# HELP PARENTS NURTURE THROUGH NATURE

**Getting outside more can be one of the best things parents can do for their kids over summer vacation.**

During the summer, families are looking for ways to help kids continue to develop and learn — but at the same time, may be struggling with busy schedules and day care challenges. Encouraging families to take advantage of free, outdoor activities can relieve some of the stress, and be better for kids in the long run. Here's some helpful info to pass along:

## Outdoor time is good-for-you time

Kids who spend more time outdoors than on screens tend to have better overall mental health, greater resilience, increased attention, and lower stress levels. **Encourage parents to think of outdoor places their kids can safely get to, play and explore.**

## Play time is friend time

Over the summer, kids who stay home on screens and don't see friends can lose social skills. Unstructured outdoor time lets kids develop relationships, strengthen bonds, and continue to develop socially, easing their eventual return to school. **Ask parents to look for ways to plan outdoor play with school and neighborhood friends.**

## An added bonus: Keeping young bodies in motion

When kids play outside, they're getting exercise and building motor skills. If they play outside regularly, they also tend to have increased energy and a healthier body weight. **Explain to parents how having fun at a park or playground can contribute to physical well-being.**

## Use the *My Summer Badge Grab* activity materials

Designed to offer screen-free outdoor activities, the *My Summer Badge Grab* gives parents and kids ways to connect and plan fun things to do, plus build in breathing room for child-guided activities. **Share the materials and help parents get started!**

If you have summer classes or activities coming up, be sure to share these events with parents too so they can make the most of the services and connections your organization provides. You could even consider planning a special *My Summer Badge Grab* event to launch the season!