

Nature for All

Why Nature?

- Nature is our natural habitat.
- Humans have an innate affinity for the rest of the natural world. (Biophilia)
- Our multiple intelligences include a naturalistic intelligence.
- There's a “goodness of fit” between the affordances of nature and what children need and want.
- Nature – an exemplar of diversity and a catalyst for inclusion



Research – What Children Need and Want

1. What children like about their school experience:

“big green trees with leaves, branches, and apples”

“raindrops, stones, sand, & birds”

“playing with friends” –

“risk taking . . . coziness. . . . autonomy”

2. What is quality of life for children with ADHD; What makes life really good?

“Outdoor activities with others”

3. What children with special needs want:

“to feel welcomed and safe”

“to play with other kids (not just watch)

“to take risks like other kids”

Affordances of the Natural Environment

Sticks

Rocks

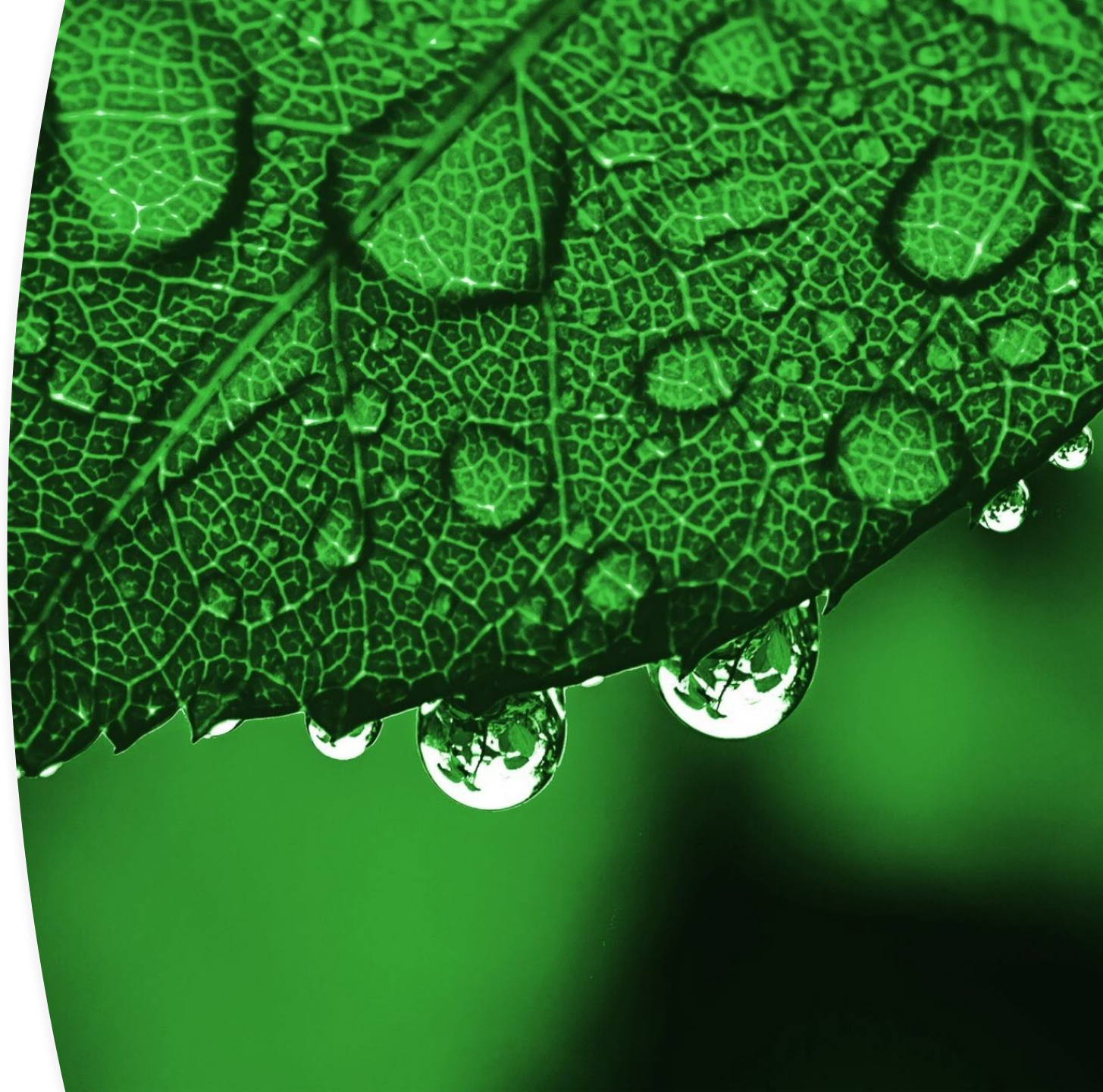
Water

Leaves

Small animals

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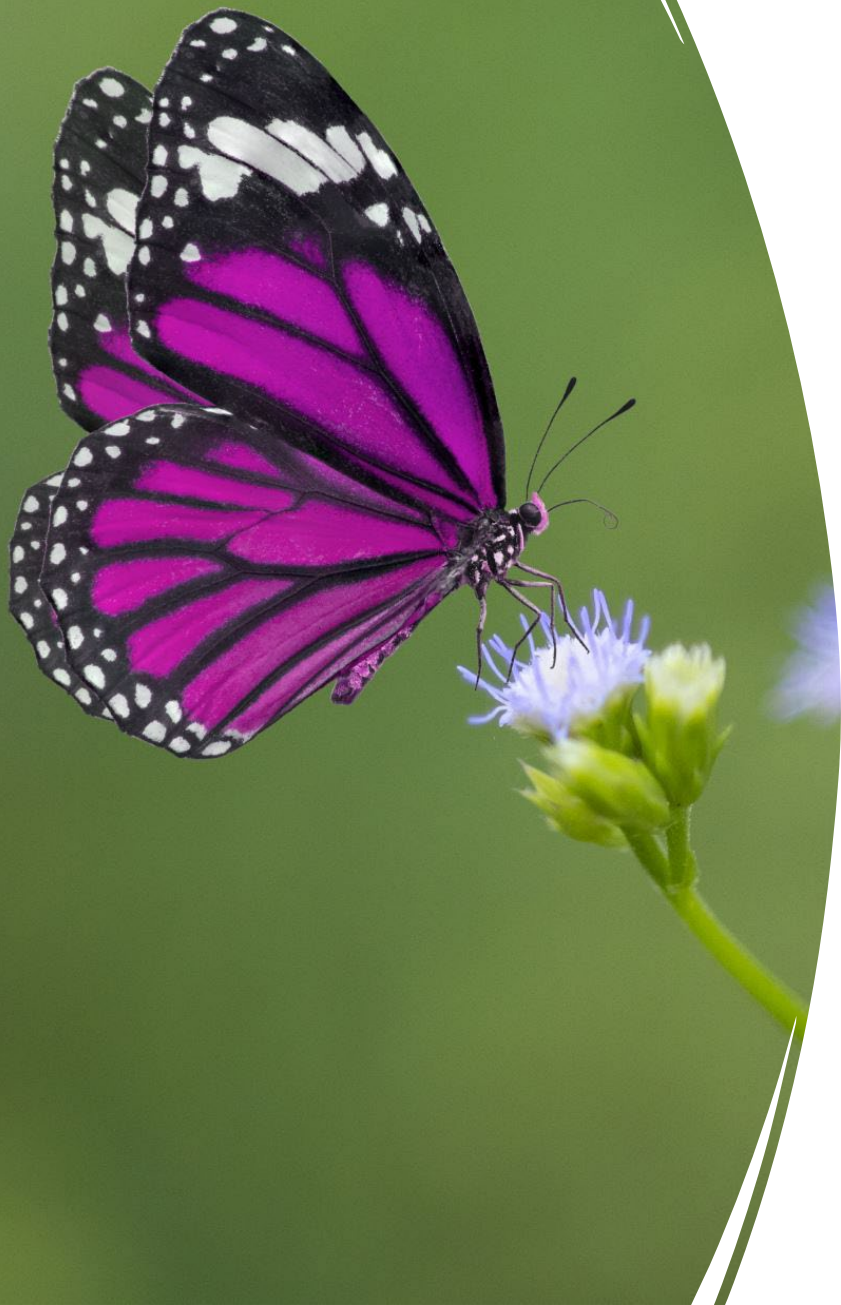
What affordances provide: Invitations to exploratory and sensory-rich experiences (wading, splashing, digging, building, climbing, risk taking, trial & error, problem solving, cooperation, different forms of play)



Research – Benefits of Nature Engagement

- Physical development
- Social development
- Emotional development
- Joint attention
- Empathy
- Enriched play and exploration





Nature and Children with Differing Abilities

Helen Keller's Experiences

Water at the pump

"Ecstatic mornings" wandering in the fields

"the delicate tremble of a butterfly's wing . . . The soft petals of violets; . . . The coolness of rain . . . The velvet of a rose . . . The utterances of animals"

"Experiences with nature made the heart glad."

Hierarchy of Needs



“The Ones We Sent Away”

Jennifer Senior, The Atlantic, September
2023





not
broken













start serving the purpose of more students help bring the program to more students who are missing their voices!

What motivates you to volunteer?

Being a mom motivates me every day to help organize in New Mexico to protect our earth—I want all children to have clean air, clean water. I want all

children to have a very strong sense within which to draw down emissions, impacting a massive shift to existing everything on renewable energy. This is particularly relevant in NM, as we are the third-largest oil and gas producing state, which is having long-term health

W.E. students spoke in Albuquerque and Santa Fe calling for New Mexico to declare a climate emergency and implement legislation to draw down emissions. We need everyone's help to ride that momentum of the Global Climate Strike so that these calls to

events and candidates who will protect our earth. I know there are so many moms, dads, sons and daughters and grandparents who feel as concerned as I do about our children's future and who want to get involved. Now is the time, before it's too late!



Activist spotlight: Sierra

Sierra, 10, is a student at New Mexico School for the Deaf and a leader of the Sierra Club Rio Grande Chapter's Global WE, kid-led climate-action program.

How did you get involved with Global Warming Express?
"I read Marissa Walter's book, 'Global Warming Express,' and became curious. After meeting the author, I had several discussions with people about the environment and joined GWE. I became inspired and enjoyed it."

Why did you decide to become a climate activist?

"There are so many reasons. Children deserve a future and we want to take charge of our lives. I also feel very connected with mother earth. I grew up on several small farms. I also love camping, hiking, climbing, and harvesting wild plants. I love the earth we live on so much and want to fight to protect it."

What message do you want adults to most hear?

"There is so much I want adults to listen about. I want them to listen to scientists. I want them to stop worrying about money so much and focus on children. I want adults to strike with us and support

from it. When we destroy it, we destroy ourselves."

What do think is the most important climate action for our state or country to take?

"Switch to renewable energy. Switch to local, sustainable businesses. Focus on community resilience. Start with community first, then state, and then country."

If other kids want to get involved but don't know how, what should they do?

"They should read more, research, and ask lots of questions. Learn the facts, but don't feel scared—they are not alone. There are many of us. We are diverse."

What's your favorite environment-related experience?

"I got a tree planted at my school and met Congresswoman Deb Haaland."

What else would you like people to know?

"I hope adults can recognize what children are going through. I hope grownups can become more thoughtful of Earth and the diversity that comes with it. This is an emergency, and we need to change the world. I want everyone to understand this, every word of



Global Warming Express/Emergency at the Albuquerque Youth Climate Strike on Sept. 20.

Kids lead the way

By Camilla Feibelman
Chapter director

On Sept. 20, New Mexico students led thousands of people who walked out of their classrooms and workplaces to strike for their future and to call for urgent implementation of climate action at every level of government.

Strikes in New Mexico were part of a global demonstration of solidarity and mobilization to address the climate crisis head on. In the days leading up to the strike, youth in Albuquerque, Santa Fe and Taos persuaded their city councils to pass Climate Emergency declarations to create a path to reduce our climate impact.

Youth organizers also established calls to action for U.S. Sens. Tom Udall and Martin Heinrich to sign on to Green New Deal, and on Climate Strike day, both senators announced they would sign on. Youth also called for Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham and the New Mexico Legislature to

Global WE update

The Global WE/GWE has started the school year off with a bang! We have 15 school programs in Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Duran and Los Alamos, with pending programs in Taos and Española. Global Warming Expressors jumped into Albuquerque's first EV with Mayor Tim Keller to announce conversion of the city fleet to EV's (see Page 6).

On Sept. 18, the GWEers urged the Albuquerque City Council to declare a Climate Emergency, and it passed! And on Sept. 20, GWEers were back, speaking and marching in the Youth Climate Strikes. All of this education, outreach, work and coordination would not be possible without that assistance of many volunteers and students. Check out the profiles of two of them on this page.

from oil and gas revenues to build a sustainable, carbon-neutral economy; achieve 100% renewable energy by 2030; and declare a moratorium on fracking; and pass community-solar legislation in 2020.

"All my life I've heard about the impending climate collapse threatening my future, and for the very first time, someone is finally taking serious action. But it isn't the adults, it isn't the politicians who we elected work for us, it's the kids—scared for their future

of those who came before us," said Jonathan Joutre-Alonzo, Native American Community Academy senior and President of Fight For Our Lives.

"We are all here because we are tired of being put down by politicians, being told that we are too young to understand what is 'really' going on," said Valeria Martinez-Hernandez of Army Biehl High School. "But no, I say that we all understand perfectly! We are here to make them understand that we are not just the future! We are











StoryWalk






RESOURCES

Children & Nature Network
Stories about Nature Smart Libraries

<https://www.childrenandnature.org/resources/thinking-outside-of-the-stacks-the-growth-of-nature-smart-libraries/>

Connecting Children of All Abilities to Nature Play & Therapeutic Gardens

<https://www.childrenandnature.org/resources/connecting-children-of-all-abilities-to-nature-play-and-therapeutic-gardens/>



September 2023 Research Digest

<https://www.childrenandnature.org/resources/research-digest-children-with-special-needs/>

Kids Included Together

<https://www.kit.org/>

The Seattle PlayGarden

<https://seattleplaygarden.org/>