

Nature Play Summit



hosted by

Parks Foundation
CLARK COUNTY

NATURE PLAY



Explore the outdoors!

June 22, 2010

Downtown Hilton Hotel
301 W 6th Street
Vancouver, WA 98661

8:00am - 4:30pm

Summit Schedule

8:00 am Registration

8:30 - 9:00 Welcome

9:15 - 10:15 Morning Education Sessions

10:25 - 11:25 Morning Education Sessions

11:30 - 1:00 Keynote Luncheon featuring

Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods*

1:15 - 2:15 Afternoon Education Sessions

2:25 - 3:25 Afternoon Education Sessions

3:30 - 4:30 Wrap Up

Presented by Jan and Steve Oliva &



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Summit 2010 Education Session Schedule

9:15 - 10:15 a.m.

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Where Do The Children Play

Presented by Laurie Cornelius, Clark College Child and Family Studies Program

“Where Do The Children Play” is a video that examines the disappearance of play and nature from the daily lives of children. Free play in the natural world, which the baby-boomer generations and their parents took for granted, is something that many children today do not know. The film explores this new environmental impact on children’s mental and physical health and their development.

Nature Playgrounds: Designed or Not Designed

Presented by Anita Van Asperdt – LandCurrent, Landscape Architects & Natural Play Area Designers

This presentation will provide practical information so Nature Play enthusiasts and volunteers are inspired to create a natural playground in their own neighborhood, at the school, park, or local daycare. Find out how a Nature Play area can be developed when there is no budget available to hire a professional designer. The presentation will also show what to expect when there is a budget for a professional designer, and explain the reasons why you might consider going this route.

PEAK: Promoting Environmental Awareness in Kids

Presented by Gayle Hoybrook, Bob Leonard, Janet Schmidt – REI

Children who develop an early appreciation for nature are inspired to be the next generation of environmental stewards. PEAK (Promoting Environmental Awareness in Kids) is a program developed in partnership with the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics. REI staff will demonstrate how kids learn the Leave No Trace principles and outdoor ethics. Discover ways in which community and youth leaders can borrow REI material to utilize PEAK games and modules with their youth groups. You’ll also receive resources about regional hiking and biking, Nature Circles, and the Children & Nature Network.

Green Art at the Intersection of Education and Environmental Responsibility

Presented by Dr. Susan Finley, Department of Teaching & Learning, WSU- Vancouver

The presentation will include hands-on opportunities for “green art” projects and will include exhibits of green art made by children in At Home At School (AHAS) K-12 programs. The demonstration will include examples of our integration of nature play and aesthetic discovery through nature video and photography. There will also be information about the AHAS Outdoors nature studies programs for urban youth. Discussion topics will include strategies to introduce children to outdoor play (including children who experience poverty, disability, urban living and other potential roadblocks to nature play. In part, this will be a presentation of Dr. Finley’s forthcoming publication.

10:25 - 11:25 a.m.

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Place Matters

Presented by Sharon Pesut, Clark County Community Choices, sharon@vancouverusa.com

View the video from unnaturalcauses.org, "Place Matters", and join in a discussion focused on how green spaces enhance a neighborhood and lead to better health. Where you live does affect your health. Find out how we can make sure all of our neighborhoods are healthy. Video description: As social conditions in neighborhoods worsen, so does health. Studies have shown that living in a disadvantaged neighborhood leads to a 50-80% increase in risk for heart disease – the number one killer in America. The High Point Neighborhood in West Seattle is emerging as a promising alternative. Community members, local government and developers took a radical approach in rebuilding this neighborhood – using federal funding to create a mixed-income community with health as its focus. Here, community gardeners grow and sell organic produce to other residents; neighbors socialize along clean, safe streets; children play in the park; and families with asthma breathe easily in specially designed homes.

NatureGrounds: Best Practices for Creating Naturalized Play Environments

Presented by Lisa Moore & Rusty Long, PlayCore

Research reveals a strong link between children's experience of nature and their psychological well-being and overall development. It is important that we encourage outdoor play and find ways to reconnect children with nature. This interactive session will discuss research-based benefits of combining the manufactured play environment with the living landscape, demonstrate how to implement best practices of design, and discuss strategies for overcoming potential barriers to naturalizing existing and new playgrounds. Participants will walk away with educational resources, funding sources and practical ideas on how to get started.

Supporting Schools' Sustainable and Educational Goals with Nature Play

Presented by Beth Flanagan & Ben Vaughn, Walker-Macy

Design for parks and elementary school education is a primary focus of the Portland landscape architecture firm, Walker Macy. Learn from recent work with the Willamette Primary School playground renovation, and the new West Linn Primary School site design (both in the West Linn-Wilsonville School District), and how they incorporated nature play issues within the scope of bond measures and limited budgets.

Preparing for Outdoor Experiences

Presented by Bev Walker & Cory Samia, the Vancouver Water Resources Education Center

Every year, the Water Center engages over 10,000 students, families and adults in different outdoor activities that focus on water and the environment. Activities include teacher trainings and student visits, service learning projects, citizen science and volunteer opportunities that focus on 40+ acres of Columbia River wetlands and the Backyard Wildlife Habitat Garden. Events include National Get Outdoors Day and the annual Sturgeon Festival. In this session, explore many of the educational strategies that the Water Center uses to engage the public in nature. Discover basic engagement activities that you can use to prepare your audience for outdoor experiences. The activities will encourage making observations with all five senses, participating as a citizen scientist in data collecting, and providing service in outdoor stewardship.

1:15 - 2:15 p.m.

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Outdoor Environment and Curricula

Presented by Laurie Cornelius, Juanita Rogers, & Ruth Laabs, Clark College Child and Family Studies
Learn why outdoor environments are critical to child development. See examples of outdoor designs and plans for the Clark College Child and Family Studies Program new and expanded outdoor play space. See images and modular props and curricula in action outdoors. Become inspired and ask yourself where the children in your life play, and how can you change their environments.

Connecting with Nature through Books and Stories

*Presented by Jacquelyn Keith, Children's Service Coordinator
Ruth Shafer, Youth Service Manager
Fort Vancouver Regional Library*

What better way to spark a child's imagination and curiosity about the wonders of nature than through reading? Learn about exciting and fun books that encourage nature play and exploration, plus simple activities that link the world of nature play to the world of books.

New Outdoor Adventure Play Space at the Portland Children's Museum

Presented by Susan Mackay, Dennis Spidal, Carol Mayer Reed – Portland Children's Museum
This panel will cover the philosophy, values and mission of the Portland Children's Museum as it relates to the topic of Nature Play. Inspired by Richard Louv's book, the landscapes of the Northwest and their own childhoods, two representatives of the museum and their landscape architect will unveil new plans for their outdoor nature and adventure play space.

Keeping Nature Close to Home: The Land Trust role in Nature Play

Presented by Lindsay Cornelius & Glenn Lamb, Columbia Land Trust
Next to getting children out the door, the most important aspect of Nature Play is having somewhere natural to go. Columbia Land Trust has conserved thousands of acres of habitat, close to home and in far reaches of wilderness in the Columbia River region. By engaging local communities in the stewardship and enjoyment of our conserved lands, we are nurturing the direct and indirect benefits of healthy land for people of all ages. Come hear about the many unique ways to engage the children in your life on land trust issues.

2:25 - 3:25 p.m.

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Encouraging Nature Play in Urban Green Spaces*Presented by Amy Carpenter, Columbia Springs Environmental Education Center*

Discover ways families can engage in Nature Play activities, exploring ecosystems, identifying plants and animals, and other nature-based recreational opportunities. Also, learn how organizations can create opportunities and encourage Nature Play in urban green spaces, while avoiding large fiscal commitments.

Connecting Youth to Nature through Gardening*Presented by Tim Foley, Kristi Baker, Jodi Wall – ESD 112*

Garden-based education has much in common with Nature Play. This presentation will outline several garden-based learning activities currently underway in ESD112 programs, and describe the plans for the future and opportunities for community partnerships.

The Intertwine Panel: Importance of Nature in the City*Panel members: Mike Houck - Urban Greenspaces Institute; Pete Mayer and Jean Akers - Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation Department; Kelly Puteney - Park and Recreation Advisory Commission*

A historical perspective will be shared on the creation of The Intertwine Alliance. Panel members will describe how a bi-state regional Metropolitan Greenspaces effort was launched in the late 1980s and evolved into the current bi-state collaborative effort of regional and local governments, park providers, nonprofit organizations and private businesses to knit together a world class network of parks, trails, and natural areas. The presentation will focus on the role that the *The Intertwine* plays in maintaining the region's biodiversity and providing access to nature throughout the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan region. Panel members will share their experiences with this regional approach to planning and conserving nature and play spaces.

Finding Nature*Presented by Ryan Weston, David Wright, & Becky Anderson, Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation*

Because Nature Deficit Disorder is a place-based issue, park and recreation systems are in a unique position to encourage and provide nature play experiences for children. Parks provide natural environments in proximity to where children live. Organized recreational programs and educational tools can reverse negative trends and increase nature play experiences.

These tools are being enhanced with new park designs, park renovations and environmental education based recreation programming. David Wright with Vancouver-Clark Parks and Recreation will be discussing the new, volunteer built Haagen Community Park Nature Play Playground. Becky Anderson will review the current nature play programming opportunities.

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