and frequency of programs and curriculum that get Michigan kids outdoors and help them connect with nature through education.

Workgroup Champion: Joan Chadde

Mentoring Outdoor Experiences

This workgroup will seek ways to increase the positive outdoor experiences of Michigan kids and important adults in their lives by drawing upon successful existing programs and perspectives such as interpretation, parks and recreation, local government, hunting and fishing, and conservation.

Workgroup Champion: Dorothy McLeer

Health Connections

To build a strong and diverse NCLI partnership under the umbrella of Health, the Health Workgroup will include participation from individuals and groups representing all eight components of the Coordinated School Health Programs (CSHP) model. These components include: Health Education, Physical Education, Health Services, Nutrition Services, Counseling/Psychological/Social Services, Healthy School Environment, Health Promotion for Staff, and Parent and Community Involvement.

Using the CSHP model, representatives from each group will participate in the planning and execution of collaborative efforts to: 1) Assess current activities that support and promote the goals of NCLI, 2) Seek new opportunities to collaborate under the NCLI initiative, and 3) Develop specific plans to individually and collaboratively work to increase awareness and promotion of outdoor activities, environmental education, and connections to nature, with each of their respective constituent groups.

Workgroup Champion: Paula Nettleton

Community Planning

This workgroup will explore how communities can promote and facilitate getting Michigan children outdoors. The group will draw from local success stories from community programs to grassroots efforts.

Workgroup Champion: Diane Seales