San Francisco Youth Nature Survey

Findings of a survey conducted February - April 2019 by San Francisco Children & Nature work group members to: 1) establish a snapshot of youth's nature connection in San Francisco (referred to as youth nature connection throughout this document), 2) create space for youth to share their narratives 3) better understand barriers and opportunities, and 4) influence key policy and decision makers.

626 YOUTH SURVEY RESPONSES
Collected mostly from SF Unified School District Middle and High School classes, as well as youth from a variety of SF Children & Nature partner organizations and independent schools.

**How Often Are You in Nature?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 out of 5 Youth rarely visit nature.

**Who Do You Go With?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After-school Program</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How Do You Get There?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Trips</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Transportation</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 out of 5 Youth walk to nature. In 2017, San Francisco became the first in the country to have a park within 10-minutes walking distance from every resident.

**In the Past Year:**

- 58% of youth went camping
- 30% of youth did not and would like to

- 86% of youth took a walk in nature
- 9% of youth did not and would like to

- 76% of youth rode a bike
- 15% of youth did not and would like to

- 42% of youth helped care for a local park
- 38% of youth did not and would like to

- 63% of youth planted a seed
- 24% of youth did not and would like to

- 70% of youth splashed in the ocean or bay
- 18% of youth did not and would like to

In 2014, San Francisco signed a resolution recognizing the San Francisco Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights, declaring that every child has the right to a nature rich childhood. How are we doing?

**What Does Nature Mean to You?**

- "Nature is trees, plants, animals, bees. Sun, soil, mud."
- "Nature means being outdoors and being vulnerable in new surroundings."
- "Nature is part of my religion and is very important to me. It means beauty and life."
IF YOU WANTED TO CONNECT WITH NATURE MORE OFTEN, WHAT WOULD MAKE IT EASIER?

66% People to Go With
37% Transportation
40% Free Activities
23% Equipment
40% Feeling Safe
15% I am content with the time I already have in nature

WHAT OUTDOOR ACTIVITY WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY?

26% Camp
16% Hike/Trail Run
14% Sports
10% Bike
7% Explore Wildlife
6% Swim
5% Visit a Local Park
4% Water Sports
3% Grow Food
3% Go to the Beach

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT NATURE?

73% of youth enjoy being in nature
7% of youth do not know how to get to nature

LIBERTAD!
NATURE MAKES ME HAPPIER
AS A TEENAGE GIRL, NIGHTTIME IN NATURE IN SAN FRANCISCO ISN’T VERY APPEALING.
I’M AFRAID I’LL GET HURT IN NATURE.
POISONOUS PLANTS LEFT ME TRAUMATIZED
NATURE IS NONJUDGMENTAL, MAKES ME FEEL FREE.
“I DON’T FEEL WELCOME” BECAUSE I CAN’T USE TECHNOLOGY TO EXPRESS MYSELF.
I FEEL WELCOME. THERE’S NO SECURITY GUARD IN NATURE
“I FEEL SAFE IN NATURE WHEN I AM WITH AT LEAST ONE OTHER PERSON.”
I HAVE NEVER GOTTEN SERIOUSLY HURT IN NATURE.
There are lots of natural disasters since Global warming. I am not sure [I feel safe] because of it.

69% of youth feel welcome in nature

“I DON’T FEEL SAFE WITHOUT MY FAMILY.”

Credits
This survey is the result of a collaborative effort from the SF Children & Nature Community & Youth Engagement team with contributions from: California Academy of Sciences, Crissy Field Center, Literacy for Environmental Justice, National Park Service, GGNRA, SF Environment, SF Recreation & Parks, SF Parks Alliance, SF Public Library, SF Unified School District, YMCA of San Francisco, Youth Outside.

Youth from the following programs provided feedback to our pilot survey:
San Francisco Recreation & Park Greenagers Program, California Academy of Sciences TASC and CIS teen groups, YMCA of San Francisco Earth Service Corps

Please send comments or questions to: info@sfchildrennature.org