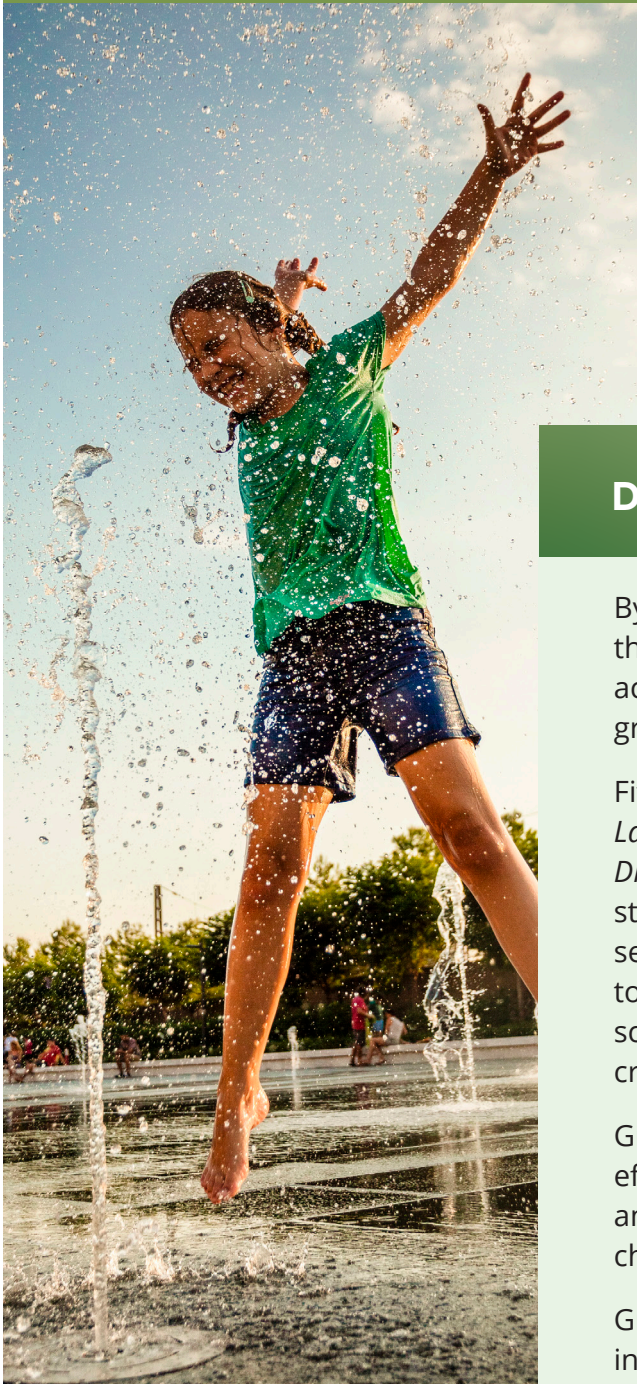




2019 ANNUAL REPORT



2019 ANNUAL REPORT

DEAR CHILDREN AND NATURE CHAMPIONS,

By the end of 2019, we had curated nearly 1,000 studies about the benefits of nature in our online Research Library. An accomplishment in itself, this milestone also represents the growth and momentum of the children and nature movement.

Fifteen years ago, our co-founder Richard Louv published *Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder*. This groundbreaking book was based on the 60 studies he could find after an extensive search. For the past several years, we've been adding more than 10 new studies to our library each month. This reflects not only the level of scientific interest in nature's benefits, but the investment of cross-sector funders and leaders in this field of research.

Growth of the evidence base and the success of grassroots efforts over the past decade have positioned the children and nature movement to impact the big systems that affect children's lives, from city planning to schools.

Great examples of this can be found in the 18 cities taking part in our *Cities Connecting Children to Nature* initiative. When we launched this program six years ago with the National League of Cities, nature connection wasn't even on the radar for most municipal leaders. Today, a growing number of mayors and policymakers recognize that increasing nature access can support a city's top priorities, from reducing academic opportunity gaps and health disparities, to improving climate resilience.

By 2019, at least 10 states have introduced and 14 states have enacted legislation designed to get more kids and families outdoors. School districts, from Oakland, CA, to Grand Rapids, MI, to Providence, RI, launched efforts to provide students with regular outdoor experiences and to create nature-filled

schoolyards for learning and play. Cities and states across the nation, and global organizations like the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, have adopted Children's Outdoor Bills of Rights, recognizing access to green space a fundamental human right.

As we begin our work in this new decade, we are filled with optimism. While the trend of an indoor childhood remains a serious challenge, the children and nature movement continues to welcome leaders, allies and partners around the world, all committed to turning our indoor kids, and our indoor society, back out to nature. We are honored to do this work with you.

Sincerely,



Sarah Milligan-Toffler
Executive Director



David Hartwell
Chair, Board of Directors





2019: GROWING THE MOVEMENT

International Conference

More than 800 leaders from 15 nations joined us in Oakland, CA, in May for our bi-ennial conference—the largest gathering of children and nature leaders in the world. Through inspiring speakers and hands-on workshops, participants learned about best practices for increasing equitable access to nature and networked with peers from around the world. The conference wrapped up our two-year residency in Oakland; Mayor Libby Schaaf helped kick off the event by announcing [Oakland Goes Outdoors](#), a school district partnership that will provide every Oakland middle school student with regular, outdoor learning experiences.

“

One of the biggest impacts of the children and nature movement is an increased understanding, across many sectors, that time in nature is essential for children’s well-being. The Children & Nature Network has been a leader in building this awareness and provides the vision, sustained leadership, partnerships and expertise needed to mobilize a growing field of passionate advocates.

— Gil Penalosa, Founder and Chair 80 Cities; Ambassador World Urban Parks



Membership

In 2019, more than 600 individuals and organizations from around the world joined or renewed their [C&NN memberships](#) and took advantage of perks such as discounts to our conference and members-only grant opportunities. The support of these leaders builds the constituency for children and nature and helps make possible the work we do to curate research, drive policy change, and develop tools, resources and training for the field.

#NatureForAll Around the World

We continued to support the [#NatureForAll](#) campaign of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and shared inspiration from around the world by curating hundreds of nature connection stories for our weekly international news round-up. We were honored to publish compelling blogs from leaders in India, Peru, Australia, Brazil, Canada and more. C&NN experts made the case for nature connection at global events such as the World Urban Parks Congress, held in Kazan, Russia.

Conference Sponsors: Special thanks to our co-host, East Bay Regional Park District; founding partners PlayCore, S.D. Bechtel, Jr Foundation and San Diego Zoo Global; and our presenting sponsor, the Pisces Foundation. A full list of sponsors and keynote speeches is available on our [our website](#).

International Efforts: Our international work was supported by Parks Canada.





MAKING THE CASE FOR NATURE CONNECTION

Advancing the Evidence Base

Children and nature advocates know that regular time outdoors is critical for children's healthy development and well-being. This belief is supported by a growing body of scientific evidence that grounds our work and that of practitioners in the field.

Each month, we curate the latest peer reviewed studies on nature connection and publish summaries in our [Research Digest](#). By the end of 2019, our [Research Library](#) held nearly 1,000 studies, making it the world's largest collection of scientific literature on the benefits of nature. Through research curation and national "research-to-practice" [webinars](#), we help children and nature leaders make the case for nature connection.

Our work with the Science of Nature-Based Learning Collaborative Research Network resulted in the publication of a multi-disciplinary research summary (viewed 36,000 times online) that supports a causal relationship between nature contact and children's learning and educational outcomes. A key finding is that children with the greatest academic challenges benefit more from outdoor learning experiences, making nature-based learning a potentially critical tool in closing academic opportunity gaps.

“

The Children & Nature Network Research Library and website have been among my primary resources in this work. The research team at C&NN has been incredibly generous with their time and expertise - making themselves available for conference calls and sending me additional resources directly. I am truly grateful for their support.

— Suchitra Sugar, Senior Programme Associate, UNICEF





BRINGING THE BENEFITS OF NATURE TO SCHOOLS

In 2019, we continued to work with partners to advance a national [Green Schoolyards Action Agenda](#)—with the vision that all U.S. school children have access to a [green schoolyard](#) by 2050. The action agenda is now endorsed by over 100 organizations; [sign on](#) to support this work today!

Throughout the year, our team partnered with like-minded advocacy organizations to collect data, raise awareness and develop tools and resources to help scale the implementation of green schoolyards. We helped raise the profile of this work by presenting at conferences and events, including AASA's National Conference on Education, City Parks Alliance's Greater & Greener Conference, Urban Land Institute's Parks and Equity Workshop, 10 Minute Walk Grantee Training, and a Park Pride roundtable.

“

The launch of this green schoolyard is an example of what happens when we come together with a shared goal and vision for connecting children to nature through rich, vibrant green spaces and parks. All of us want to see children throughout our city benefiting from nature-filled spaces like this and feeling connected to the natural world right here in the heart of Grand Rapids.

— Mayor Rosalynn Bliss, Grand Rapids, MI, speaking at a green schoolyard launch event.

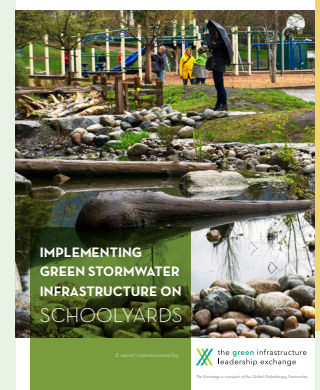


In partnership with the Green Infrastructure Leadership Exchange we produced the report: [Implementing Green Stormwater Infrastructure on Schoolyards](#). Case studies in this guide identify both challenges and innovative solutions for implementing green stormwater infrastructure on school grounds. In collaboration with PlayCore, we developed *The Green Schoolyards Executive Summary*, which features findings from a national green schoolyards survey. The summary also highlights best practice design principles for creating nature-filled schoolyards that enhance children's healthy development, community well-being and positive environmental impacts.

We supported municipal leaders' green schoolyard efforts through our Cities Connecting Children to Nature (CCCN) initiative, in partnership with the National League of Cities. We provided [technical support](#) to 10 CCCN cities, helping them research, plan and implement green schoolyards. As a result, Grand Rapids, MI and Austin, TX launched new green schoolyards as part of district-wide programs; and Providence, RI committed capital funds in its annual operating budget for the greening of schoolyards. These green schoolyards programs will offer outdoor classrooms and green spaces for neighborhoods that lack park access.

With support from the Pisces Foundation, Kaiser Permanente Community Benefit Program, W. K. Kellogg Foundation, and PlayCore.

CCCN green schoolyard efforts are supported by The JPB Foundation.





CONNECTING CHILDREN TO NATURE IN CITIES

Cities Connecting Children to Nature

With a majority of children living in urban areas, city policies and programs play a critical role in connecting kids to green spaces and outdoor experiences. In 2019, we provided technical assistance and support to 18 cities through our [Cities Connecting Children to Nature \(CCCN\)](#) initiative, in partnership with the [National League of Cities](#).

Cities in the CCCN network used a [variety of strategies](#) to bring the benefits of nature to children’s daily lives, through parks, schools, internship programs, libraries, childcare centers and more. Mayors aligned nature connection strategies more closely with other top priorities, developing public-private partnerships and cross-departmental collaborations to accelerate progress.

Examples of this progress include Houston, TX and St. Paul, MN, where city leaders connected children and nature strategies to climate resilience and equity efforts. Mayors in Rochester, NY and Grand Rapids, MN consider their CCCN efforts as top priorities for community development. San Antonio, TX kicked off the first of several



“
We can connect children to nature, mitigate the risk of flooding and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. All of these things are connected. By doing these things, at the same time, we are enhancing the community’s quality of life.
— Mayor Sylvester Turner of Houston, TX

Nature-Smart Libraries with a launch event drawing over 450 attendees. Madison, WI, San Francisco, CA and Albuquerque, NM enhanced early childhood education centers with nature play spaces. Louisville, KY, Gary, IN and Houston, TX trained summer youth employees to lead nature-based activities, increasing the number of children benefiting from outdoor programming. Louisville, KY also launched a youth conservation corps, which informed development of a [City-Corps Partnerships Strategy Tool](#).

Throughout the year, we drew upon the experiences and successes of CCCN cities to create [tools and resources](#) designed to help cities beyond the CCCN cohort increase equitable access to nature.

Wintermission

In partnership with [880 cities](#), we supported three northern U.S. cities with robust community engagement efforts to find out what people love about winter, what would make winter life easier, and what would encourage more outdoor activity and social connection. Leadville, CO; Eau Claire, WI and Buffalo, NY piloted successful winter season programs, such as outdoor gear lending libraries, city-county collaborations for better snow management, and partnerships with community groups to engage families of color in winter events at local parks and public spaces.

With major support from The JPB Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Hayes Family Fund of the Seattle Foundation.





DEVELOPING YOUNG LEADERS

In 2019, C&NN celebrated 10 years of the [Natural Leaders Network!](#) What began as a way to engage young leaders in C&NN's International Conferences has evolved into an initiative that builds the power of young leaders, providing them with skills and resources to identify community-driven solutions to increase nature connection. Through our signature Legacy Camp curriculum, peer learning network, youth leadership advisory council, and our work in CCCN cities and with youth-serving organizations, we continue to invest in new generations of nature-smart leaders.

Regional youth development partnerships continue to thrive. In Colorado, building on a two-year investment, C&NN worked with Colorado Parks & Wildlife to engage young leaders in the planning and execution of the Colorado Partners in the Outdoors Conference. In Central Texas, a Natural Leader facilitated Legacy Camp training for young leaders and students from Austin and San Antonio. In Atlanta, we brought together six organizations to discuss the intersection of nature-based programs and youth development; these organizations continue to collaborate through monthly calls, C&NN's Leadership Summit and an upcoming Youth Summit.

“

Being a part of The Natural Leaders Network has built bridges to many new opportunities and connections that have allowed me to gain more confidence in my personal and professional life.

— Carina Cisneros, Natural Leader since 2017, Grand Rapids, MI



Fresh Tracks: Continued Investment in Young Leaders

Through continued partnership with [The Aspen Institute Forum for Community Solutions](#), C&NN supported expanding this cross-cultural leadership program with new organizations and partners. Using the healing power of nature as a platform for youth leadership development, cross-cultural sharing and understanding and youth power building, Fresh Tracks is developing the next generation of civically engaged leaders who are equipped to be change-makers in an increasingly complex and diverse world.

The Natural Leaders Network and C&NN's youth leadership development work was supported by the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, Colorado Health Foundation, Texas State University Meadows Center, Treeline Foundation and in partnership with the National League of Cities with major funding from The JPB Foundation.

Fresh Tracks is supported with funding from The Annie E. Casey Foundation, The JPB Foundation, REI Co-Op, Newman's Own Foundation and The Andrus Family Fund. Fresh Tracks is a partnership with the Center for Native American Youth at The Aspen Institute, The Opportunity Youth Forum and LBC Action.



With major support from The JPB Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Hayes Family Fund of the Seattle Foundation.



All kids deserve quality
time outdoors.

SUPPORTING YOUTH OUTDOOR ENGAGEMENT POLICIES

People across the U.S. are passionate about their states' outdoor economies and natural resources—and about connecting children to the benefits of nature.

To help community leaders advance state policies to get kids outside, C&NN and a coalition of national partners launched the [Youth Outdoor Policy Playbook](#). The Playbook highlights successful bipartisan policy initiatives and provides educational resources to support new state-wide efforts to increase environmental education and youth engagement in the outdoors. The website provides a platform for sharing and advancing ideas and connects cross-sector leaders working on policy initiatives that get more kids outside, more often.

Partners involved in the development of the Playbook include the Children & Nature Network, National Caucus of Environmental Legislators, North American Association for Environmental Education, Outdoors Alliance for Kids, Meridian Institute and LBC Action.

“

I'm working to advance policies that support youth outdoor engagement. The Policy Playbook is an invaluable tool in that effort, providing at my fingertips the evidence I need to make the case and a library of bills that have worked in other states.

— Jim Davnie, MN State Representative



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Consolidated Statements of Financial Position

ASSETS

Current Assets:	2019	2018	2017
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 528,833	\$ 792,638	\$ 773,933
Accounts Receivable	32,426	65,957	139,481
Grants Receivable	208,471	245,000	315,000
Prepaid Expenses	40,274	61,659	34,561
Property & Equipment	0	22,621	33,931
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 810,004	\$ 1,187,875	\$ 1,296,906

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Liabilities:

Accounts Payable	\$ 41,590	\$ 56,415	\$ 88,043
Payroll Taxes Withheld & Accrued	40,661	48,109	48,594
Deferred Revenue	395,054	412,491	288,763
Total Liabilities	477,305	517,015	425,400

Net Assets:

Unrestricted	65,619	(84,420)	(79,879)
Temporarily Restricted	267,080	755,280	951,385
Total Net Assets	332,699	670,860	871,506

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 810,004	\$ 1,187,875	\$ 1,296,906
---	-------------------	---------------------	---------------------

Consolidated Statement of Activities

Support and Revenue:	2019	2018	2017
Grants and Contributions	\$ 739,570	\$ 979,547	\$ 1,035,040
Government Grants	43,015	18,836	222,845
Program Income	718,632	690,203	576,420
Other Income	(9,655)	(829)	2,653
Special Events	8,516	3,250	34,866
Total Support and Revenue	\$ 1,500,078	\$ 1,691,007	\$ 1,871,824

Expense:

Program Services	\$ 1,519,308	\$ 1,602,240	\$ 1,876,247
Support Services:			
Management and General	148,364	167,014	125,697
Fundraising	170,567	122,399	120,281
Total Support Services	\$ 318,931	\$ 289,413	\$ 245,978
Total Expense	\$ 1,838,239	\$ 1,891,653	\$ 2,122,225
Change in Net Assets	(338,161)	(200,646)	(250,400)
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	670,860	871,506	1,121,906
Net Assets - End of Year	\$ 332,699	\$ 670,860	\$ 871,506

Percentage of Programmatic Efficiency

83%
PROGRAM SERVICES

9%
FUNDRAISING

8%
MANAGEMENT & GENERAL

In 2019, we continued to invest in key strategic initiatives to build leadership and community capacity through evidence based solutions and policy change. We remain committed to establishing a three-month operating reserve to ensure financial stability and continued to focus on organizational sustainability to increase our scope and impact.

The success of any movement is due to the commitment of its members. We are grateful for the generous and continued support from our corporate, foundation and individual donors, as well as the nearly 600 members who joined the network in 2019.

The condensed financial information for the years ended December 31, 2019, 2018 and 2017 have been derived from Children & Nature Network's 2019, 2018 and 2017 consolidated financial statements, audited by Carpenter Evert & Associates. This information should be read in conjunction with our audited consolidated financial statements and related notes. To obtain copies or to request a copy of our 990, contact us at giving@childrenandnature.org.



SUPPORTERS

Our work is made possible by the hundreds of individuals and organizations who support C&NN's mission through memberships and charitable gifts. We are grateful for each and every gift. Your belief in our mission buoys our spirits and inspires our team as we work to ensure equitable access to nature in every community.

Below, we are pleased to recognize support in amounts of \$5,000 or more.

General Operating Grants

Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund
Kikkerland Design, Inc.
National Recreation Foundation
Open Door Foundation
Pisces Foundation
Quimby Family Foundation
The REI Foundation
Smikis Foundation
Swantz Family Foundation
Turner Foundation

Program and Initiative Grants

S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation
(Youth Engagement)
Colorado Health Foundation
(Youth Engagement/Natural Leaders)
Hayes Family Fund of the Seattle Foundation
(Cities Connecting Children to Nature)
JPB Foundation
(in partnership with the National League of
Cities and The Center for Native American
Youth at The Aspen Institute)
Scott and Holly Martin Family Foundation
(Youth Engagement/Natural Leaders)
Treeline Foundation
(Youth Engagement/Natural Leaders)

Major Gifts

The Barrington Charitable Fund
David Hartwell and Elizabeth DeBaut
Richard and Kathy Louv
Kyle and Katie McCoy
Sarah and Jeff Milligan-Toffler
Betsy and Charles Townsend
Brad and Danielle Tilden

Conference Sponsors

Marlys Barry
East Bay Regional Parks Foundation
Landscape Structures
Lampert Byrd Foundation
MIG
National Park Foundation
Outdoor Foundation
The David & Lucile Packard Foundation
Pisces Foundation
PlayCore
Sand Hill Foundation
The San Francisco Foundation
Wilderness River Foundation



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

David Hartwell, Chair
Former President and CEO, Bellcomb Technologies, Inc.

Kim Moore Bailey, Vice Chair
CEO, Youth Outside

Amy Pertschuk, Treasurer
Co-Founder, Children & Nature Network

Jesse Sixkiller, Secretary
Senior Corporate Counsel, 8x8

Stephan D. Nygren, Immediate Past Chair
Founder and CEO, Serenbe

Lisa Moore, Governance Chair
Senior Vice President, Corporate Strategic Services, PlayCore

Jesús Aguirre, Equity and Inclusion Chair
Superintendent, Seattle Parks and Recreation

Dr. Gail Christopher
Executive Director, National Collaborative for Health Equity

Nancy Herron
Retired Outreach and Education Director, Texas Parks and Wildlife

Fran Mainella
Retired Director of National Park Service; Visiting Scholar, Clemson University

David Orr
Counselor to the President and Paul Sears Distinguished Professor of Environmental Studies & Politics, Emeritus, Oberlin College

Stephen J. Pont, MD, MPH, FAAP
Medical Director, Science & Population Health, Texas Department of State Health Services

Hannah Quimby
Executive Director, Quimby Family Foundation

Laura Turner Seydel
Chairperson, Captain Planet Foundation

Richard Louv
Chair Emeritus, Author and Co-Founder, Children & Nature Network

Board term ended in 2019:

Kyle McCoy, Treasurer
Vice President and Private Wealth Advisor, Goldman Sachs

Mohammed Lawal, Secretary
Principal Architect and CEO, LSE Architects

Svante Myrick
Mayor, City of Ithaca, New York



STAFF & CONSULTANTS

Gabe Aeschliman

Vice President of Organizational Strategy and Advancement

Paxton Barnes

Director of External Relations

Cathy Carmody

Director of Operations

Cheryl Charles, PhD

Co-Founder and President Emerita

Avery Cleary

International Conference Manager

CJ Goulding

Manager of Community Leadership Development

Cathy Jordan, PhD, LP

Consulting Research Director

Monica Lopez Magee

Director of Cities and Nature

Juan Martinez

Vice President of Strategic Partnerships

Kelly McManus

Creative Director

Sarah Milligan-Toffler

Executive Director

Laura Mylan

Senior Vice President of External Relations

Alejandra Pallais

Marketing & Communications

Jamie Pérez

Membership Coordinator

Jenette Restivo

Director of Content Strategy

Ruth Wilson, PhD

Research Library Curator

Jaime Zaplatosch

Director of Green Schoolyards for Healthy Communities

Special thanks to incredible team members who transitioned to new adventures in 2019:

Amy Crawford

Vice President of Advancement



OUR VISION:

A world in which all children play, learn and grow with nature in their everyday lives.

OUR MISSION:

We are leading a global movement to increase equitable access to nature so that children—and natural places—can thrive. We do this by investing in leadership and communities through sharing evidence-based resources, scaling innovative solutions and driving policy change.