



Education for a Healthy Planet

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Supported by:



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Dear Friends,

A recent article by Richard Louv stated that “the human child in nature may be the most important indicator species of future sustainability.” Richard Louv, author of No Child Left in the Woods and other seminal works, is among many writers and researchers who are reporting on the recent movement to reconnect children to the natural world. This movement has been called many things, among them “no child left inside” and the “child-and-nature” movement. Regardless of its name, this movement’s roots reach back to the early sixties.

This year, we celebrate the 100th anniversary of the birth of Rachel Carson who was writing about the need to connect children to nature over four decades ago. Her writings helped launch an environmental movement that recognized the central role of environmental education in young people’s lives. Rachel Carson and this earlier movement was the inspiration that helped shape the Hitchcock Center for the Environment’s formation in 1962.

It is ironic that in the wake of this most recent movement, policymakers nationwide are pressing for the creation of organizations and programs that mirror the Hitchcock Center’s model for educating children. A review of national trends finds the following examples:

- The president of the National Audubon Society is currently campaigning for the creation of family-focused nature centers in every congressional district.
- An article in the latest edition of Orion Magazine reports nature centers increasingly adding preschool programs not only to meet the demand for early childhood education but also to create outdoor enthusiasts at a young age
- The National Wildlife Federation is rolling out its new Green Hour initiative, a national campaign to persuade parents to encourage their children to spend one hour a day in nature

First, I am happy to report that your congressional district already has a family-focused nature center – it’s the Hitchcock Center! Second, we are proud to report that the Hitchcock Center’s award-winning Nature Discovery parent-and-child preschool program has been a regular feature of the Center for over 20 years. And lastly, the Hitchcock Center continually supports and encourages children and whole families to participate in nature exploration and discovery every day through a wide array of programs ranging from weekly Nature’s Story Hour to the monthly Second Saturday Science, a family science and nature program.

Over its 45 year history, the Hitchcock Center’s educational leadership in keeping children and families connected to nature has been widely recognized through conference proceedings, published articles, and awards. Most recent of these is an article published in the national magazine, *Family Fun* (April 2007), entitled “Nurturing a Love of Nature” featuring Hitchcock Center educator Colleen Kelley.

Your support has been a critical part of our success. The Hitchcock Center’s continued relevance and strong community presence could not

have happened without you. We are asking that you continue this support, even consider increasing that support, as we face a new set of environmental challenges. You can be assured that we will continue to be at the forefront of educational leadership helping children, teachers, and adults learn ways to live in a manner that will ensure the health and livelihood of future generations.

To make a donation, please print this letter, tear off the reply slip below, and return it to the Hitchcock Center with your check or credit card information. Your tax-deductible gift keeps the Hitchcock Center strong!

Sincerely,



Julie Johnson
Executive Director

Hitchcock Center for the Environment

Thank you for making a tax-deductible gift in support of the environmental education programs and mission of the Hitchcock Center for the Environment.

\$1000 \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other \$_____

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THANK YOU!