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CELEBRATE NATIONAL GET OUTDOORS DAY

MANY PROGRAMS SLATED FOR THIS YEAR'S 'GREAT DAY OF PLAY'

MONTGOMERY COUNTY – Recent studies show children are smarter, cooperative, happier and healthier when they have frequent and varied opportunities for free and unstructured play outdoors. Over the past few decades, however, research has shown children are spending less and less time engaging in unstructured outdoor play. Five Rivers MetroParks seeks to remedy this with a day-long, agency-wide “play date.”

In conjunction with National Get Outdoors Day on **Saturday, June 12**, several programs will take place throughout the area:

- **FAMILY GARDEN WALK**

10:00 AM-12:00 PM

WEGERZYN GARDENS METROPARK, 1301 East Siebenthaler Ave.

Meet at the entrance to the Children’s Garden to begin your exploration of walking, gardening and playing at Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark. Includes a walk to the community gardens, a chance to plant and learn, and a scavenger hunt through the park. Weather dependent; Call (937) 277-6545 for more details.

- **NATURE PLAY - FAMILY STYLE!**

10:00 AM- 1:00 PM

SUGARCREEK METROPARK, Parking Lot, 4178 Conference Rd.

Enjoy an afternoon of play, while learning about the importance of keeping kids outside. Families will move through the park from station to station, building forts, exploring the creek, playing hide-and-seek, and many other activities. Families that complete three activities will get a backyard nature exploration kit to take home. Reservations required and limited, call (937) 277-4178 or register online.

- **SENSE OF WONDER STATIONS**

12:30 PM- 3:30 PM

GERMANTOWN METROPARK, Nature Center, 6910 Boomershine Rd.

Stop by between 12:30 PM and 3:30 PM and wander down the red trail to encounter exploration stations around the pond, cedar grove and forest. Families can collect a stamp at each station and return to the nature center to collect a prize book to read outside on beautiful days. For more details call (937) 855-7717.

- **FAMILY OUTDOOR FUN**

1:00 PM- 4:00 PM

ENGLEWOOD METROPARK, Patty Shelter/East Park, 4361 National Rd.

Hey Mom and Dad! Spend some family time in the great outdoors! You and your kids can build a fort, go on a nature scavenger hunt, or explore a creek (no sandals please). This program is ideal for elementary-aged children. For more information call (937) 278-2623 Monday - Friday.

“Unstructured nature play is a non-adult lead activity, but does not mean there is no adult supervision,” explains MetroParks Naturalist Joshua York. “Time is spent





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outdoors in which the child is leading his or her own discoveries. Examples of nature play include creek walking, playing in mud or dirt, fort building, hide and seek, lifting up rocks, leaf piles, rock skipping, or catching insects. Parent or guardian participation can be as simple as sharing your reactions to the sliminess of a salamander, the perfection of a tiny blossom or the unexpected rainbow in a mud puddle.”

Families are encouraged to attend one of these programs or create their own adventures in a MetroPark. Take a walk, look for birds, play “I Spy,” ride a bike, or splash around in the interactive fountains at RiverScape or Island MetroParks. Discover the types of activities waiting for families to enjoy by visiting metroarks.org/families. Learn more about the Get Outdoors initiative at www.nationalgetoutdoorsday.org.

ABOUT FIVE RIVERS METROPARKS

Five Rivers MetroParks focuses on three areas – conservation, recreation and education – as part of its role as steward of greater Dayton’s public lands. Established in 1963 through the efforts of forward-thinking citizens concerned about preserving green space and natural areas, Five Rivers MetroParks has grown to a nationally renowned park system composed of natural area parks, gardens, sensitive river corridors, urban parks and a network of recreation trails. Educational programs and recreational opportunities are offered year-round for all ages. And, diverse natural habitats are being protected and cared for today to assure their future existence. To learn more about Five Rivers MetroParks, log onto www.metroarks.org or call (937) 275-PARK.

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