

2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORT

Texas Children in Nature
Network

TEXAS
Children
in Nature
NETWORK

ABOUT TCINN

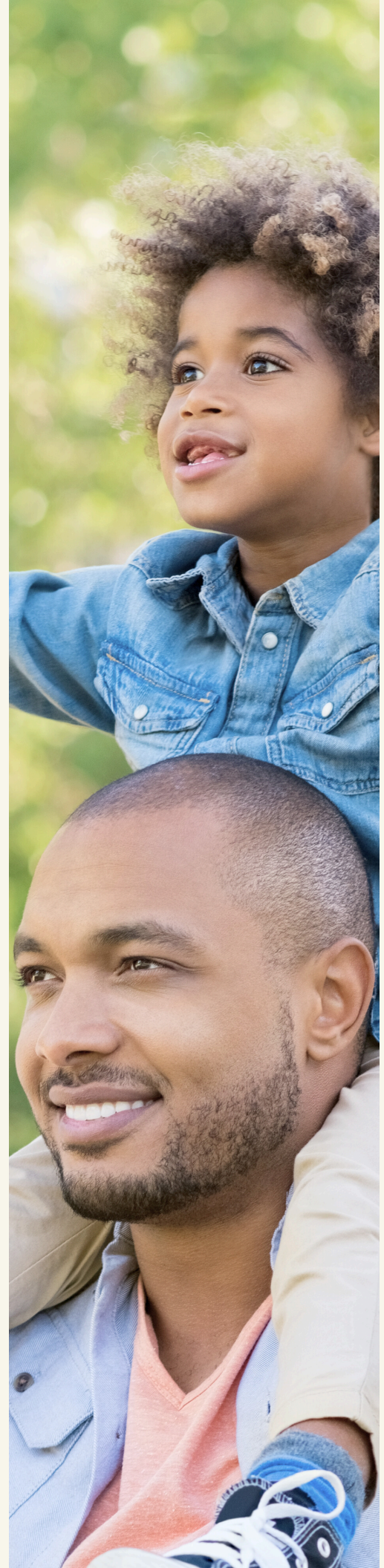
We strengthen and leverage the work of over 900 state and local partners across Texas, working in the health, community development, education, and conservation fields. With our partners we work towards creating equitable access and connection to nature for all children in Texas. Through our partner programming and projects TCiNN engaged over **7 million families** in Texas during 2024.

The Texas Children in Nature Network supports the children in nature movement through the sharing of resources, production of an annual summit, and technical support to our partners. With our partners TCiNN has created the strongest statewide nature collaborative in the nation.

ACCOMPLISHMENT HIGHLIGHTS

In 2024 we accomplished the following:

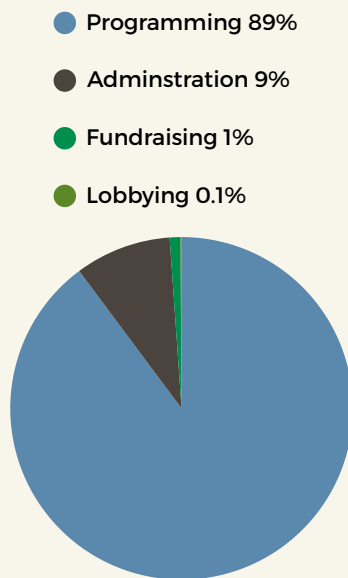
- In December we hosted our 2024 Summit at the Waco Convention Center in Waco, Texas for 288 attendees.
- Hosted webinars and shared resources for 3925 attendees.
- Our three Health and Nature Liaisons working in the Rio Grande Valley, North Texas, and Gulf Coast regions of Texas launched and expanded the Nature Smart Library program, adding 22 more libraries to our cohort.
- Work continued with the University of Texas at Austin with our Youth EcoAlliance in Pharr, Texas. Students continued to meet throughout the year, planned a community event held in January 2025, and presented at the Planet 2050 conference in Austin.
- Contracted with the Department of State Health Services to create the Outdoor Learning Environment Early Childhood Education Network.
- Partnered with H-E-B in the fall to co-create our first outdoor learning and play space at Sarah King Elementary in San Antonio, Texas.



THE FIGURES

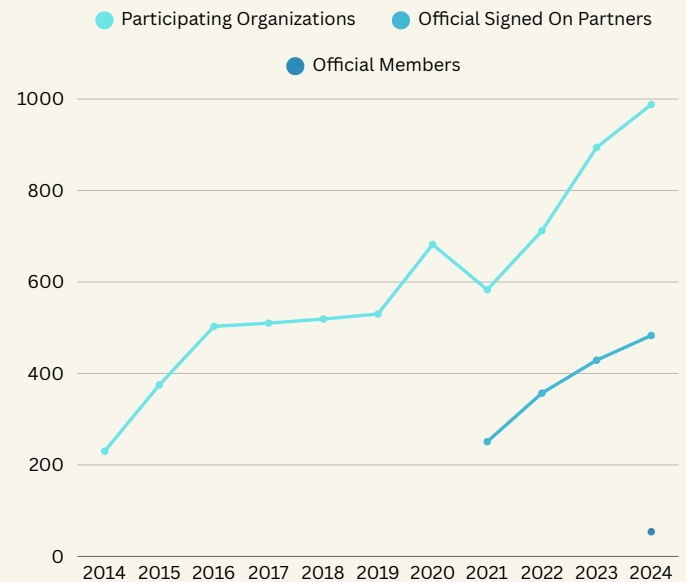
HOW YOUR DONATIONS WERE USED

This graph shows the percentages of spending for 2024



GROWTH OF PARTNERSHIPS

Collaboration across the state is growing



GRANTS WE RECEIVED IN 2024

- Department of State Health Services
 - Outdoor Learning Environment
 - Early Childhood Education Network
 - \$192,000
- H-E-B: \$30,000
- University of Texas Planet 2050 Initiative: \$25,000
- Shield Ayres Foundation - \$15,000
- Mitchell Foundation with EcoRise - \$10,000

MAJOR PROJECTS



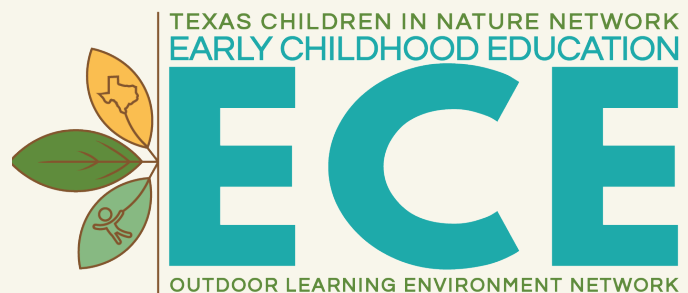
CITIES CONNECTING CHILDREN TO NATURE/NATURE EVERYWHERE

This initiative is led by the National League of Cities, Kaboom! and the Children & Nature Network. Nature Everywhere helps city leaders and their partners ensure all children have access to nature. TCiNN continues to work with the existing CCCN/Nature Everywhere cities as well as encourage other Texas cities to apply for future rounds of funding through our Technical Support work.

In 2024 Texas Children in Nature Network helped five communities in South Texas apply to be Nature Everywhere communities to support their Green Schoolyards work.

OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS - OLE! TEXAS

OLE! Texas transforms early childhood spaces through research-inspired landscape designs to increase physical activity and connection with the natural world. TCiNN works with OLE! Texas to convene stakeholders and facilitate professional developments for teachers. This year, TCiNN entered a contract with the Department of State Health Services to create the Outdoor Learning Environment Early Childhood Education Professionals Network. The initiative recently launched the new website and Pathfinder portal at <https://texaseceoutdoornetwork.org/>



MAJOR PROJECTS

NATURE SMART LIBRARIES

A Nature Smart Library is a community library where communities can engage with the outdoors through the outdoor space at the library, materials at the library, and with nature programming at the library sites.

This year TCiNN worked with DSHS to expand our Library Explorer Adventure Pack program in our Gulf Coast and North Texas regions, and added more packs in the Rio Grande Valley.

In addition TCiNN staff has been working with library staff across the state to increase nature programming at libraries, and working with individual library systems to improve the greenspace around libraries to offer locations for nature play.



ANNUAL SUMMIT

Every year TCiNN hosts a gathering of leaders across the state. During this three-day Summit, TCiNN brings together health, education, built environment, faith and conservation community leaders to shape an even brighter future for the children of Texas. TCiNN convenes thought leaders to strengthen the network and develop opportunities and policies that will connect more children and families with nature. Our Summit in 2024 engaged 288 partners. We also honored five amazing Children and Nature Champions

- Hayden Brooks
- Saanvi Mylavarapu
- Mary Jo Greene
- GTG Outdoors
- The Visitor Experience



MAJOR PROJECTS

UT PLANET 2050 PHOTOVOICE

This year, TCiNN continued our relationship with the University of Texas in the Rio Grande Valley. At the beginning of the year, participating students presented their photovoice findings at UT in Austin. Then, through the support of UCLA, TCiNN helped the City of Pharr to form a Youth EcoAlliance. Throughout the fall, 25 youth met regularly to plan an environmental education and planting event for the community in support of some of the findings from the initial Photovoice project.



WORKSHOPS AND WEBINARS

TCiNN is sharing best practices and resources with partners and teachers through our series of webinars and workshops. Monthly webinars cover topics such as equity in the outdoors and public health with experts in the field. Teacher workshops are offered throughout the year to help teachers teach more in the nature spaces on their campuses. This year, we hosted our first in-person workshops to promote the Texas Healthy Parks Plan in conjunction with our workshop partners at AgriLife. In 2024, TCiNN hosted 29 webinars and workshops with a total of 3925 participants.

PRESENTATIONS FOR TEXAS CHILDREN IN NATURE NETWORK

This year, staff from Texas Children in Nature Network presented at multiple statewide and national conferences, including plenary presentations at the Texas Pediatric Society, Active Living Conference, Conference for Science Teaching, and the Texas Rising Star Early Childhood conference.

Overall, the staff presented for 2000 people this year.



MAJOR PROJECTS



GREEN SCHOOLYARDS

This year, TCiNN engaged in Green Schoolyards across several regions.

In the summer, we started working with five ISDs in South Texas who received the Texas A&M Forest Service Community Forestry Grant to improve their outdoor learning environments. Throughout the fall and winter, our staff engaged in multiple Technical Assistance visits and will continue to support the work.

Additionally, this year TCiNN partnered with H-E-B and Unilever to build out an outdoor learning space at Sarah King Elementary in San Antonio. The event brought together over 100 volunteers and created a wonderful new learning space.



HEALTH AND NATURE LIAISONS

NORTH TEXAS

Our Health and Nature Liaison in North Texas, Jenny Larios, has made the following accomplishments:

- Worked with Dallas Public Library to launch the LEAP Program with 75 LEAP backpacks.
- Reached over 1,000 people through outreach activities.
- Facilitated a workshop in Plano, TX (October 2024): “Mapping Surveys and Storytelling for Funding: Leveraging [GSI/NBS/BGI] Survey Metrics to Evaluate Impacts.”



GULF COAST

Our Health and Nature Liaison in the Gulf Coast, Alicia Fontenot, has made the following accomplishments over the past year:

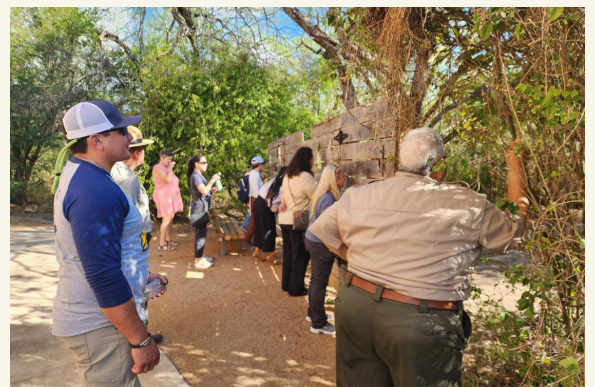
- Successfully launched the LEAP Program across the Gulf Coast region, distributing 66 nature-themed backpacks across 13 sites.
- Fostered over 15 new relationships with public health professionals, environmental educators, community-based organizations, and government entities.
- Reached over 700+ community members and environmental professionals through outreach events, collaborative programs, and direct engagement.



LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY

Our Health and Nature Liaison in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Marisa Oliva, has made the following accomplishments:

- Expanded the LEAP backpack program in the Rio Grande Valley with 60 backpacks currently at 12 libraries across the region.
- Worked with 25 high school students to form the Pharr Youth Eco Alliance, with students working to host a community event and contribute to park improvement initiatives.
- Provided technical assistance and guidance to Green Schoolyard initiatives in South Texas, specifically those districts participating in the Texas Forest Service Schoolyard Forest Grants.





THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

2024 SUMMIT

Presenting Sponsor:



OTHER SPONSORS:

Cameron Park Zoo
Bienenstock Natural Playgrounds
National Wildlife Federation
Driscoll Health Plan
The Fay School
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Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries
Program

Center for Health and Nature
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