

Nature-Based Preschool National Conference

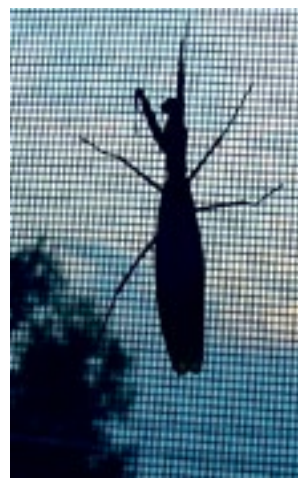
August 15-17, 2016

Dodge Nature Center and Preschool
St. Paul, Minnesota

Registration Guide



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Conference Overview

Sunday August 14

Registration Opens, 5-7 pm

Highlights: Registration and Happy Hour at Country Inn and Suites

Monday August 15

Conference Sessions, 8 am–7 pm

Highlights: Registration, keynote address, interactive sessions, Dodge Nature Preschool tour and dinner

Meals: Lunch, happy hour, and dinner included

Tuesday August 16

Conference Sessions 8 am–7 pm

Highlights: Panel discussions, interactive sessions, BBQ dinner

Meals: Lunch, happy hour, and dinner included

Wednesday August 17

Field Trip (Additional Fee) 9 am–5 pm

Highlights: Visit three area nature-based preschool programs

Meals and Transportation: Boxed lunch and transportation included

Registration Fees

Conference Registration: \$275

Registration includes: Sunday registration happy hour; Monday and Tuesday sessions, lunches, and dinners

Field Trip: \$50

Fee includes: lunch and transportation

To Register

Visit www.naturalstart.org



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Keynote Speaker

Monday August 15



Ruth Wilson

Are We There Yet?

We've come a long way in integrating the best of early childhood education with nature education. We have reasons to congratulate ourselves and celebrate work well done. But we also have reason to ask,

"Where do we go from here?" Can we further define the role of early childhood environmental education to include the promotion of peace and social justice in a troubled world?

Intersections, like bridges, invite us to move forward, to explore new territory, and to respond to the quickening you may already feel inside of you. So, yes, we celebrate the coming together of early childhood education and environmental education; but we also prepare for the next step in our remarkable journey dedicated to the well-being of children, society, and the world of all living things.

About Dr. Wilson

Many consider Dr. Ruth Wilson to be the founder of the field of early childhood environmental education. After over 14 years as a professor of early childhood education, Dr. Wilson is now an education consultant who has helped clients from Sesame Street to Brookfield Zoo to blend early childhood and environmental education. In 2007, she was given a lifetime achievement award by the National Arbor Day Foundation for her work in connecting children with nature.

Dr. Wilson's published books include *Learning is in Bloom* (in press), *Nature and Young Children: Encouraging Creative Play and Learning in Natural Environments*, *Fostering a Sense of Wonder during the Early Childhood Years*, and *Environmental Education at the Early Childhood Level*.

To register, visit: www.naturalstart.org



Sessions

The conference includes three tracks to help meet the needs of attendees looking for different kinds of professional development:



Nature Preschool 101—Sessions in this strand are most appropriate for those who are interested in starting a nature-based preschool program or learning more about the field. Examples of topics include: business planning, innovative partnerships, licensing programs, and more.



Teaching—Sessions in this strand are most appropriate for educators who are interested in refining their practice as educators in nature-based programs. Examples of topics include: teaching strategies, documentation and assessment, and curriculum design and implementation.



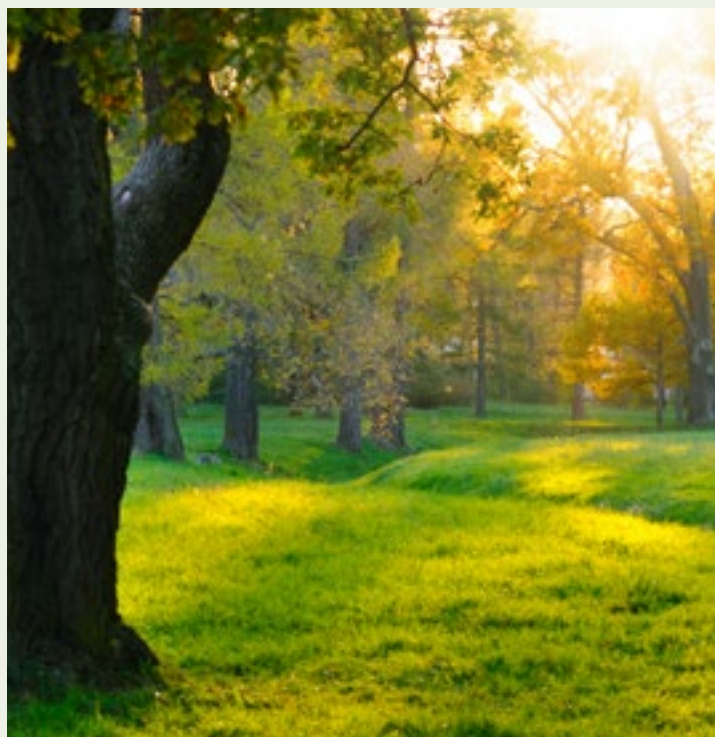
Administration—Sessions in this strand are most appropriate for administrators who are running nature-based programs. Examples of topics include: best practices in nature-based education, fundraising, and marketing nature-based programs.

Also, new this year is a **Research Roundtable** session that will allow participants to meet researchers in nature-based education, learn about their research, and engage in group discussions on research topics.

Graduate Credits Available

Interested in receiving graduate credits for your participation in the conference? Optional graduate credits (2 credits) will be available through Hamline University.

Contact Patty Born Selly at pselly01@hamline.edu to learn more.



Association of Nature Center Administrators (ANCA) Summit

For the past two years, the Nature-Based Preschool National Conference has been held in association with the ANCA Summit. This year, the ANCA Summit will be at the nearby Audubon Center of the North Woods in Sandstone, MN, August 17-21, 2016.

Visit www.natctr.org for more information.



ANCA Summit

August 17-21, 2016

SANDSTONE, MN



Field Trip

Wednesday, August 17

Gather new ideas and inspiration by exploring three nature-based preschools in the Twin Cities. We will depart at 9 am by bus and return at 5 pm.

Fee \$50 (includes a boxed lunch and transportation)



All Seasons School

All Seasons Preschool provides a model of early learning experience that meets children's developmental needs while fostering meaningful relationships with senior adults. The school offers an intergenerational program with a nature-based and art-centered curriculum.



Children's Country Day School

Children's Country Day School has provided quality early childhood programming for young children for over 40 years. This model farm is located on 7 acres of pasture and woodlands, overlooking the city of St. Paul and the Mississippi River Valley. Children learn lessons in biology, empathy, and responsibility through their care and interaction with a wide variety of animals. From feeding llamas and riding ponies, to grooming burros and walking goats, students interact with animals on a daily basis.



Tamarack Nature Center

Located in White Bear Township, Tamarack Nature Center is a 320-acre preserve within Bald Eagle-Otter Lakes Regional Park. In September of 2015, a new 3,500 square-foot center opened with 2 new classrooms that more than doubled the student capacity. The unique curriculum is focused on immersing children in nature, allowing them to learn with, from, and about it. Each class is led by both a preschool teacher from White Bear Lake Area Schools and an early childhood naturalist/educator from Tamarack Nature Center.



To register, visit: www.naturalstart.org



Travel

Lodging

A block of rooms has been reserved at the nearby Country Inn & Suites for \$105/night + tax. This rate includes continental breakfast.

Address: 3035 Holiday Lane, Eagan, MN 55121
To make reservations: Call the hotel directly at 651-287-8800.

Be sure to book under the block named “Nature-Based Preschool National Conference” to secure the discounted rate. Please book by August 10th to guarantee your room. After that date, prices can’t be guaranteed.

Shuttles will be provided from the Country Inn & Suites to Dodge Nature Center on Monday and Tuesday.

Twin Cities Travel

Airport: Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport
www.msairport.com

Light Rail: www.metrotransit.org

Airport Shuttles: www.supershuttle.com/Locations/MinneapolisStPaulMSP

Local Shuttles: Shuttles from Country Inn and Suites, Eagan, will run to and from the airport as well as places within a 5 mile radius of this location.

Twin Cities Highlights

Extending Your Stay in the Twin Cities? Our hosts have suggested you might like check out some of these sites:

Minnesota Landscape Arboretum

<http://www.arboretum.umn.edu/>

The Arboretum features 1,000 acres of unique public gardens, including bike and walking paths. Visit the Green Play, an outdoor nature play area for children from birth through school age.



Carpenter St. Croix Valley Nature Center

<http://carpenternaturecenter.org/>

Located within a half hour of the Twin Cities, this nature center includes hiking trails, world-class exhibits with live animals, and restored prairie and wooded bluffs.

Mall of America

www.mallofamerica.com

Mall of America® is located in Bloomington, Minnesota—only 15 minutes from downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul. As one of the most visited tourist destinations in the world, Mall of America is a retail shopper’s paradise.

Reducing Our Carbon Footprint



renewable
choice
ENERGY

Natural Start is working with Renewable Choice Energy to reduce the environmental impact

of our conference. You can easily purchase verified emission reductions on your registration form. This voluntary effort will help balance the carbon dioxide emissions associated with your travel to the conference and use of resources during your stay in the Twin Cities. Renewable Choice supports a variety of domestic and international projects that conform to leading standards.

To register, visit: www.naturalstart.org