Family Nature Clubs engage thousands of families from across the country and around the world in frequent active time together in the natural world. Groups of families organized into clubs help to break down barriers to getting out in nature, bringing together families from diverse cultures and across generations.

At a time of their lives when children need most to be engaged in active play outdoors, instead we find them with nearly every minute of their day either in some structured activity or connected to electronic media. Recent studies indicate that children are spending between 8–11 hours per day engaged in screen-time. This exacts a high toll on family bonds and quality time together, key ingredients to children’s social/emotional development and to family wellbeing.

Family Nature Clubs are dedicated to helping people get time in nature back on the family calendar by providing regular opportunities to engage in hikes, paddles, camping trips and other fun outdoor family activities. These experiences give families a sense of place, allow for free play in nature, and familiarize families with the many opportunities for outdoor recreation in their neighborhoods.

Family Nature Clubs engage families in creating healthy living habits for themselves and their communities.

“**Our older son Aaron never wanted to hike with us. Now he’s excited to get out with the other kids and explore with the club!**”

Ying, parent
Family Adventures in Nature, San Diego

C&NN supports nearly 200 Family Nature Clubs worldwide with over 160 in the U.S., serving more than 35,000 individuals. With new large-scale partnerships forming, C&NN hopes to engage hundreds of thousands of new families in Family Nature Clubs to create active, healthy, connected families.
C&NN’S NATURAL FAMILIES NETWORK GOALS

Families are direct decision-makers in the lives of children and must be at the forefront of this movement. Through large-scale partnerships with organizations that also seek to serve families in nature, C&NN will grow family participation in Family Nature Clubs.

In 2014-2015, we will:

1. **INCREASE AWARENESS OF PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS** of active family time in nature.

2. **TRAIN PARENTS AND DIVERSE YOUNG ADULT LEADERS** to work together to lead nature-based activities.

3. **EXTEND THE REACH TO UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS** by providing support and mentorship for new and existing leaders.

4. **CREATE FAMILY ADVENTURE BACKPACKS** with hands-on activity plans, nature activity cards, field tools, and ideas for community-based stewardship, made available at participating public libraries.

5. **CREATE A FAMILY NATURE CLUB COMMUNITY ACTION AWARD** recognizing the Club that completes the most number of stewardship project hours.

6. **CREATE A MOBILE PLATFORM** where families can post videos, pictures and comments about their activities to cross-inspire new ideas.

7. **ENGAGE FAMILIES ACROSS THE WORLD** with tools available in mobile and multi-lingual platforms to make them accessible to users across the globe.

How do Family Nature Clubs reduce the barriers between children and nature?

**Family Nature Clubs provide a way to share time, resources and knowledge.**

- By joining with others, parents, grandparents and other guardians find it easier to provide nature experiences for their children because the group and group leaders provide guidance on activities and ways to engage children in new environments.

- Group activities provide increased motivation to get nature and “green exercise” back on the family calendar. Think of how much easier it is to maintain regular gym visits if you have an exercise buddy. The same can work for families in nature.

- Family Nature Clubs provide access for all, particularly families with single parents and families who live in underserved communities.

“I want to plant seeds of appreciation for nature that my son can nurture for years to come. Each outing has also reminded me of a part of myself that I almost forgot I had—a natural sense of wonder.”

Amanda
Family Nature Club organizer