



September 15, 2016

Mr. Andrew O. Moore
Director, Youth & Young Adult Connections
Institute for Youth, Education, and Families
National League of Cities
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 550
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Mr. Moore,

We are writing to express our support for the City of Austin's Cities Connecting Children to Nature Implementation Plan. The extensive research and highly collaborative strategic planning process conducted by the Core Planning Team and six Working Groups ensures that children's equitable access to nature will be a top priority for the City of Austin and our partners.

The enthusiasm and commitment to this mission was readily apparent throughout the planning process. With representatives from the City of Austin, health, education and non-profit sectors this initiative helped build and strengthen relationships across departments and sectors that had not existed previously.

We firmly believe that these partnerships and the collaborative efforts of the plan will help Austin achieve these long-term outcomes:

1. Every child has abundant & equitable access to nature at their home, neighborhood & school.
2. Every parent, health professional & teacher knows & understands the importance of access to nature for a child's healthy development. And every child considers outdoor play a top option for free time.
3. City codes & school curriculum are designed to allow & encourages kids to play outside in nature more frequently.
4. Austin is seen as an innovator & leader in the Children in Nature Movement.
5. Kids choose nature.

With a focus on greening school yards and creating a new network of school parks, Austin will be able to provide daily access to rich nature environments for tens of thousands of students across the city and strengthen communities with access to new park space. We look forward to the opportunity to contribute to this burgeoning national movement and to building relationships within schools across the city.

We also endorse the Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights resolution which will be brought before City Council in November 2016 and will help support the subsequent public awareness campaign surrounding issues of children's healthy development as it relates to nature connection.

The Children in Nature Collaborative of Austin looks forward to continued collaboration and information sharing with National League of Cities, the Children & Nature Network, and the six cohort cities as we discover new and better ways for city leadership to institutionalize equitable nature access. We greatly appreciated the opportunity to participate in this planning initiative and look forward to the positive change it will make for Austin's children.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan K. Spencer".

Ryan K Spencer, M.A. Geo
Children in Nature Collaborative of Austin – Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne Muller".

Anne Muller
Outdoor Learning Specialist - AISD

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jessica Wilson".

Jessica Wilson
City of Austin Watershed Protection Department

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Amy Starling Rampy".

Amy Starling Rampy
Landscape Architect – TBG partners

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Heather Kuhlken".

Heather Kuhlken
Executive Director – Families in Nature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Megan Arnold".

Megan Arnold
Development Director – YMCA

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Walker Hendry".

Walker Hendry
Program Coordinator – Explore Austin

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kisha Conroy".

Kisha Conroy
CC Director – El Ranchito

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Molly Stevens".

Molly Stevens
Executive Director – WODC
Coordinator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Addie Broussard".

Addie Broussard
Children in Nature Collaborative of Austin -