

BE OUT THERE WITH RANGER RICK

The nature of childhood has changed. There's not much nature in it. American childhood has moved indoors during the past two decades, taking a mental and physical toll on today's kids. The negative impact of decreased time outdoors includes a doubling of the childhood obesity rate as well as declining creativity, concentration and social skills. Some say it takes a village to raise a child. We say it takes a backyard, a playground, a park. Join the National Wildlife Federation and Ranger Rick at www.nwf.org/Kids/Ranger-Rick.aspx in our goal to get 10 million kids outside, running and playing.

Ranger Rick knows

A generation ago, 75 percent of kids spent daily time playing freely outside their homes. Today, only 25 percent of our nation's children are making it outside on a regular basis. An alarming number of children are spending nearly seven hours each day using electronic media instead. This "indoor childhood" is not good for kids.

The positive effects of daily, unstructured time outdoors on kids' health and happiness are well documented and wide-ranging:

In tune with nature

Playing outside is life insurance for the planet: Children who spend time outdoors are more likely to care about wild things and wild places when they become adults.

Kinder

Mom always said "play nice." When kids play outdoors, they tend to learn about fostering compassion and improving social bonds.

Leaner

Overweight and obese kids may have shorter lifespans. Giving kids the runaround — outdoors — helps them maintain a healthy weight.

Calmer

In today's overscheduled world, kids need more rest and relaxation. Research shows stress levels fall within minutes of being outside.

Smarter

Kids who spend time outdoors learn teamwork and problem-solving skills. They also score higher on cognitive and standardized tests.



Join the Great American Backyard Campout

On June 22, thousands of people across the nation will gather in their backyards, neighborhoods, communities and parks to take part in a one-night free event that will provide an experience for all generations to connect with nature.

Be a part of the movement! The positive effects of daily, unstructured time outdoors on kids' health are well documented and wide-ranging. National Wildlife Federation encourages families and friends to Be Out There™ in order to give back to American children what they don't even know they've lost — their connection to the natural world. Camping with friends and family is a great way to get outside in the great outdoors.

Sign up now at www.backyardcampout.org to be part of Great American Backyard Campout and join other families across the nation as we spend a night under the stars.

TIPS FOR TEACHERS

- Give your student a Green Hour each day and promote good health and well-being. For more great outdoor activities visit BeOutThere.org
- Watch for wildlife outside of your classroom and tell us what you find: nwf.org/wildlifewatch
- Discover nature nearby by typing in your zip code in NatureFind: nwf.org/naturefind
- Create a Certified Wildlife Habitat: backyard, schoolyard, or community space at nwf.org/gardenforwildlife
- Green your school: www.eco-schoolsusa.org



Get in touch with your local National Wildlife Federation office. Seattle staff members are happy to help connect your family, school, troop or neighborhood with resources, or, to support these great programs, contact us at **206.577.7809** or visit www.nwf.org.



To register for NIE, visit us at seattletimes.com/nie or call **206.652.6290**.