

Come Play With Us!

Nature-Based Preschool Conference

Professional development for nature-based preschool teachers & administrators
In conjunction with the Association of Nature Center Administrators (ANCA) Annual Summit

August 20-23, 2014

Kalamazoo Nature Center (KNC), Kalamazoo, MI

A gathering to provide nature-preschool educators with resources, connections, and inspiration to enhance the world of nature play and education. Registration includes nature-preschool based sessions, ANCA Summit activities, all conference meals (Wed. evening – Sat. evening) and abundant networking opportunities.

Conference Highlights:

Wednesday, August 20 (at the Kalamazoo Nature Center)

- Welcome evening reception (*ANCA and NBP combined*)

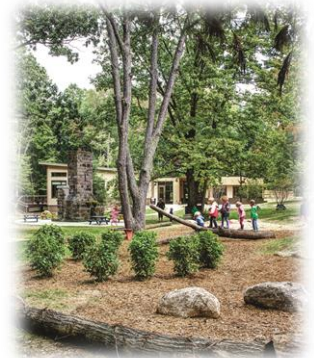
Thursday, August 21 (at the Nature's Way Preschool)

- Tour the new building at Nature's Way Preschool and its outdoor areas
- Concurrent sessions—presentations for nature-based preschool staff.
 - Sticks and Fairies: A Waldkindergarten's Perspective on Gender
 - Integrating High-Quality Early Childhood Methods Parent Communication and Involvement
 - Engaging Parents and the Community Through Special Programs
 - Nature as a Catalyst for Emerging Curriculum
 - Demonstrating Children's Learning – How to create students portfolios that support assessment, reflect curriculum, and are fun and meaningful for children and families
 - Hands-On! Creative activities for the nature-classroom
 - Preschool in the Woods
 - Spreading the Word on Nature-Based Approach to the Early Childhood World



Friday, August 22 (at the Kalamazoo Nature Center)

- Morning keynote, *Hearts First, Then Minds: Using Emotion to Connect People and Nature* by Cal Martin, Chief Naturalist, Ontario Parks
- Facilitated sessions on nature preschool topics such as:
 - Long sticks, Short sticks, Smooth sticks, Bumpy sticks
 - Outdoor play spaces
 - Hikes, Hikes, and More Hikes
 - Using Public Policy to Advance the Nature Preschool Movement
 - Where are we Now?
- Panel Discussion: Diverse approaches to Nature Preschools and their Near Kin



Saturday, August 23 (at the Kalamazoo Nature Center)

- Off-site session option (additional \$25 for transportation). Visit Little Hawks Preschool at the Outdoor Discovery Center in Holland, MI. Also visit a couple of other natural play areas and learn about a recent grant the ODC received to help preschools "green up" their play areas.
- On-site option (no additional charge): Open Space where participants can offer up specific topics to talk more about and we will offer a space to continue that conversation.
- Evening dinner to include pig roast and live music



Conference FAQ's:

1. **Is this conference really designed for me?** If a majority of your work is with young children (birth – 5- years) in an outdoor setting then yes, this conference is designed for you!
2. **How is this conference connected to the ANCA conference?** We are sharing some of the resources of the ANCA conference such as some meals, transportation, and conference site for Friday and Saturday (Thursday will be held at Nature's Way Preschool).
3. **How do I know if I qualify for the reduced \$250 conference rate?** Thanks to a generous gift from the North American Association for Environmental Education/Natural Start Alliance we are able to off-set the cost of the conference for the following individuals:

Educators and administrators whose **primary** role is working with nature-based preschools or other early childhood (birth-5 years) environmental education projects

This would include:

- Preschool teachers or other early childhood educators
- Naturalists/teachers whose job responsibilities include more than 75% work with nature-based, early childhood programming
- Early childhood/nature preschool Director

This would NOT include:

- Executive Directors and other senior administrators of a nature center that has a nature-based preschool
- Naturalists/teachers whose job responsibilities include less than 75% of their time with early-childhood programming

4. **How do I register at the reduced-rate?** On page 3 of the registration you will be asked to select your conference option. The list will include the full ANCA rate, several one-day options, and at the bottom there is an option for the Nature-Based Preschool Conference.
5. **What is included in the conference fee?** Registrants will receive full conference benefits (Wed. evening – Saturday evening) including; nature-preschool based sessions, ANCA Summit activities, all conference meals (Wed. evening – Sat. evening – see brochure for full details), transportation (if needed) from hotels to conference locations, and numerous networking opportunities. There is also a special rate at the Holiday Inn West offered for conference participants.
6. **How far is Nature's Way Preschool from the Kalamazoo Nature Center's Visitor Center?** These two locations are about 20-25 minutes apart.



For full conference booklet or to register, go to:
<http://naturecenter.org/ANCA2014.aspx>

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