TEXAS CHILDREN INNATURE NETWORK

ENSURING
EQUITABLE ACCESS
AND CONNECTION TO
NATURE FOR ALL
CHILDREN IN TEXAS

www.texaschildreninnature.org





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BIRDING

NPS BUCKET-LISTING



What Do you
Like to Do
Outside?

Why Do You
Like Going
Outdoors?



TEXAS Children in Nature NETWORK

Healthier, Happier, Smarter.

HISTORY

In 2009 SB 205 resolved to address the problem of Nature Deficit Disorder through the creation of a working group between TPWD and TEA. Out of this group leaders from across the state in nature education gathered and formed TCiN in 2010.

On January 1, 2021 The Texas Children in Nature Network became an independent non-profit. Since becoming a npo we have worked to set up a sustainable program, with a full diverse board, fundraising, and a great spectrum of initiatives.





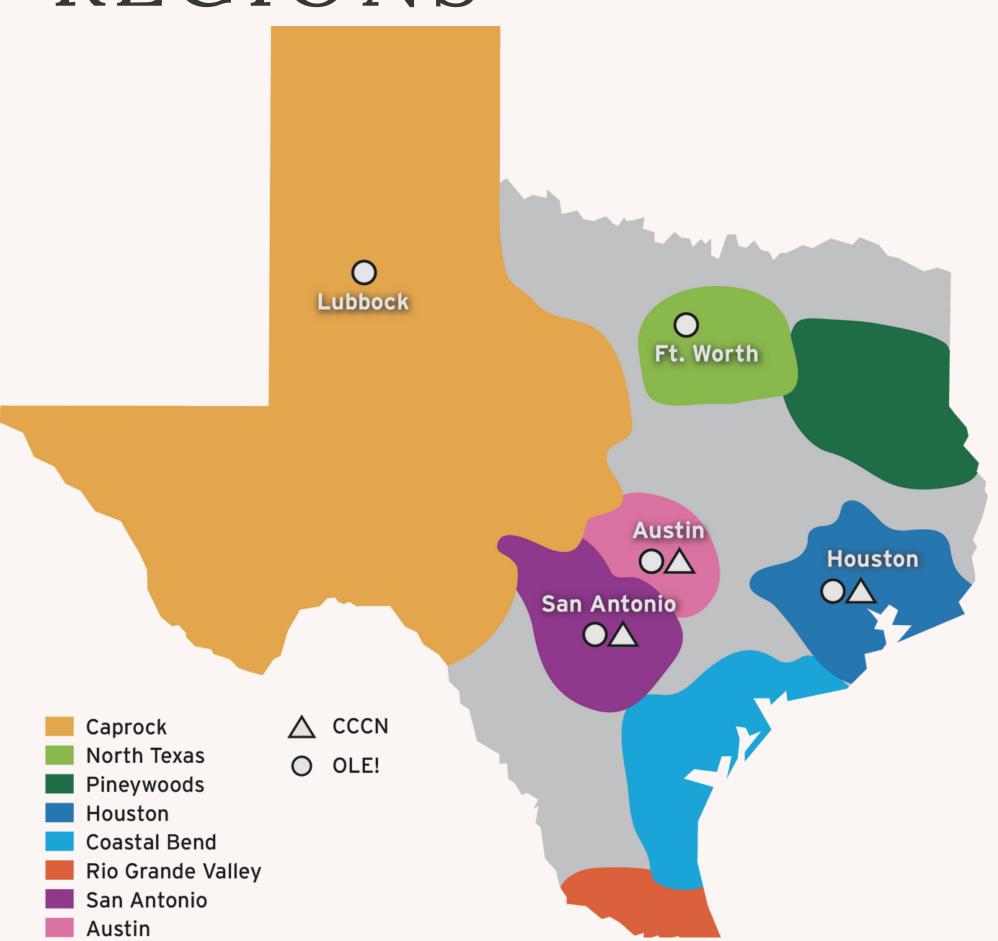
TCiNN Works off of the Collective Impact Model

- Common Agenda
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
 - Resource Sharing
- Continuous Communication
 - Newsletters, social media and more
- Strong backbone organization that's US!





REGIONS





Eight Regional Collaboratives Across the State

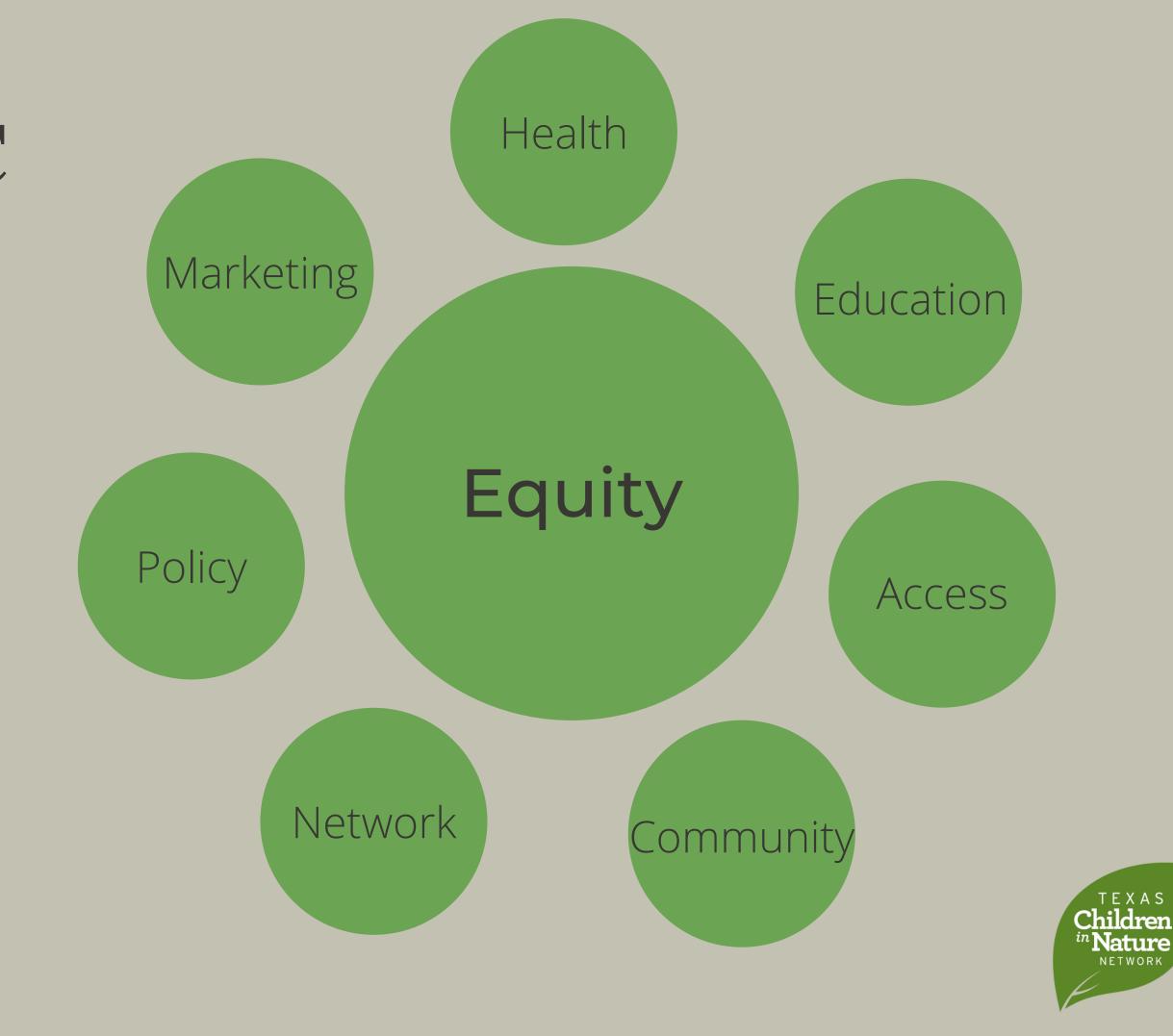
- Caprock
- North Texas
- Austin
- Pineywoods
- Waco ComingSoon

- Houston
- Coastal Bend
- Rio Grande Valley
- San Antonio



STRAGEGIC AREAS OF INTEREST

In 2010 TCiNN released its first strategic plan. In 2021 we released our newest plan. We work in 8 strategic areas of interest



STRATEGIC GOALS

Network Leverage the power of a diverse network and amplify impact

Access to Nature Increase the number of welcoming natural spaces accessible for all children



Education Inspire educators to use outdoor classrooms and nature-based learning

Health Engage the health community to use nature as a health strategy

Community Encourage nature-based experiences through community organizations

Policy Advocate and promote state, regional and municipal level planning, policies, and funding to support outdoor play and learning

Marketing Raise awareness of and increase engagement in nature through consistent and unified communication

WHY TIME OUTDOORS

- Healthier physically and mentally
- Do better in school
- Have higher self-esteem
- Have good self-discipline
- Feel more capable and confident

- Are good problem solvers
- Are more cooperative with others
- Are more creative
- Feel connected to nature
- Are tomorrow's conservation leaders



Healthier Physically and Mentally

MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

- Emotional Well-Being Positive
 Impacted
- ADHD symptoms reduced
- Tillmann, et al (2018)

INCREASED PHYSICAL ACTIVTY

- Students in Green Schoolyards
 experienced a 50% increase in physical
 activity compared to traditional
 playgrounds
- Bell (2008)

HEALTHY PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

- Bones, joints and muscles develop more naturally through outdoor play
- Risky Play teaches boundary setting
- Hanscom (2016)

RESPIRATORY HEALTH

- 91% of children live in areas negatively affected by air pollution
- Urban forests greatly reduced airpollutants
- Almeida, et al (2020)



Healthier Physically and Mentally

SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

- Children who regularly spend time in nature, especially near blue spaces experienced greater social connectedness
- Britton, et al (2020)

DECREASED ANXIETY AND RUMINATION

- After a 50 minute walk in a natural setting significant cognitive improvements
- Bratman, et al (2015)

REDUCTION IN OBESITIY

- Increased physical activity
- Benefits of Free Play
- Burdette & Whitaker (2005)

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE AND DIABETES

- Increased activity outdoors improves risk factors for High Blood Pressure and Diabetes
- McCurdy, et al (2010)



Healthier Physically and Mentally

SLEEP

- Exposure to sunlight before noon helps with natural sleep patterns
- Figueiro, et al (2017)

GREEN EXERCISE

- Benefits include reduced stress, depression and blood pressure, and increased self-esteem and mood
- Smyth (2020)

More Information

- Children and Nature Network Research Library
- TCiNN Website
- TCiNN Webinars
- TCINN LinkedIn



Health and Nature Liaisons

- Three Metro Areas of Texas to work towards making Nature a Health Strategy big audacious goal is to have parents think of nature as one of the top things they can engage with for healthy kids
- Engaging community leaders and members to create sustainable change
- Serving as a connector of all the great work happening across the state
- Engaging with <u>Cities Connecting Children to Nature</u> work already happening in the state and working to engage more cities in this initiative in Texas



HOUSTON Robyn Kebede



RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Marisa Oliva



DALLAS/FORT WORTH

Still Open



SYSTEMS CHANGE

Policies

What laws are in place that affect our work?

Practices

How we have always done things

Resource Flows

Funding Grants Time

Relationships and Connections

Who are our partners?

Power Dynamics

Who are the decision makers? Who is in the room?

Mental Model

Children need to spend more time in nature



SYSTEMS CHANGE

Policies

Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights
Park Rx
Joint-Use Agreements

Practices

Recess Field Experiences at School

Resource Flows

Funding from CDC for our work

Lots of money going into

One Health

TCiNN Staff

Relationships and Connections

Educators Nature Professionals Health Professionals

Power Dynamics

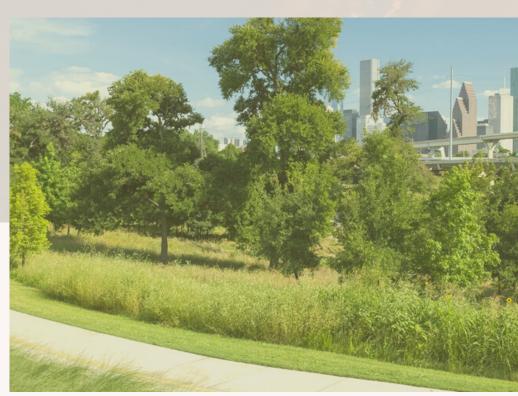
Engaging City Leadership

Mental Model

Time in Nature is a major tool for healthy kids

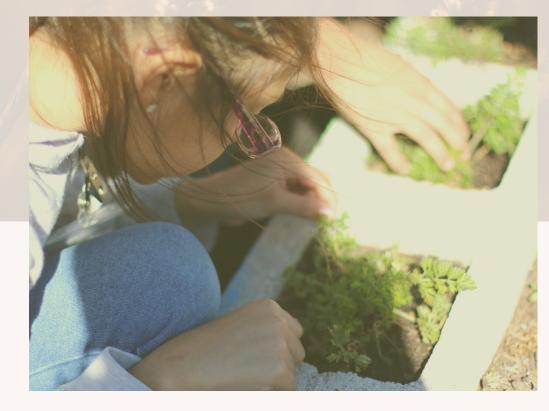


Health and Nature Connection Strategies



PARK PRESCRIPTIONS

Doctors and other health professionals giving a prescription to spend time in nature - research shows that patients take medical advice more seriously when given in the form of a prescription



GREEN SCHOOLYARDS

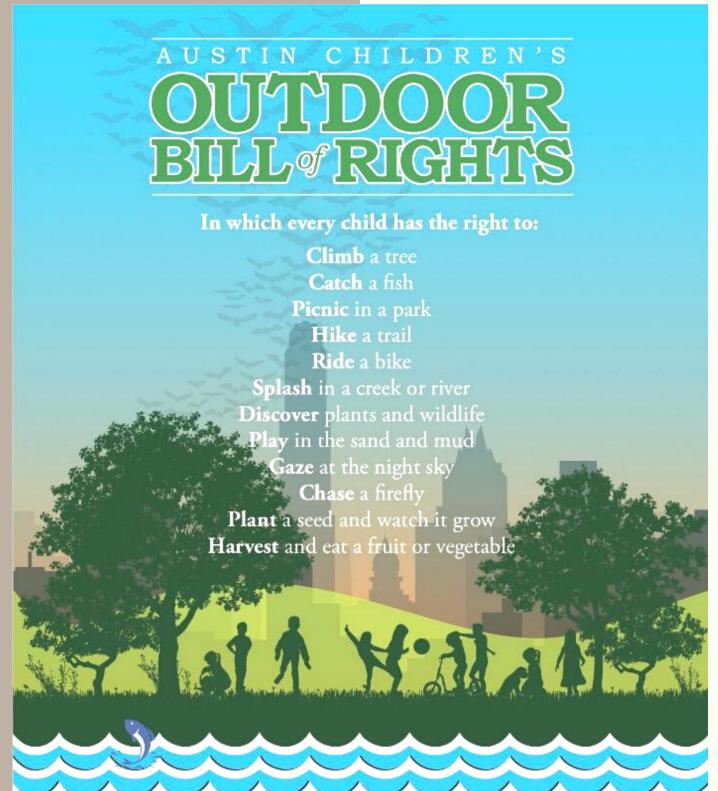
Using Joint-Use agreements
between cities and ISDs to build
nature rich schoolyards that are also
accessible to community members
outside of schooltime



OLE! TEXAS

Initiative with Department of State
Health Services to create outdoor
learning environments in early
childhood education centers





Understanding that research shows children who learn and play in nature are healthier, happier and perform better in school, we enthusiastically support this Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights.

Learn more at www.austintexas.gov/cccn



CHILDREN'S OUTDOOR BILL OF RIGHTS

Austin



How Can Master Naturalists Get Involved?

ENGAGE WITH OUR HEALTH AND NATURE LIAISONS

Our staff are
 working to create
 partnerships in their
 metro areas - they
 can use volunteers!

ENGAGE YOUR COMMUNITY

- Encourage people to spend time in nature for their health
- Participate in events like Walk with a Doc and other health focused activies

STOP GATEKEEPING

 Many don't spend time in nature because they don't feel equipped.
 Engage with folks where they are don't have the "right" boots - that's ok - glad you are here!

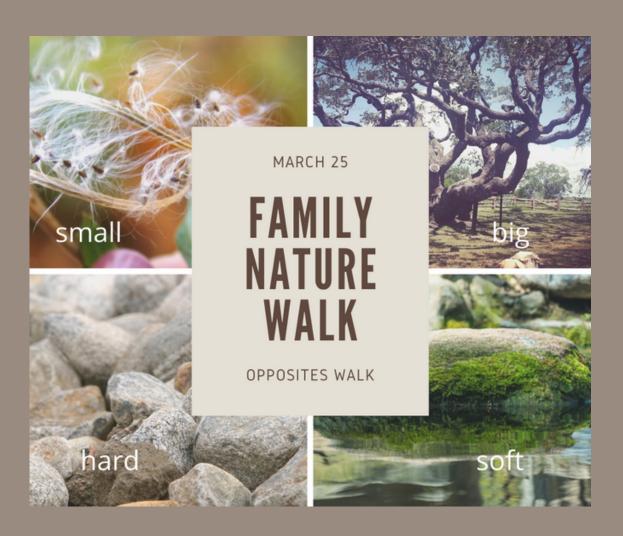
VOLUNTEER WITH OUR PARTNERS

 As projects gear up across the state our partners are going o need volunteers to help them implement the new programs they will be starting









Family Nature Walks









WEBINARS

We offer webinars and workshops each month to share resources with our partners.

All our webinars are also shared on our YouTube Channel

Some upcoming webinars include:

- Green Gentrification in Texas Cities
- How to Develop Activities that
 Students Love and Teachers Use
- Building Bridges Through Inclusive
 Storytelling





TEACHER WORKSHOPS

We offer teacher workshops along with our partners to help teachers become more comfortable teaching outdoors

All our virtual teacher workshops are also shared on our YouTube Channel

Some upcoming teacher workshops include:

Home on the Range K-5th Grade
 Teacher Workshop



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Join A Regional Collaborative

Join a Strategic Area Call

Become a Partner Today

https://forms.gle/FL56DBjYFhkBPC uC7



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@TXChildren



<u>@texaschildren_innature</u>



Texas Children in Nature





THANK YOU.

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