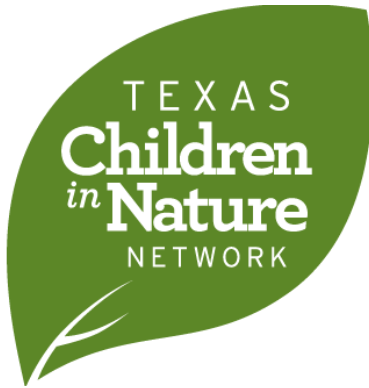


TEXAS CHILDREN IN NATURE NETWORK 2022 SUMMIT



December 7-9, 2022

Opening the Doors to Nature for All

**Austin, Texas
AT&T Conference Center
University of Texas at Austin**

Sponsored By:



Children & Nature Network



**PEA
GROUP**



Hayden and Lynn Brooks
The Winkler Family
Jennifer Vickers and Lee Walker
Kathleen Mack and John Blazier



2022 SUMMIT AT A GLANCE

Wednesday, December 7

- 12:00-4:00 - Workshops around Town
 - Vans for workshops will pick up at AT&T Conference Center between 11 and 12:15, and drop back off by 4:45
- 6:00-9:00 - Screening of *Deep in the Heart* at the Paramount Stateside Theater

Thursday, December 8

- 7:30-8:30 Breakfast
- 8:30-9:15 - Welcome
- 9:30-10:30 - Concurrent Sessions
- 10:45-11:45 - Concurrent Sessions
- 11:45-1:15 - Lunch
- 12:15-1:00 - Tai Chi Class
- 1:15-2:15 - Concurrent Sessions
- 2:30-3:30 - Keynote Speaker - Dr. Rae Wynn-Grant
- 3:30-4:00 - Coffee Break
- 4:00-5:00 - Concurrent Sessions
- 5:00-6:00 - Poster Sessions and Networking

Thursday Evening, December 8

- 6:30-9:00 - Champions Awards Dinner

Friday, December 9

- 7:30-8:30 - Breakfast
- 8:30-9:45 - Regional Breakout Meetings
- 10:00-11:00 - Keynote Speaker - Jesus Aguirre
- 11:15 - 12:15 - Connecting Health and Nature Panel Discussion
- 12:15-12:30 - Close
- 2:00-4:00 Post Conference Workshops



SUMMIT LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our 2022 Summit is taking place in Austin, Texas.

We are on the ancestral and unceded land of the Jumanos, Lipan Apache, Comanche, Coahuiltecan and Tonkawa people. Our ongoing colonial presence on Indigenous lands compels us to take action now to counteract the effects of colonization. The work we do through the Texas Children in Nature Network is one small step towards that effort.

Learn more about land acknowledgments and how to find out about your organization's land here: native-land.ca/resources/territory-acknowledgement

Learn more about the Jumanos: jumino-nation.com

Learn more about the Lipan Apache: lipanapache.org

Learn more about the Comanche: comanchenation.com

Learn more about the Coahuiltecan: tappilam.org

Learn more about the Tonkawa: tonkawatribe.com

Learn more about the Indigenous Cultures Institute: indigenousthoughts.org

A resource featuring Indigenous voices to learn more about Indigenous People's history and current efforts to fight colonization is the [All My Relations Podcast](#).

As part of our efforts to counteract the effects of colonization, TCiNN has donated a portion of the proceeds of this Summit to [The Indigenous Cultures Institute](#), an organization working to preserve the cultures of the Native Americans indigenous to Texas and northern Mexico while maintaining our covenant with sacred sites.

Follow Us On Social Media

Submit questions for our keynotes and panels via our twitter feed: @TXChildren



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in Nature**



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nature_network**

2022 Keynote Speakers

DR. RAE WYNN-GRANT

Dr. Rae Wynn-Grant is a wildlife ecologist and National Geographic Explorer who researches how human activity influences the movement and behavior of wild animals. A native Californian, Wynn-Grant attributes her interest in wildlife and conservation to the nature shows she watched on television as a child, and today she uses media to increase representation of Black scientists and explorers. She is a scientist, conservationist, equity, and justice advocate and consummate storyteller.



JESUS AGUIRRE

Jesus Aguirre is the newly appointed Chief Executive Officer of Waterloo Greenway Conservancy, an Austin organization committed to ensuring that all communities have meaningful access to all aspects of the park, including workforce opportunities, programmatic engagement, and community partnerships. He brings experience from the Children in Nature Network Board of Directors, where he chairs their equity program, as well as the City of Seattle and the District of Columbia Departments of Parks and Recreation.





Deep in the Heart

On the evening of Wednesday, Dec 7, 2022, we will host a special screening of the Texas documentary, *Deep in the Heart*, along with a question-and-answer session with the film makers, at the Stateside at the Paramount Theater. This special screening is included with your Summit registration.

After the movie we will host a panel discussion with filmmaker Ben Masters and curriculum developer Anne Marie Fayen. You can add questions to the discussion by tweeting at us @TX_Children.

Transportation to the Stateside Theater is not provided. The theater is located approximately one mile from the University of Texas at Austin AT&T Hotel and Conference Center. Walking, carpooling and the use of public transportation, ride sharing (Uber, Lyft), and E-scooter/E-bike rentals are encouraged. There is a public parking area across from the theater.



Check out the Deep in the Heart Movie Curriculum - free and available to educators!

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2022 CHAMPIONS

LEGACY CHAMPION

The Ayers Family: The Ayers Family has worked towards engaging more children and families in nature in a wide variety of ways, through their work with El Ranchito Camp at the Shield Ranch, and foundation support of environmental education programs in the Central Texas region. They are dedicated to opening the doors to nature equitably for thousands of children throughout the Austin area and Hill Country.



EMERGING LEADER

Magaly Arrendondo Lopez: Magaly serves the Austin community in engaging youth in the outdoors. Through weaving in her own experience as a young person growing up in Austin, Magaly role-models professionalism, honesty, and vulnerability - aspects that greatly deepen the experience of participants. She has served on the Austin Youth Forest Council, is a Roots and Wings grant recipient and currently works at the Austin Nature Center.



INDIVIDUAL

Susana Cruz: Susana Cruz with Chicana in Nature is honored for her work engaging families from Dallas in nature areas and creating an inclusive space for many who have not felt welcome in the outdoors. She continuously works to engage more people in the outdoors both through her walks, and popular social media channels.

ORGANIZATION

San Antonio River Authority: San Antonio River Authority has worked in the San Antonio area engaging thousands of children in the natural spaces along the San Antonio River and serving as an innovative leader in the way municipal departments can work with children and families in the outdoors.



BUSINESS

Greenspace Learning: Green Space Learning for their work across the state in designing outdoor learning environments for our youngest Texans. Designers of Outdoor Learning Environments, they are working to create interactive and innovative nature spaces for students to learn and engage in.

TEXAS CHILDREN IN NATURE SUMMIT 2022

WEDNESDAY WORKSHOPS

Wednesday, Dec 7

- **Community Engagement in Providing Access to and Creating Nature-Based Playground**
 - Presenters: Asakura Robinson Design
 - Location: Waterloo Park, 500 E 12th St, Austin, 78701
 - Time: 1-4
 - Description: The idea of a nature-based playground is often misunderstood by parents, teachers, administrators, and maintenance people. What is nature? Seeing the relationship between nature and children comes with preconceived ideas based on people's own experiences, and often their fears. In designing and creating a nature-based playground, it is important to engage adults, who ultimately determine the outcome of the playground, to discuss potential issues with an experienced designer or facilitator to lead them to a successful outcome. This engaging workshop will be led by Keiji Asakura, Managing Principal with Asakura Robinson.
 - Participants will walk from the University of Texas at Austin AT&T Conference Center to meet at Waterloo Park at 1pm. The park is located about 1 mile from the conference center. If you are not able to walk to the park, please let the Summit organizers know and transportation can be provided.
- **Bridging the Great Divide: Breaking Down Barriers to Nature Access**
 - Presenters: Austin Sunshine Camps
 - Location: Zilker Park, 2225 Andrew Zilker Rd, Austin, 78746 (Free Parking)
 - Vans will depart from the AT&T Conference Center at 12:15
 - Time: 1-4
 - Description: This workshop begins with a challenge course progression, a time to build connections, increase communication skills, and challenge participants to grow through a low and high ropes experience while exploring the urban oasis of Zilker Park. Afterwards, everyone will gather in an authentic, solutions-focused, round-table discussion where these questions will be answered: What are the barriers to nature access in underinvested communities and beyond? What are the challenges we face? How can we remove these barriers? How can we engage as many children and families in nature as possible? Austin Sunshine Camps (ASC) believes in the constructivism education philosophy, and through this collective knowledge even more can be achieved to connect all kids to nature. Following this session participants should expect to take home one to two concrete action steps to break down barriers in their own communities and increasing access for folks in the underinvested areas of their communities



Wednesday, Dec 7

- **Community Forestry and Parkland Stewardship**

- Presenters: Austin Youth River Watch & Ecology Action of Texas
- Location: Roy G. Guerrero Park (Playground), 400 Grove Boulevard, Austin, 78741 (Free Parking)
- Vans will depart from the AT&T Conference Center at 12:15
- Time: 1-4
- Description: Austin Youth River Watch (AYRW) is a mentoring and environmental education program for high school students and young adults. This multi-year after school and summer program engages historically underrepresented youth in water quality testing, community focused restoration projects, and outdoor adventure. Join Austin Youth River Watch and Ecology Action of Texas for a short hike around Roy G. Guerrero Park and Circle Acres Nature Preserve. This will be followed by a restoration project, where we will plant native trees and grasses. Participants can expect to walk away from this workshop with greater knowledge about how AYRW leads culturally relevant and equitable programs in Austin. They will gain a better understanding of how to recruit, build community, and support youth of color in the outdoor education and conservation work they do in their own communities.

- **Breaking Down the Barriers. Kayaking is not “for” certain groups, it is for everyone!**

- Presenters: Black Women Who Kayak + and Austin Parks & Recreation Department
- Location: City of Austin Lorraine "Grandma" Camacho Activity Center, 35 Robert Martinez Jr. St., Austin, 78702 (Free Parking)
- Vans will depart from the AT&T Conference Center at 12:15
- Time: 1-4
- Join Black Women Who Kayak+ and the Austin Parks and Recreation Department for a two-part experience that includes nature barrier identification and teaches how to effectively break down these barriers and concerns around kayaking and big bodies of water. The second part of the workshop will focus on water safety education and the proper way to paddle with hands-on kayaking lessons in the water. The BWWK+ community aims to dismantle stereotypes of what African American women will and won't do in sports and green spaces where they are seldom seen! In addition to breaking down barriers, their goal is to provide women of color with the opportunity to gain knowledge and feel safe as she embarks on a new adventure.

- **Green School Parks Tour**

- Presenters: Cities Connecting Children to Nature-Austin & Austin ISD
- Location: Various Schools
- Bus will depart from AT&T Conference Center at 11:15
- Time: 12-3
- Join the Cities Connecting Children to Nature team to explore two Austin ISD Green School Parks, Reilly Elementary and Wooldridge Elementary. First, there will be a presentation on the overview of the program at the North Austin YMCA before embarking on the tour of the schools. The tour will cover the successes and challenges in the Green School Park model, brainstorm how to implement a Green School Park in your area and hear perspectives from the school and city.



Wednesday, Dec 7

- **Get Down Underground!**

- Presenters: City of Austin - Watershed Protection Department, Education Program
- Location: Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Texas at Austin, 4801 La Crosse Ave, Austin, 78739 (Free Parking)
- Vans will depart from the AT&T Conference Center at 12:15
- Time: 1-4
- Description: Want to explore the underground world while learning innovative ways to provide children with a sense of discovery as they connect to nature? Join the City of Austin Watershed Protection Department on a wild cave tour at the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center. Participants will experience how caves can be used in youth education programs to teach about cave habitat, endangered species, the hydrogeology of the Edwards Aquifer, and environmental stewardship. Cave helmets, headlamps, knee pads, and gloves will be provided. Participants should wear comfortable closed-toed walking shoes and clothes that they don't mind getting dirty. Entering this small, wild cave involves walking up/down steep steps, uneven ground, and stooping (crawling is optional).

- **Clearing the Slums: A History of Downtown Austin's Waterloo Park**

- Presenters: Katherine Pace, PhD and Waterloo Greenway Conservancy
- Location: Waterloo Park & Waller Creek, 500 E 12th St, Austin, 78701
- Time: 1-4
- Environmental historian Katherine Pace will take participants on an historic walking tour of Waterloo Park and nearby sections of the Waller Creek greenbelt. Along the way, you will learn how race has taken place in Austin, shaping the location and design of seemingly benign urban spaces, including many of Austin's parks and other green amenities. Katherine will focus on the history of Waterloo Park, beginning shortly after the Civil War, when racist real estate practices drove Black people into lower Waller Creek's floodplains, and continuing through the 1970s, when urban removal dislodged Black people from the creek. After the walking tour, participants will be invited to engage in a dialogue about how to address such problematic histories and how to ensure that our cities' green spaces are welcoming for all people, including people of color.
- Participants will walk from the University of Texas at Austin AT&T Conference Center to meet at Waterloo Park at 1pm. The park is located about 1 mile from the conference center. If you are not able to walk to the park, please let the Summit organizers know and transportation can be provided.



Wednesday, Dec 7

- **Plants for Play & Loose Parts Play**

- Presenters: Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Texas at Austin
- Location: Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center at the University of Texas at Austin, 4801 La Crosse Ave, Austin, 78739 (Free Parking)
- Vans will depart from the AT&T Conference Center at 12:15
- Time: 1-4
- Description: Come learn about creating outdoor spaces that encourage exploration and engagement. Participants will learn about two critical components of nature play: plants for play and loose parts play. Participants will learn how to select and care for plants that encourage creative play. Participants will also visit the Wildflower Center's loose parts play area and learn about selection of materials, sourcing, and maintenance of the area. Weather permitting, participants will have the opportunity to explore the Wildflower Center's Family Garden.

- **Park Rx and Access to Being Active in Nature**

- Presenters: Texas A&M School of Public Health
- Location: Pease Park, 1100 Kingsbury St, Austin, 78703 (Free Parking)
- Time: 1-4
- Walking, biking, and playing outside—"just what the doctor ordered!" This interactive, in-nature, workshop will focus on programs and policies that increase access to being active in parks and green spaces. The workshop will take place at Austin's lovely Pease District Park. Drs. Maddock and Kellstedt, professors from Texas A&M University, will lead a "walk and talk" around the park while they share research on initiatives like Park Rx and built environment changes that increase community access to nature. While participants actively take in the surrounding nature, there will be discussion on how to implement programs and policies that encourage families to visit parks and nature spaces and how to promote activity once there. In addition, staff from the Pease Park Conservancy will highlight how Pease District Park is a model for providing public green space accessible to the whole community.
- Meet at 11:30am at the University of Texas Orange Bike Project Workshop located inside the 27th Street Garage on the University of Texas Campus: 109 W. 27th St., Austin, 78712. More details provided prior to the workshop.
- Transportation will be provided for those who do not want to participate in the group bike ride to and from the park. Please let the Summit organizers know if an alternate mode of transportation is required.



Wednesday, Dec 7

- **Nature Connection Techniques: From Indigenous Ceremonies, Place-based Learning, To a New Virtual World**

- Presenters: The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University – San Marcos
- Location: The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University, 211 San Marcos Springs Dr, San Marcos, 78666
- Time: 12-3
- Description: The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, a research center that is part of Texas State University, is a leader in outdoor education and informal science learning. For over seventy-five years visitors from all over the world have looked through our glass-bottom boats and connected with an aquatic ecosystem like no other in. These visitors leave inspired by natural beauty, connected with the natural systems around them, and often embrace a sense of personal responsibility for their protection. The education team, along with the Indigenous Cultures Institute, will host a workshop on connectedness to nature and different ways to spark interest and to connect. Located on the shores of Spring Lake, a culturally significant site that is one of the oldest and most persistently inhabited sites in North America, the workshop will begin with a Water Ceremony hosted by a local indigenous non-profit, the Indigenous Cultures Institute. This ceremony will connect participants to the ancestors of the site as well as providing a connection to the springs and water itself. Participants will then take a tour of the location, including the wetlands boardwalk, Discovery Hall, and the glass-bottom boats. Participants will also receive a demonstration of the new virtual reality program that allows participants to be immersed in Spring Lake through technology.
- *Participants will need to provide their own transportation to the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment in San Marcos – a parking pass will be given to the participant upon entry to the Meadows Center parking area.

- **An Afternoon of Nature Immersion: A Guided Forest Therapy Walk**

- Presenters: Trinity University - Department of Education
- Location: Pease Park, 1100 Kingsbury St, Austin, 78703 (Free Parking)
- Vans will depart from the AT&T Conference Center at 12:15
- Time: 1-4
- Our bodies share the same elements as the many beings we meet in natural settings. Humans are nature, but we have allowed ourselves to be separated from nature. When experiencing a forest therapy walk, participants will slow down, and while using a standard sequence of invitations they will deliberately move out of cluttered headspace and into the senses as the Guides help them connect with the natural world. Certified Forest Therapy Guides will open the doors so the forest can welcome you, and you, to it. They will provide multiple ways to experience walks so everyone can participate in a way that meets their needs. These walks are not strenuous, yet the physiological effects may be noticed such as decreased blood pressure and stress or increases in creativity, problem-solving, and empathy. These benefits often last far beyond the walk as participants reenter their daily life.



Wednesday, Dec 7

- **Connecting Children to Mindfulness and Nature**

- Presenters: University of Texas at Austin Longhorn Wellness Center (Healthy Horns)
- Location: Meet at the University of Texas at Austin AT&T Conference Center (Walk-Shop)
- Time: 1-4
- Description: Noticing. It is one of the many superpowers of children. This interactive workshop will aim to enhance that superpower through accessible mindfulness and connecting with nature in your community. Participants will engage in different means of practicing mindfulness, how to share mindfulness with children of all ages in ways that connect to who they are, and how it all connects to nature in your community. Utilizing Google My Maps, participants will first explore University of Texas (UT) Austin's Nature Rx Map during a campus walking tour. Then they will be guided through the process to make a personalized Nature Rx Map for their own community. This workshop led by UT Austin's Mindfulness Campus Coordinator and former Austin ISD Mindfulness Specialist, James Butler, will provide meaningful and accessible ways to connect children to mindfulness and nature in your community.
- This is a "walk-shop" style workshop and is a walking tour of the UT Campus. The tour route is wheelchair accessible.

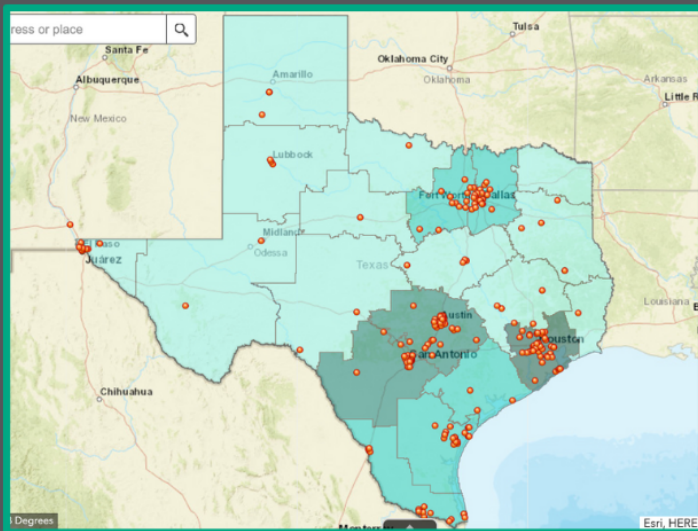
*Thank You To Our Partners Who Helped Provide
Transportation for our Workshops*

City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department
Austin Sunshine Camps
Trinity University
Texas A&M Forest Service
Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program
Explore Austin





Learn about the state of environmental education in Texas and across the U.S.



Gen:Thrive provides shared tools, data, and insights to explore community needs, identify partnership opportunities, and amplify resources to advance sustainability education, equity, health, and climate resilience for youth and K–12 schools.

Contribute program info and be included in the 2023 Texas map and directory by visiting www.genthrive.org/tx today!



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TEXAS CHILDREN IN NATURE SUMMIT 2022

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Thursday, Dec 8 - 8:30-9:15 Welcome

- Welcome to the Summit
 - Featured Speakers:
 - Sarah Coles, Executive Director of Texas Children in Nature Network
 - Jay Hartzell, Presiden of The University of Texas at Austin
 - Dr. Stephen Pont, Chief Medical Officer of the State of Texas
 - Gina LaMotte, Executive and Founder of EcoRise
 - Amy Ponder, H-E-B

Thursday, Dec 8 - 9:30-10:30

- **Building Resilient Kids and Communités Through Green Playspaces: A Case Study**
 - Presenters: Olayinka Ojo and Sianna Afari, Fort Worth ISD
 - Room: Conference Room 301
 - Description: In this panel, you'll hear Fort Worth ISD and KABOOM! discuss their unique partnership to employ Texas Health and Human Services - COVID-relief funds to support the building of 6 playgrounds for FWISD kids.
 - Strands: Access
- **Understanding Risky Play**
 - Presenters: Beth Edwards, Green Space Learning
 - Room: Salon A
 - Description: Brain and behavior research tells us that children gain critical cognitive, physical, and even emotional skills when engaging in child-directed risk. This includes both physical risk (balancing, leaping, climbing) and social risk (inviting a new friend to play). When we prevent all risks in the name of safety. We rob children of the skills to accurately assess and navigate common situations. In this session we will identify the differences between risk and hazards, examine our role in children's play, and develop strategies to support healthy risk.
 - Strands: Education
- **BOLD: Blindness Outdoor Learning and Development**
 - Presenters: Emily Gibbs, Mika Baugh, and Kayleigh Joiner - National Federation for the Blind of Texas
 - Room: Salon B
 - Description: Our team, made up of experts on blindness, will discuss the ways they adapt outdoor activities to make them accessible for blind people. We will then review the layered mentoring approach we use to disseminate these accessible techniques to blind youth.
 - Strands: Equity



Thursday, Dec 8 - 9:30-10:30

- **Healing with Nature: A Social Justice Framework**

- Presenters: Starla Simmons, Steve Hicks School of Social Work University of Texas at Austin
- Room: Ballroom/Salon C
- Description: We depend on nature for our health, well-being, and survival. There is a growing body of research that proves the many benefits of spending time in nature from simply walking in the park to engaging in clinical ecotherapy interventions. Using a social justice lens, Starla will inspire critical thought about the historical traumas that have impacted the relationship between nature and marginalized communities. We will talk about the power of nature to heal individuals & communities, while honoring the ways people of color have always leaned on Mother Earth to thrive.
- Strands: Equity

- **Green Jobs: Exploring STEM Natural Resource Careers**

- Presenters: Ted Stevens, Texas Forestry Association
- Room: Salon D
- Description: Learn how to use Project Learning Tree's new Green Jobs guide that is TEKS-aligned, and STEM correlated to inspire your students to pursue a future career working outdoors in a natural resource or forestry related career. The guide contains four fun hands-on activities to explore this topic with your middle school and high school students.
- Strands: Education

- **Mobilizing Middle Schoolers to Envision and Design: EcoRise and the Bedichek MS Peace Garden**

- Presenters: Elizabeth Stephens, EcoRise and Christine Mederos, Austin ISD
- Room: Classroom 115
- Description: EcoRise mobilizes a new generation to design healthy, just, and thriving communities for all. Our session focuses on our Sustainable Intelligence program and our partnership with Austin ISD through the lens of Bedichek MS. Teachers receive personalized professional learning, groundbreaking curricular resources, and access to our Student Innovation Fund to implement greening projects such as the Bedichek Middle School Peace Garden. Participants can ask questions about the pedagogical, logistical, and systemic challenges of connecting students to such an on-campus project and will walk away with access to EcoRise curriculum and the opportunity to similarly engage their own schools and communities.
- Strands: Health, Education, Community, Equity, Access

- **How to Talk to Kids About Climate Change**

- Presenters: Kate Carmichael, ATX Counseling/Parents Climate Community
- Room: Classroom 116
- Description: Climate change creates a lot of big feelings for kids and adults alike. Come join us to learn more about how to process these feelings and help others do the same. We will be exploring emotions as well as providing pragmatic tools and techniques you can use today!
- Strands: Health



Thursday, Dec 8 - 10:45-11:45

- **Nature Play in the City: Shifting Mindsets and Changing Policies**

- Presenters: Melody Alcazar, Cities Connecting Children to Nature: City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department
- Room: Conference Room 301
- Description: Nature play is fast becoming a well-known concept for parks, nature centers, and even schools. For the institution, nature play has significant benefits for sustainable planning and can be appropriate for projects with lower operating budgets. However, liability and safety concerns are often a hinderance for organizations and agencies wanting to incorporate nature play features in unmanaged spaces. Learn how the City of Austin's Cities Connecting Children to Nature initiative has tackled nature play at a city-level, from training, to installing and managing pilot nature play spaces, to the creation of Nature Play Guidelines.
- Strands: Access, Community

- **Texas Family Resource Centers: Strengthening Families through Community-Based Early Childhood Interventions**

- Presenters: Tiffany Greco and Chelsy Alexander - Texas Alliance of Child and Family Services and Tameka Caldwell, Texas Family Support Network
- Room: Salon A
- Description: Join us to learn about the Family Resource Center approach and efforts by public and private partners in child welfare to grow and support FRCs in communities across Texas. Participants will learn about the FRC approach with a focus on how FRCs are critical links in the social safety net, actively promoting key protective factors in early childhood and across multiple generations that strengthen children and families. FRCs are a compelling approach for communities to partner with families before crises occurs and provide ample opportunities for nature-based and environmental education organizations to partner to improve child and family wellbeing outcomes.
- Strands: Health, Community, Equity

- **Creating Environmental Engagement with D.U.E. Dillegence**

- Presenters: Andrew Bullard and Jennifer Arledge, Fossil Rim Wildlife Center
- Room: Salon B
- Description: Environmental education has long been considered an essential part of learning; however, in the past few years, many of us have learned that environmental education was not as "essential" as we originally thought. Fossil Rim Wildlife Center has created a new programming framework for increasing public engagement with the natural world. The D.U.E (Discover, Understand, Engage) framework allows our staff to incorporate education across our facility as well as establish new ways of engaging with the public regardless of where they might be in their environmental journey.
- Strands: Education



Thursday, Dec 8 - 10:45-11:45

- **TEKS and SEPs and RT's, Oh My!**

- Presenters: Kiki Corry, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Room: Ballroom/Salon C
- Description: The new Science TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge & Skills) are delicious alphabet soup – straight from the schoolyard garden. The new science teaching standards are better than ever for teaching by exploring nature and the outdoors. We'll cipher the new language and how we can help the teachers meet their requirements while getting their kids outside.
- Strands: Education

- **Using Community Engagement to Enhance Outdoor Education Activities**

- Presenters: Brian Shmaefsky, Lone Star College
- Room: Classroom 115
- Description: Human rights and environmental justice issues are a platform for teaching youth the importance of knowing local environmental conditions in outdoor education settings. Using simple strategies and inexpensive materials, children and young adults can perform outdoor environmental data collection activities to learn about local human rights and environmental justice issues. The pedagogy promoted in this workshop is consistent with local and national teaching standards and adds equity, diversity, and inclusion to the curriculum. In this hands-on workshop, participants will be guided through the processes behind adding human rights or environmental justice issues to environmental monitoring activities.
- Strands: Community, Education

- **Healthy Play with OLE!**

- Presenters: Cheryl Potemkin, Fort Worth Botanic Garden
- Room: Classroom 116
- Description: Learn about the OLE! Texas initiative and best practices, and how community organizations can implement changes and programming to connect families with nature and healthy movement.
- Strands: Health, Education



Thursday, Dec 8 - 1:15-2:15

- **Community Centered Program Design**

- Presenters: Emily Weerts, Wildly Supportive
- Room: Conference Room 301
- Description: Learn how to flip the traditional Program Design Model to a Community Centered Program Design approach. Everyone will come away with tools and resources to bring this simple but transformative model back to their organization, increasing the community relevance and inclusive reach of their institution. Participants will learn the basic structure of the Community Centered Program Design approach and have the opportunity to start outlining this method for their own programs and partnerships. This presentation has been updated to reflect the assets and needs of a society transformed by COVID-19.
- Strands: Equity, Community

- **Pathways to Green Careers: Conversations with Austin's Youth Eco-Professionals**

- Presenters: Chanel Davis, Austin Youth River Watch and Britney Huhyn, City of Austin Youth Forest Council
- Room: Salon A
- Description: Austin's young leaders from different environmental groups share their experience working in the environmental field. Youth representatives from Austin Civilian Conservation Corp, Austin Youth River Watch, City of Austin's Youth Forest Council, Park Ranger Cadet Program, and Youth Leadership Working Group provide a broad look at pathways to green careers. They will speak on topics related to special projects, equitable hiring and recruiting, barriers to access, and work culture in the outdoor field. This panel session has been designed and presented by young people.
- Strands: Community

- **Cities Connecting Children in Nature (CCCN) Texas Cohort All-Site Meeting**

- Presenters: Sarah Coles, TCiNN
- Room: Salon B
- Description: Meeting for our CCCN Cohorts

- **SPARK Park Case Study - Mandarin Immersion Magnet School, Houston, Texas**

- Presenters: Elizabeth Howley and Kathleen Ownby, Spark Parks
- Room: Salon D
- Description: For almost 40 years, SPARK Parks have engaged public schools and surrounding community, providing space for outside recess and instruction during school hours, as well as park space for the surrounding community to exercise, enjoy the outdoors, and for children to play after school hours, on weekends, and holidays. SPARK has 158 active SPARK Parks in the greater Houston metropolitan region. The SPARK team will present a case study of the SPARK Park at the Mandarin Immersion Magnet School in the Galleria Area of Houston. They will present the process and discuss the steps involved, providing ample time for questions.
- Strands: Health, Community, Equity



Thursday, Dec 8 - 1:15-2:15

- **Making Connections Between Field Investigations in Science, Academic Performance, and Mental and Physical Health**
 - Presenters: Mark Broughton, Dallas ISD
 - Room: Classroom 115
 - Description: As evidence of the mental, physical, and academic benefits of nature grows, calls for more natural spaces are becoming widespread. This presentation describes how the STEM Environmental Education Center provides urban teachers and students with the opportunity to have meaningful encounters with nature while they explore important science concepts.
 - Strands: Health, Access, Education
- **Youth Birding Camp: Connecting Children to Nature Through Summer Camp**
 - Presenters: Caley Zuzula, Travis Audubon
 - Room: Classroom 116
 - Description: In June 2022, Travis Audubon piloted a day-long Youth Birding Camp aimed at connecting kids ages 8-12 to nature through the lens of birds and birding while being as accessible, fun, and inspiring as possible. This presentation will review the strategies used by a collaborating body of staff and volunteers to create a successful camp, lessons learned to create smoother logistics for future camps, and best practices for others interested in creating similar programming opportunities.
 - Strands: Access Education

Thursday, Dec 8 - 2:30-3:30

- **Keynote Speaker - Dr. Rae Wynn-Grant, Bren School of Environmental Science & Management University of California Santa Barbara**
 - Room: Ballroom/Salon C
 - Description: An overview of Dr. Wynn-Grant's most notable wildlife adventures will segue into a personal story of her moment of realization that the greater environmental community was lacking the intersectional perspectives that can best support its scientists - starting with our youth. She will then define intersectional environmentalism and give several examples of how her own work has taken a turn for the better since adopting this lens, as well as detail her most recent forays into supporting opportunity for youth inclusion in the outdoors.



Thursday, Dec 8 - 4:00-5:00

- **Flipping the Script - Creating a Preschool within a Nature Sanctuary**

- Presenters: Jaime Gonzalez, The Nature Conservancy and Melissa Turnbaugh, PBK Architects
- Room: Conference Room 301
- Description: The Alief Early Childhood Center #2 Project, located in Houston's Alief community, is a revolutionary project whose aim is to create a campus where nature is rich, dispersed, and big. The campus opened in August 2022 and sports over 190 trees and 4.5 acres of prairie wetlands. This campus flips the script on establishment and maintenance of nature on a campus and also the size of nature that can be built on campuses. Presenters will provide an overview of the process of designing and building this innovative campus, how it's being used and interpreted, and the many quantified benefits it will bring to the students and community.
- Strands: Health, Community, Health, Education, Equity, Access

- **Experiential Environmental Education for Teachers - Connecting Formal and Informal Educators**

- Presenters: Amanda McMickle, Steve Lewis Project and Sara Ramirez, San Antonio River Foundation
- Room: Salon A
- Description: The Steve Lewis project, a group of San Antonio-area organizations and its education service center, are developing an experiential environmental education program dedicated to getting kids and teachers outdoors. Come here about how the group was formed, how they developed their program model, how the partnerships work, and their future plans. The group will also address the peaks and valleys along the way and the guidance they received from the namesake of the group. You will leave with an understanding of their work and how to effectively execute action to increase access to nature for students in their community.
- Strands: Education

- **Placemaking and Green Space: How to Use Pilot Projects to Incorporate Nature into Public Space**

- Presenters: Kristin Leiber, The Better Block Foundation
- Room: Salon B
- Description: Join Kristin Leiber, Senior Project Manager for The Better Block Foundation, as she explores case studies for incorporating nature in community-led demonstrations for public spaces. We will explore strategies best used for quick-win civic projects using low budgets and volunteer elbow grease, and how to use landscaping elements in pilot projects to justify permanent civic investment in urban green spaces.
- Strands: Community



Thursday, Dec 8 - 4:00-5:00

- **Early Play and Learning - In Any and All Weather!**

- Presenters: Jessica Yuill, National Wildlife Federation
- Room: Salon D
- Description: As temperatures rise – or when it's cold – we can be less motivated to be outdoors engaging with young children. But spending time in dynamic outdoor spaces all year long supports healthy child development in so many ways. In this session, participants will learn how to enhance outdoor learning environments to help offset heat and make spaces more comfortable and inviting for both young children and adults. We will explore barriers to outdoor play in different weather, think through potential solutions, and provide examples of guided activities to engage children in outdoor play and learning year-round.
- Strands: Health, Education, Equity, Access

- **Inclusive Social Media: Remember Y'all Means All**

- Presenters: Susana Cruz, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Chicana in Nature
- Room: Classroom 115
- Description: Want to see a wider variety of humans having fun at your programs? Feeling overwhelmed with social media? Struggling to figure out better approaches to marketing? Join me to discuss the “who, what, where, when, how, and why’s” of social media for marketing to different audiences.
- Strands: Equity, Access

- **Outdoor Learning Time: A Prek4SA Journey**

- Presenters: Nicole Balderas, Cristina Lopez, Julie Taylor - PreK4SA
- Room: Classroom 116
- Description: Join us in a session where participants will gain a deeper understanding of outdoor learning and the impact their role has in connecting children with nature. We will discuss the benefits of OLE! and how to implement the 13 Best Practice Indicators (BPIs) in your outdoor spaces. We will also share our journey of our first year as an OLE! Texas chapter.
- Strands: Health, Education, Access



Thursday, Dec 8 - 5:00-6:00

- **Poster Sessions and Happy Hour**

- Location: Hall Outside the Grand Ballroom
- Posters:
 - **Outdoor Explorers** - Presenter: Adrian Dearmond - Candlelight Ranch
 - **Evaluating the Current Nature-Based Climate Anxiety Treatment in Mental Health Services in the United States of America and Identifying Future Strategies** - Presenter: Anika Shethia, Houston Youth Climate Strike (in conjunction with the Climate Is Health Campaign and the International Social Science Conference for Youth)
 - **An Examination of the Relationship Between Childhood Experiences in Nature and Time Spent in Nature in Adulthood** - Presenter: Dr. Deb Kellstedt, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
 - **Nature Challenge - The Future of Nature Engagement** - Presenter: Jacey Tosh, Texas A&M Forest Service
 - **Trash Talk** - Presenter: Janine Garcia, San Antonio River Authority
 - **Bridging the Access to Nature Gap with Storytelling and Exploration** - Presenter: Jayshree L Patel, One Drop, Many Ripples Author
 - **Trinity River Crew 2022: An Overview of a North Texas Youth Conservation Educational Work Program** - Presenter: Jimena Vivanco, Trinity Park Conservancy
 - **Live Life Without Egrets: Creating Collaborative Projects Between Friends of Redhead Pond WPA and Flour Bluff ISD Oceans Program** - Presenters: Katie Doyle & Larissa Ford, Flour Bluff Intermediate School & Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
 - **Girl Scout Explorers** - Presenter: Kayla Robinson, Girl Scouts of Central Texas
 - **The Practice of Doing Sit Spots in Nature to Improve Mental Well-Being** - Presenter: Leah Marsh, Trinity University Education Department
 - **Science Outside! Program Creates Impactful Outdoor STEM Experiences for Rural Communities** - Presenter: Rachel Grotte, The Science Mill
 - **Bringing the Outdoors In** - Presenter: Sara Ramirez, Dallas ISD



Friday, Dec 9 - 8:30-9:45

- **Regional Breakout Groups**
 - **Austin** - Grand Ballroom
 - **Coastal Bend** - Salon A
 - **Heart of Texas** - Conference Room 301
 - **Houston** - Salon B
 - **North Texas** - Salon D
 - **Pineywoods** - Classroom 115
 - **Rio Grande Valley** - Classroom 116
 - **San Antonio** - Grand Ballroom

Friday, Dec 9 - 10:00-11:00

- **Keynote Speaker - Jesus Aguirre, Waterloo Greenway Conservancy**
 - Room: Ballroom
 - Description: In his presentation, Jesús will share about his journey as an immigrant to this country and how his experiences, and careers in education and parks and recreation have solidified a belief in the power of parks, open spaces and nature to improve health, build strong communities, and support a healthier environment – especially for historically underserved communities. He will share some insights into how equity can be brought into practice in large municipal systems and will also share some of the national perspective on this work from his involvement with the Children and Nature Network and the National Recreation and Parks Association.



Friday, Dec 9 - 11:15-12:15

- **Connecting Health and Nature Panel Discussion**

- Room: Grand Ballroom
- Panelists
 - Jenny Larios, North Texas
 - Robyn Kebede, East Texas
 - Marisa Oliva, Rio Grande Valley

Friday, Dec 9 - 12:15-12:30

- **Summit Closing**

- Room: Grand Ballroom

Friday, Dec 9 - 2:00-4:00 - Optional Post Conference Workshops

- **Park Ranger Pathways**

- Presenters: City of Austin Parks & Recreation Department
- Location: Zilker Caretaker's Cottage, 2105 B. Andrew Zilker Rd. Austin, 78746 (Free Parking)
- Description: City of Austin (COA) Park Rangers will share their personal journey to finding their way into full time employment in the conservation field including their experience with the Austin ISD Akins High School Cadet program. There will be opportunities for informal discussions and Q&A during the workshop. Participants will go on a tour that includes the springs found in Zilker Park (Eliza, Upper-on greenbelt trail) and the Splash Exhibit. Topics covered will include the springs system, Edwards Aquifer, salamanders, and more. Participants will learn how to create meaningful pathways to employment for youth participants. They will also get a chance to explore Central Texas flora and fauna.

- **Beginning Birding with Travis Audubon**

- Presenters: Travis Audubon
- Location: Blair Woods Nature Preserve, 5401 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Austin, 78721 (Free Parking)
- Description: Birds are a ubiquitous part of the outdoors, making them the perfect gateway to getting folks interested in nature and conservation. In this workshop, Travis Audubon staff and volunteers will discuss techniques and best practices for getting both youth and adults acquainted with birding as a hobby. This workshop will take place at Travis Audubon's Blair Woods Sanctuary, a 10-acre preserve in East Austin, and will be mostly hands-on with bird walks along the trails. Attendees should expect to walk approximately one mile. Trails are mostly mulched and fairly flat.





Thank You to Our 2022 Texas Children in Nature Network Board Members

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- Past Chair - Molly Stevens
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Thank You to Our Founder's Circle Members

Organizations

- Fossil Rim
- San Antonio River Authority
- JCM Industries Foundation

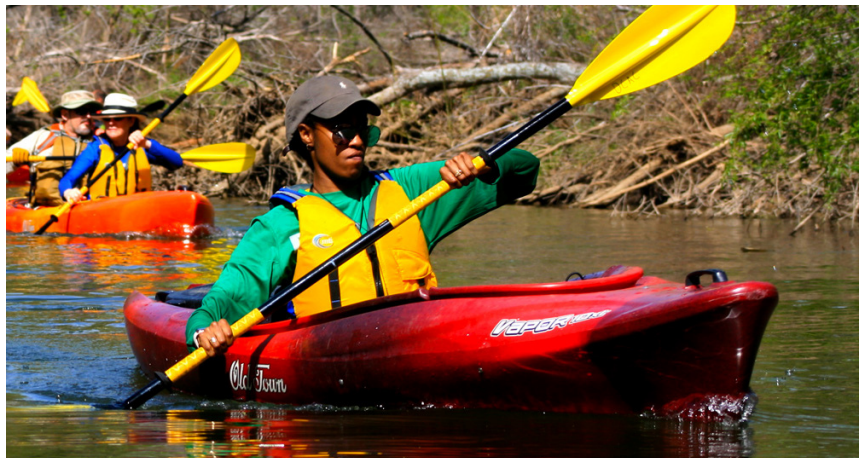
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The Texas Children in Nature Founder's Circle is made of friends who have made the commitment to give \$1000/year to TCiNN for its first three years to help us get our start.

**Become a
Founder's
Circle
Member
today**





BECOME A TEXAS CHILDREN IN NATURE NETWORK PARTNER TODAY

Texas Children in Nature Network is a collaborative of over 600 partner organizations that are dedicated to connecting children and families with nature to be healthier, happier and smarter.

To become an official partner of Texas Children in Nature Network we are asking for organizations to read our strategic plan and sign on to support our mission, no fees involved. As a partner organization you will be eligible to attend partner networking events, share resources, your logo will be displayed on our website, and more!

I hope your organization will become a partner of Texas Children in Nature Network. We are looking forward to an amazing next three years and can't wait to get started!

