The Nature and Health Connection

Communities Collaborating to Promote Health and Wellness

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Kaiser Permanente Northwest
The Intertwine Alliance
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Working to leverage investments in nature to create positive environmental, transportation, education, recreation, health, economic and social outcomes for our community.
The Alliance accomplishes this by:

- **Building** connections across sectors, geographies, disciplines and racial divides
- **Deepening** the partnerships and collaborations necessary to accomplish large-scale change
- **Organizing** intentional gatherings
- **Creating** a communications platform
- **Helping** build our partner’s capacity
- **Catalyzing, nurturing, and facilitating** complex, collaborative initiatives.
Wingspread Declaration on Health and Nature

“The connection between people and the natural world is fundamental to human health, well-being, spirit, and survival….Concerted, cooperative action…is needed to reconnect people with nature and to secure commitment to protecting nature.”

Children and Nature Network  Kaiser Permanente  Colorado Foundation

Yale School of Public Health  University of Washington School of Public Health
NATURE

Encompasses all members of our plant and animal kingdoms; the land which surrounds us; water – our oceans, rivers, and lakes; the sky and its many transformations; and all the elements and processes that are a part of the complex community of life on Earth. Nature can be near or far; microscopic or monumental, managed or wild.

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An optimal state of physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being. It is not merely the absence of disease or infirmity but a state that create opportunities for individuals to flourish.

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What’s the Link Between Nature and Health?

1. Physical Activity
2. Air and Water Quality
3. Biophilia Hypothesis
4. Physiological Stress Recovery
5. Attention Restoration
6. Microbiomes
The purpose of the Health & Nature Initiative is to raise awareness of the benefits of the nature-health connection to develop collaborative programs and increase investment in nature as a means to a healthier community.

...encompasses plants, animals, land, water, sky and all the elements and processes that are part of the complex community of life on earth.

...are the actions that organizations can take to improve the health of the community by engaging and supporting nature.

...is an optimal state of physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social well-being. It is not merely the absence of ills or infirmity, but a state that creates opportunities for individuals to flourish. Healthy people, communities and cultures are resilient, adaptable, and experience an enhanced quality of life.

The diagram illustrates the interconnection between nature, activities, health, and equity.
RxPlay
The Concept

Prescription programs are designed in collaboration with healthcare providers and community partners and utilize parks, trails, and open space to improve individual and community health.

- Offer children opportunities for physical activity close to home
- Provide clinicians with a proven “treatment” option
- Leverage existing capacity in parks and recreation systems and help with sustainability
HOW IT WORKS

WARM HANDOFF

RxPlay Navigator

Rx

First course: free
Second course: 75% scholarship
Third course: 50% scholarship
Fourth course: 25% scholarship
Evaluation
2012-2015

104 clinicians

5 Kaiser Permanente clinicians accounted for 50% of Rx
61% had never taken a Portland Parks course before RxPlay

779 unique patients

50% of registered families required three outreach phone calls

833 RxPlay prescriptions

100% rated experience with Portland Parks as “good” or “very good”

274 Portland Park registrations

Oregon Public Health Institute, February 2016
RxPlay Expansion
Two Year Strategic Plan

Obesity prevention & treatment
Focus on physical activity
Children
Three health organizations
Two park and recreation providers
Patchy geographic coverage
RxPlay navigator with limited capacity
Small scale data collection and evaluation
Physical, mental, and spiritual health promotion
Exposure to nature/outdoors
Multi-generations
Wide array of referral sources
Broad array of community resources
More inclusive coverage
HUB infrastructure, database, and increased navigator capacity
Robust evaluation
COMMUNITIES COLLABORATE

THE HUB

- Human Navigators
- Consumer Relationship Management (CRM) and data platforms

HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS
- SCHOOLS
- OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES
- SELF REFERRALS
- PARK & RECREATION DISTRICTS
- YMCA
- NONPROFITS
- CORPORATE AND FOR PROFIT

COMMUNITIES COLLABORATE
Critical to Success

- Broker a funding agreement including health partners to sustain the program
- Develop the HUB infrastructure and human capital
- Think deeply about equity and barriers to access
- Solidify relationships between health and environment/community sectors through a neutral, third-party convener
The Intertwine Alliance

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