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Date 9/13/2016

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,

I am writing to express **my strong and enthusiastic 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 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.

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

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 & encourage 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

Through serving as the medical director for Austin Independent School District's more than 80,000 students and 120 campuses I'm very excited that through focusing 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 build a relationship within schools across the city.

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

I look 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. I 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 "Stephen Pont". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Stephen" and last name "Pont" clearly distinguishable.

Stephen Pont, MD, MPH, FAAP

Medical Director, Texas Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Childhood Obesity

Medical Director, Austin Independent School District Student Health Services

Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, UT Dell Medical School / UT Departments of Nutrition & Advertising

www.dellchildrens.net/healthyliving

On Twitter: [@DrStephenPont](https://twitter.com/DrStephenPont)