

The logo for Children & Nature Network, featuring a stylized leaf icon to the left of the text.

Children
& Nature
Network

A young girl wearing a straw hat and a white lace dress is crouching by a stream, splashing water with her hands. The background is a lush green forest. The text '2022 ANNUAL REPORT' is overlaid in large white letters on the left side of the image.

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

2022 ANNUAL REPORT



DEAR CHILDREN AND NATURE CHAMPIONS,

Throughout 2022, we celebrated the 15th anniversary of the Children & Nature Network. Over the past decade-and-a-half, we've seen tremendous growth and change in our organization and in the children and nature movement. But our mission – *to increase equitable access to nature so that children and the natural world can thrive* – remains constant and more necessary than ever.

We achieve our mission in partnership with advocates for children and nature from many sectors around the world – all working to make sure that children have regular connection to nature's benefits everywhere they live, learn and play.

Thank you for being part of this critical work. We look forward to what we can accomplish together in the years to come.

With gratitude,

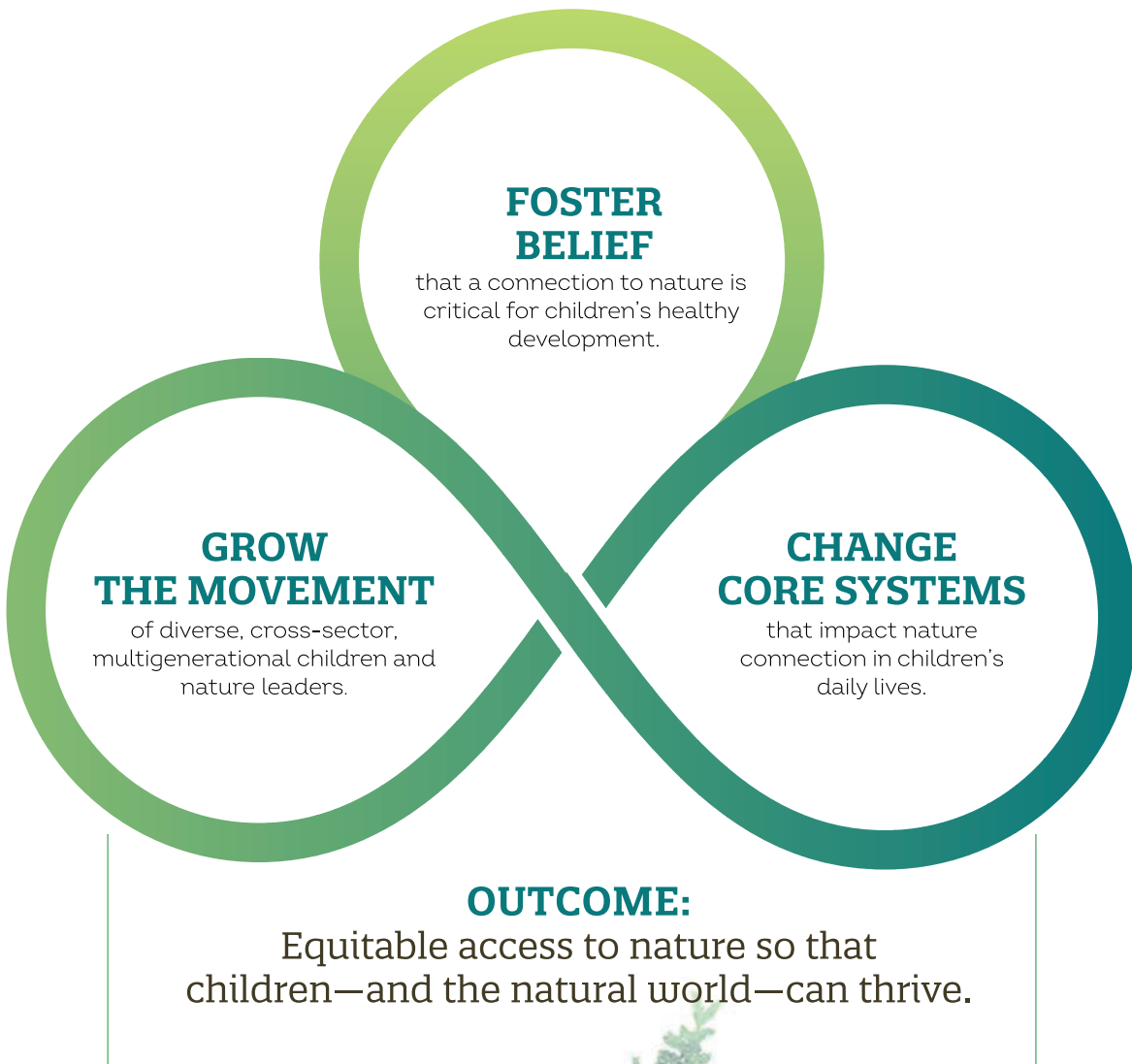
Sarah Milligan-Toffler
President & CEO,
Children & Nature Network

Kim Moore Bailey
Board Chair, Children & Nature Network
President & CEO, Justice Outside

HOW WE WORK

THEORY OF CHANGE

We work to increase equitable access to *nature everywhere* children live, learn and play by fostering the belief that nature is essential for healthy development; growing an inclusive global movement; and changing the big systems that impact children's daily lives.



FOSTER BELIEF

that a connection to nature is critical for children's healthy development.

GROW THE MOVEMENT

of diverse, cross-sector, multigenerational children and nature leaders.

CHANGE CORE SYSTEMS

that impact nature connection in children's daily lives.

OUTCOME:

Equitable access to nature so that children—and the natural world—can thrive.

FOSTERING BELIEF

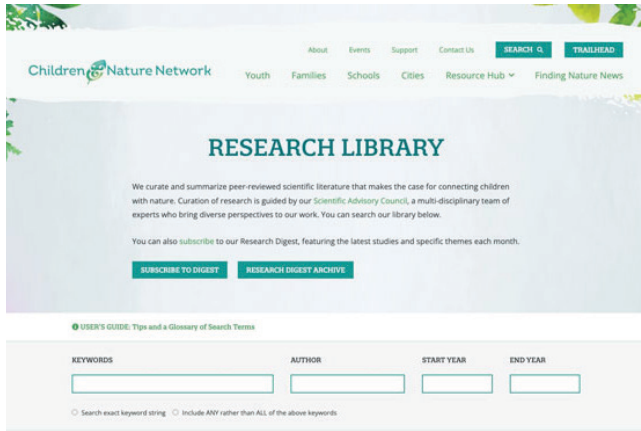


Nature's benefits are becoming more widely recognized, but much work is needed to ensure access to the natural world in the systems that impact children's daily lives. Throughout 2022, we curated research and developed

tools, resources and training to help advocates make the case for nature connection, and advanced evidence-based strategies proven to increase equitable access to outdoor experiences and learning.

Thanks again for all you do to translate articles and promote research-informed practice. We appreciate having access to so much info that would otherwise be too restricted, expensive or obscure.

— KARAN WOOD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ALLIANCE



BUILDING THE EVIDENCE BASE

Since our founding in 2006, research has been a cornerstone of our work. In 2022, our online research library grew to host more than 1,300 peer-reviewed studies. We deepened our focus on equity with research related to specific populations, disparities and social justice. And, we further aligned our research curation and interpretation to support our work with cities, schools and practitioners across many disciplines.



Research Digest Archive

Our Research Digest Archive holds published Digests going back to our first publication in 2016, including themed issues and literature reviews.

[EXPLORE ARCHIVE](#)



Research-based graduate-level “children and nature” course engages students in making the case for nature connection

In late 2022, North Carolina State University professor Dr. Kathryn Stevenson partnered with the Children & Nature Network’s research team to provide her students with the opportunity to develop real-world research skills. The effort resulted in a student-led Research Digest focused on inequitable access to nature.

[READ MORE](#)



In Flagstaff, green schoolyards sprout after climate-related disasters

Following devastating wildfires and floods, a powerful coalition of community members, school district leaders and city officials prove that green schoolyards can help mitigate climate-related disasters and increase access to outdoor learning and greenspace.

[READ MORE](#)

FINDING NATURE NEWS

EVERYONE BELONGS OUTDOORS

Finding Nature News is a key way in which we foster belief in the benefits of nature – and promote an inclusive narrative about who spends time, and who belongs, in the outdoors. In each issue, we celebrate leaders working to make sure that children have equitable access to outdoor experiences and learning opportunities that are critical for healthy development.



Team Wilderness: Connecting Jersey City youth to the outdoors

Communities of color in the U.S. are three times more likely than white communities to live in nature-deprived areas. High school history teacher Steve Cunningham recognized that his students lacked opportunities to experience the wilderness, so he created an outdoor adventure club for Jersey City youth.

[READ MORE](#)



Vámonos Outside is getting Latinx youth into the rivers and onto the slopes

A 2020 study found that 67% of Latinos in the U.S. live in nature-deprived areas. *Vámonos Outside* (“Let’s Go Outside”), based in Bend, Oregon, works to navigate cultural and economic barriers to the outdoors with the aim of exposing Latinx youths to nature and outdoor recreation in an area that is bursting with it.

[READ MORE](#)



STEAM Beans is demystifying nature – and science – for Black girls

In the U.S., Black women comprise only 2% of the science and engineering workforce. Underlying causes include the marginalization of Black girls and lack of exposure to STEAM careers and nature-based education. *STEAM Beans* aims to change this, using nature as a conduit to pique Black girls’ interest in science, technology, engineering, art and math.

[READ MORE](#)



CELEBRATING 15 YEARS OF NATURE CONNECTION

In April 2022, we celebrated [15 years of progress and partnership](#) with children and nature leaders around the world. To celebrate this milestone, we launched the annual \$15,000 Richard Louv Prize for Innovation in Nature Connection. Our inaugural winner, BLISS Meadows founder [Atiya Wells](#), was selected for her exemplary work to advance equitable access to nature in her community.

2022 BY THE NUMBERS:

80,000+

Research Library views

12

Research Digests published

18,000+

Research Digest monthly subscribers

1,300+

studies in our Research Library

700+

resources available in our Resource Hub

13

green school grounds case studies produced to inspire global action

GROWING THE MOVEMENT



Following two-plus years of convening virtually during the COVID pandemic, 2022 marked the return of our in-person [Inside-Out International Conference](#). More than one-third of the 700+ cross-sector attendees were new to the event, reflecting a growing interest in nature's power to support physical and mental health, academic outcomes, climate resilience and recovery from pandemic-related

and other traumas. 90% of attendees said the conference would help them advance their work.

We continued to engage advocates throughout the year with our virtual [Inside-Out Leadership Series webinars](#) and through [The Trailhead](#), our free online community for children and nature leaders, which saw active users double in 2022.



MEMBERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Our [membership](#) base grew to more than 600 individuals and organizations in 2022. Average membership gifts doubled and a refreshed members-only newsletter offered special discounts and opportunities, hitting the mark with an open rate of 70%.

I was impressed with the BIPOC representation and others that looked like me. For me, it really spoke to the fact that connection to nature is universal and it's a big part of our humanity and our being. The conference itself was transformative.

— 2023 INSIDE-OUT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ATTENDEE



THE VITAMIN N CHALLENGE

During the summer of 2022, families around the world participated in the [Vitamin N Challenge](#), designed to connect parents and caregivers to ideas, inspiration and a community of people committed to spending quality time outdoors. Participants shared their #VitaminNChallenge adventures on Instagram, where we saw engagement increase by 114%.



More than 700 leaders working to connect children to the benefits of nature gathered for the 2022 Inside-Out International Conference

Children and nature advocates from around the world gathered in Atlanta, Georgia in May 2022 for inspiring keynotes, plenary panels, TEDx-style talks, networking receptions, workshops and more. Special highlights included appearances by Dr. Jane Goodall and youth activist, Ms. Yoland Renee King.

[READ MORE](#)



A common thread: Indigenous-led foundation weaves together activism and art, climate and community

Alicia Fall is Founder and Vision Holder of the Indigenous-led Her Many Voices Foundation. The organization’s core value, “Whatever I do for another, I do for myself,” comes from Fall’s mother, and is the reason that she works so tirelessly to champion causes for Indigenous women and children, and Mother Earth.

[READ MORE](#)



Leading with intent

In September 2022, young leaders gathered in Colorado for a Children & Nature Network Legacy Camp, a multi-day immersive training that supports young adults in growing their outdoor leadership and taking action in their communities. In this article, participants share experiences that brought them to the intersection of outdoor equity, environmental activism and climate justice.

[READ MORE](#)

2022 BY THE NUMBERS:

700+

Inside-Out International conference attendees from 15 countries

475,000+

total website visitors

25,000+

Finding Nature News subscribers

1,200+

active users from 41 countries in The Trailhead

604

individual and organizational members

1 MILLION+

social media reach and impressions

CHANGING CORE SYSTEMS

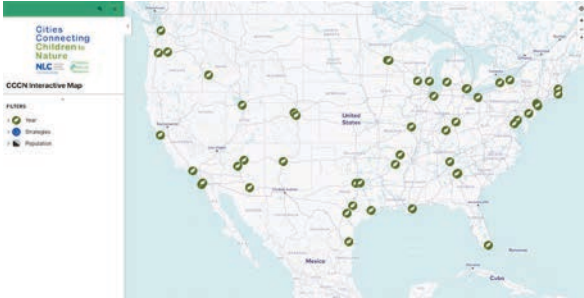


In cities, school districts and communities across the U.S., we worked at the systems level to increase equitable access to nature everywhere children live, learn and play. In 2022,

we also launched and expanded large-scale national partnerships, designed to advance nature-based interventions and strategies for the health and well-being of children and families.

When we were selected for the Cities Connecting Children to Nature Green Schoolyard cohort, it gave us time and space to just hold together. That can go a really long way in building collaboration and aligning goals.

— DANYA GOREL, OUTREACH COORDINATOR FOR TERRA BIRDS,
NONPROFIT PARTNER WITH FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA SCHOOLS

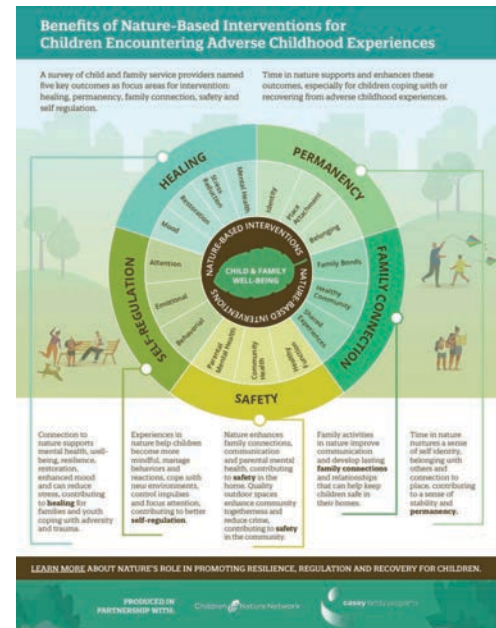


CITIES CONNECTING CHILDREN TO NATURE

More than 50 U.S. communities take part in Cities Connecting Children to Nature (CCCN), our joint initiative with the National League of Cities. In 2022, we supported these communities in greening schoolyards; connecting families to the outdoors through Nature-Smart Libraries; enhancing public spaces with nature play areas; advancing nature connection in early childhood; and more. This [interactive map](#) highlights nature-based strategies being implemented by CCCN cities across the nation.

NATURE-BASED INTERVENTIONS FOR FAMILIES

Throughout 2022, we partnered with Casey Family Programs to equip social workers across the U.S. with [nature-based strategies to support families and children in crisis](#). The partnership allows us to apply what we know about the restorative power of nature as a counterbalance to the negative health and developmental impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Through monthly workshops, conference presentations, resource development and technical assistance, we helped Casey Family Programs incorporate nature-based interventions in their training and service models to improve the health and well-being of children and families.



When we engage families in outdoor experiences, we see strengthened relationships with opportunities for healing from trauma.

— PATSY SELLARS,
MANAGING DIRECTOR, CASEY FAMILY PROGRAMS

GLOBAL LESSONS FOR GREENING SCHOOL GROUNDS & OUTDOOR LEARNING

Around the world, nature-filled school grounds enhance children’s play, health and well-being, and help improve climate resilience, community engagement and educational outcomes. We partnered with a coalition of international organizations and leaders to highlight [successful approaches and scalable strategies](#) for greening school grounds in a series of video case studies. And we worked on developing a [Global Action Agenda](#), which lists 24 actions that must take place in order to create a world in which every child connects meaningfully with nature every day – especially those most impacted by long-standing systems of inequity and climate change.



YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

A partnership with Girl Scouts USA resulted in an update to the quintessential *Outdoor Education in Girl Scouting Guide*, used across the U.S. by volunteer troop leaders. Children & Nature Network staff provided content for the guide, focused on activities and approaches for creating inclusive and culturally relevant connections to nature. We also facilitated monthly peer learning and technical assistance for a national cohort of 18 youth service organizations – and hosted our signature leadership development [Legacy Camp](#) for young leaders in Colorado.

2022 BY THE NUMBERS:

50+

cities committed to implementing nature connection strategies through CCCN

100+

organizations and practitioners endorsed Global Action Agenda for Greening School Grounds & Outdoor Learning

11

communities participated in national Green Schoolyards cohort

18

youth service organizations participate in national Youth Leadership Development cohort

32

young leaders from Colorado develop nature-based leadership skills at Legacy Camp

100s

of social workers learned about nature-based interventions for families through our work with 5 Casey Family Program field offices



***Stumps, jumps and tree cookies:
Bringing nature's benefits to
young children in cities***

Research indicates that providing young children, ages zero to five, with regular access to nature improves physical and mental health, develops social emotional skills and better prepares children for school. It also helps them develop connections to nature and their communities.

[READ MORE](#)



***A natural remedy: For social
workers striving to help keep
kids out of foster care, nature-
based interventions can be a
powerful tool***

Nature-based interventions — which can be as simple as walking and talking in the outdoors, or as involved as a camping trip — are offering therapists and social workers a way to bridge communication gaps and provide tiny doses of tangible joy that can add up to something significant for families over time.

[READ MORE](#)



***Around the world, green
school grounds benefit
children, communities and the
environment***

When it comes to greening school grounds and outdoor learning, we can learn a lot from each other. From “cool urban islands” in France to colorful nature crafts in the Czech Republic to youth environmental clubs in Cameroon, schools around the world are finding creative ways to connect children to nature.

[READ MORE](#)

2022 FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF POSITION

ASSETS

Current Assets:	2022
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 6,963,194
Accounts Receivable	32,952
Grants Receivable	526,000
Prepaid Expenses	84,564
Property and Equipment – Net	59,975

TOTAL ASSETS	7,666,685
---------------------	------------------

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Liabilities

Accounts payable	51,167
Payroll Liabilities	95,688
Deferred Revenue	555,725

TOTAL LIABILITIES	702,580
--------------------------	----------------

Net assets

Unrestricted	2,789,746
Temporarily Restricted	4,174,359

TOTAL NET ASSETS	6,964,105
-------------------------	------------------

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	7,666,685
---	------------------

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

Support and Revenue

Grants and Contributions	740,379
Government Grants	
Program Income	888,932
Other Income	91,479
Special Events	

TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE	1,720,790
----------------------------------	------------------

Expense

Program Services	2,834,995
Support Services	
Management and General	644,866
Fundraising	96,028
Total Support Services	740,894

TOTAL EXPENSE	3,575,888
----------------------	------------------

Change in Net Assets	(1,855,099)
Unrealized Gain (Loss)	(276,845)
Net Assets Beginning of Year	9,096,049

NET ASSETS END OF YEAR	6,964,105
-------------------------------	------------------

AUDIT STATEMENT

Our 2022 financial information has been derived from the Children & Nature Network's 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, please contact us at admin@childrenandnature.org.

2022 SUPPORTERS

FUNDERS, PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

The Children & Nature Network's work is made possible by more than 600+ members, donors, funders and partners who sustain and inspire us. Every contribution makes a difference.

Special thanks to our 2022 major contributors (contributions of \$5,000 and above):

Biohabitats, Inc. in honor of their employees
The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation
Casey Family Programs
The Colorado Health Foundation
Fidelity Charitable
The JPB Foundation
Kikkerland Design Inc.
Landscape Structures
The Kim Larson and Gary Knell Impact Fund of Schwab Charitable
Meridian Institute
National Recreation Foundation
The Pierce Williams Donor Fund of Morgan Stanley Gift Fund
Pisces Foundation
PlayCore
Prima
The Hannah B. Quimby Gift Fund of Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund
REI Cooperative Action Fund
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Smikis Foundation
Swantz Family Foundation
Treeline Foundation
Turner Foundation
Betsy and Charles Townsend
The Walker Family Foundation
Wilderness River Foundation

MEMBERS

We are grateful for the 600+ Children & Nature Network members who sustain and inspire us.

[Become a member today.](#)

STRATEGIC PARTNERS

We thank these strategic partners with whom we align resources to deepen our collective impact:

City of Austin, Texas
Colorado Parks & Wildlife
Girl Scouts of the USA
International Union for the Conservation of Nature, #NatureforAll
International School Grounds Alliance
Jane Goodall Institute, Roots & Shoots Kaboom!
National League of Cities Institute on Youth, Education and Families
Salzburg Global Seminar
Trust for Public Land

TEAM CHILDREN & NATURE

The Children & Nature Network is grateful for the leadership of our Board of Directors and our Founders' Council, who help guide and support our work to create equitable access to nature's benefits for children around the world.

[MEET OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS](#)

[MEET OUR FOUNDERS' COUNCIL](#)

This report was developed with input from the Children & Nature Network team, who work to ensure equitable access to the benefits of nature everywhere children live, learn and play.

[MEET OUR STAFF](#)



**HELP US CONNECT CHILDREN TO THE
BENEFITS OF NATURE**

[DONATE TODAY](#)

CHILDRENANDNATURE.ORG
[OUR ONLINE 2022 ANNUAL REPORT](#)