

NatureFuture: Kids' visions for a just and nature-filled world

Tips for Parents and Teachers

Children & Nature Network is organizing **NatureFuture: Kids' visions for a just and nature-filled world**, an online art exhibition that provides an opportunity for children and teens to express how they think and feel about critical issues that impact equitable access to the outdoors.

How to introduce the exhibit to kids:

"Children & Nature Network is creating an art exhibit called *NatureFuture: Kids' visions for a just and nature-filled world*. They are inviting kids/teens like you to create art, poetry or creative writing to show your vision for how all kids can be happy, healthy and safe outdoors. Your artwork can show a world where all children have access to nature. They're curious to see what kids create and they'll share it in an online gallery! Is that something you'd like to do?"

Language for sparking conversation with kids:

- Be curious. Listen to what they have to say and follow their interests/questions/concerns.
- Let them know that you value their ideas and want to know what they think and feel.
 - "Can you think of reasons some kids might not be able to play outside?" (physical disability, living in an unsafe neighborhood or one without greenspace, racially prejudiced ideas of who "belongs" in the outdoors...) "How does that make you feel?" "What would it be like if you couldn't play outside?"
- Acknowledge their feelings and share your own, as is age appropriate.
 - "It makes me sad to know that some children can't play outside. I am looking forward to a future where all kids, regardless of their skin color, where they live or how they are able to move their body, have a chance to play outside."
- Let them know there are people helping. You can show them pictures or read from Finding Nature News articles, like these:
 - [Alayna Schmidt Finds New Way to Engage Teens](#)
 - [Daffodils in Brooklyn](#)
 - [Watershed School](#)
 - [Connecting Diverse Youth to Outdoor Careers](#)
- Ask them how they might use visual art, poetry or creative writing to share their thoughts and feelings.

Finding the words to talk to kids about social and environmental justice can be challenging. Check out the toolkit, [Talking with Kids about Equitable Nature Access](#), for specific ideas on talking with kids about racism, climate change and children with disabilities.

We'd love to hear your experience talking about these topics with your kids. Please reach us with your stories of what worked for you and what didn't.

Email us at conference@childrenandnature.org