



SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM NEWS



CHILDREN AND NATURE

On average, today's kids spend up to 44 hours per week in front of a screen, and less than 10 minutes a day playing outdoors, which researchers believe becomes extreme crisis, they called Nature Deficit Disorder (childrenandnature.org). Technology and parent's fears of diseases and dangers playing outside contributed to the crisis. However, recent studies have exposed the benefit-even necessity-of spending time outdoors, both for kids and adults. Most of the studies agree that kids who play outside are smarter, happier, more attentive and less anxious than kids who spend more time indoors. Nature provides countless opportunities for discovery, creativity, problem-solving and STEAM education. Interacting with natural environments allows children to learn by doing and experimenting with ideas. In nature, children think, question and make hypotheses-thereby developing inquisitive minds.

The slew of benefits that the outdoors provides to children's minds is ample reason to give it a try. Taking children outdoor as young as infant is the start. Happily there are lots of ways to make nature as stimulating activities that kids like to do inside.

1. Set up games such as treasure hunts or board games outside
2. Get a picture book to identify birds, bugs, leaves, trees, plants, flowers, etc.
3. Introduce tools to discover such as magnifying glass, bug box, shovel, etc.
4. Go to an outdoor event such as park visits, outdoor puppet show, outdoor plays and movies.
5. Use the technology to your advantage such as using phone cameras to take picture to create photo journals.
6. Take them to fruit/veggie picking, short nature walk or hiking, etc.
7. Use items from outdoors such as leaves, sticks, rocks, etc. to create art or to build something. (Ref: [Ideas for Getting Your Kids into Nature - Child Mind Institute](#))

April is Month of the Military Child

As of Jan. 2024, Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC) reports there are approximately about 876,234 ages 0-18 years old children from active military families. VA has the largest number of 99,962 military children, followed by Texas (88,703), California (85,374) while Maryland with 27,213 kids from active duty.

Naval Support Activity South Potomac (NSASP) NSF Dahlgren is celebrating the event on April 25 from 3:30 to 5 pm at Dahlgren Library & Joy Park. While NSF Indian is celebrating on April 17 at 4:30—6:30 at IH CDC parking lot. Come and celebrate with us with facepainting, arts and crafts, inflatables, snacks and outdoor fun activities!

"We must teach our children to smell the earth, to taste the rain, to touch the wind, to see things grow, to see the sun rise and night fall—to care." *John Cleal*

**MOVING OR TRANSITIONING WITH SCHOOL-AGE!
CONTACT YOUR YOUTH CENTER FOR SPONSORS!**

Did You Know???

1. [Dahlgren School](#) has a full-day pre-school program starting next school year for those who turned 4 on 9/1. Also, the Pilot Program for active military residing off-base with orders on Dahlgren ca attend Dahlgren School. Call 540-469-7100.
2. [Free SAT Prep Courses](#)—Charles County School District partners with FEV Tutor to provide students a high-quality virtual tutoring sessions that are personalized to each student's unique needs and aligned to curriculum. It gives the student choice to pick the day/time that works best for them as well as flexible start and end dates depending when to take the exam. Click [Charles Spring SAT Email - Google Docs](#) for more information and to sign-up..
3. HiveClass, can teach yourself new moves in your favorite sports, dance, or even basic conditioning. Instruction videos are made for kids but will work for all ages. It will even track your progress, so you don't have to worry about losing your place. Visit DODMWRLibraries.org.
4. 2024 National STEM Festival is on April 11-13 at National Harbor, MD. Visit [2024 National STEM Festival](#) for more info.
5. Earth Day celebration at Dahlgren Library is Apr. 18 & [Fredericksburg Annual celebration](#) is at Old Mill Park in Fredericksburg on Apr. 20, 11 to 3 pm.
6. Parent Educational, Advocacy and Training Center (PEATC) in partnerships with VA Dept. of Education offers various webinars, resources and training to families with special needs such as IEP University & Introduction to VA and NC Special Education for Military-connected Families, Building Strong Parent Advocate, etc. Visit peatc.org for more information.

VA & NDW Purple Up Day is April 17 & 19.
Wear purple to honor the military children!

NSASP SCHOOL LIAISON PROGRAM for NSF Dahlgren & NSF Indian Head

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