

## Facts for outdoor photography

### The Problem/Sobering Statistics:

- Children ages 8 to 18 spend an average of 7.5 hours a day connected to electronic media. Kaiser Family Foundation, Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8 to 18 year olds. Publication Number 8010. Publish Dates. 2010-01-20.
- A child is six times more likely to play a video game than ride a bike. A Special Report on Youth, The Outdoor Foundation, 2010 and Kaiser Family Foundation.
- In the 2009-2010 Fitnessgram school year reports by the TEA, only a little over 8% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade-girls and boys were deemed physically fit. Texas Education Agency, Physical Fitness Assessment Initiative, Summary data 2207-2010 report.
- Today's children may be the first generation at risk of having a shorter lifespan than their parents. Ludwig DS(2007). New England Journal of Medicine, 357(23): 2325-27.

### Part of the Solution: Nature based Play

- Studies by the Children and Nature Network show that kids who play and learn outside are healthier physically and mentally and do better in school.  
<http://www.seer.org/extras/execsum.pdf>
- Active nature play improves physical conditioning and has a positive effect on emotional wellbeing and child development.  
<http://www.childrenandnature.org/downloads/C&NNHealthBenefits.pdf>
- Outdoor play has been linked to reduced risk of obesity, myopia and vitamin D deficiency.  
<http://www.childrenandnature.org/downloads/C&NNHealthBenefits.pdf>

### The Lure: Nature Photography, Use the Technology (Cameras and Cell Phones) to Get Kids Outside to Play!

- Outdoor photography and other nature awareness activities are essential to connect children with nature and are heralded by organizations such as the Children & Nature Network .
- The Children and Nature Network found that “children today are rarely engaged in unstructured and imaginative play of their choosing in rich and diverse nature-based settings,” and activities like outdoor photography provides this essential outlet for growing imaginations.
- The same organization advocates that “all children need leisurely, un-scripted, genuinely playful, and exploratory hours in their own backyards, neighborhoods, and in varied natural environments for their optimal development” meaning that with a camera in hand, your child need only look out their windows to shift their perspective and aid in vital mental development.  
<http://www.childrenandnature.org/downloads/CNNMovement2009.pdf>

## Contests:

- Organizations like the Nature Conservancy and National Geographic have annual children's outdoor photography contests open to children of varying ages. Your afternoon photo shoot could turn into a magazine cover or be featured in an art gallery, but attached to the fridge by a magnet is just fine too. <http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/photo-contest/>.  
[http://my.nature.org/photography/?gclid=COLdolvSuKoCFY\\_D7QodSzo-6w](http://my.nature.org/photography/?gclid=COLdolvSuKoCFY_D7QodSzo-6w)
- Visit abc13.com to enter the Texas Parks and Wildlife photo contest. Contest ends October 15<sup>th</sup> and winning photos will be featured in the TPW Magazine.

## Where to Go Locally:

See Website content link that will hopefully be live on your TV station website starting September 1 . In addition, Naturerocks.org will allow you to search for nature near you, by zip code.