

Nature Play WA

Annual Report

2013/2014



IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of
Sport and Recreation

CONTENTS

Introduction	Page 4
Message from the incoming Chair, Allan Tranter.....	Page 4
Chief Executive Officer, Griffin Longley.....	Page 5
About Us.....	Page 6
Vision.....	Page 6
Mission.....	Page 6
Guiding Principles.....	Page 6
Who We Are.....	Page 7
Expanding our Reach.....	Page 8
Nature Play SA and Nature Play QLD Launched.....	Page 8
International Collaboration.....	Page 8
Programs and Events.....	Page 9
Nature Play Spaces.....	Page 9
Camps.....	Page 12
Family Geocaching Weekend.....	Page 13
Schools Geo-challenge.....	Page 13
Passport to an Amazing Childhood.....	Page 15
Active School Diaries.....	Page 19
Family Nature Clubs.....	Page 20
Geocaching.....	Page 22
Garden Week.....	Page 23
Raising Awareness.....	Page 24
News Media Engagement.....	Page 24
Website.....	Page 26
Social Media.....	Page 27
Newsletter communications.....	Page 28
Speaking Engagements.....	Page 29
Operations.....	Page 30
Founding Partners.....	Page 30
The Board.....	Page 31
The Staff.....	Page 32
Get involved!.....	Page 33
Acknowledgments.....	Page 34



INTRODUCTION

Message from the Incoming Chair, Allan Tranter

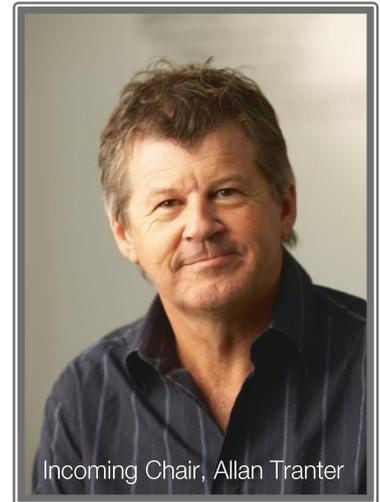
As you read this report you can see there is much to celebrate as the year has brought many successes. This has been primarily due to continued dedication and capability of a strong staff contingent more than ably led by our CEO Griffin Longley.

Success brings challenges as we grow from the “childhood” of an organisation through “adolescence” into “adulthood.” A significant factor in the need for this maturing as an organisation is the fact that we are at the end of our third year out of four of guaranteed funding from the State Government. Fortunately, two additional years of funding were announced in the recent budget giving us a little more time to develop and consolidate other sources of funding.

The Board has been aware of the need to both evolve in structure and in operational methods to ensure longevity of Nature Play WA. As a result two significant initiatives have been taken:

- The reshaping of the Board to create a balance between members who are primarily “custodians of the idea” of Nature Play WA and those who are appointed primarily due to their specific expertise. To this end constitutional changes have been made to allow this blend to be more easily achieved.
- The development of profitable income streams that will initially supplement government grants but that have the potential to ensure the longevity of the organisation. As a result a consulting arm of Nature Play WA is being developed as will other developments over the coming year.

As a Board we thank members for their continuing support and undertake to engage with you regularly as we continue to grow this nature play movement.



Incoming Chair, Allan Tranter



Being outdoors is the biggest determinant of physical activity

James Sallis, Health Psychology, 1993



Chief Executive Officer, Griffin Longley

It has been a year of significant growth for Nature Play WA including the expansion of the Nature Play family across state borders into South Australia and Queensland. All three states are now working together with a vastly increased capacity to raise awareness of the importance of unstructured play outside and are sharing ideas, programs and initiatives through a licencing model that rewards innovation.

Internationally, Nature Play WA continues to work closely with Islandwood, a not-for-profit outdoor learning organisation based in Seattle USA, to develop a smart phone application that aims to get children outdoors based on the concept and content of Nature Play WA's flagship child engagement initiative – the Passport to an Amazing Childhood. The app beta will be launched in the coming months.



Closer to home, Nature Play WA ramped up its efforts to get more kids outdoors by offering on-the-ground programs and activities for Western Australian families. Three fantastic family adventure camps were developed and operated in partnership with the Department of Sport and Recreation.

Our successful Schools Geo-challenge event on Rottneest Island was expanded to allow families to get in on the fun of this high-tech treasure hunt through our inaugural family geocaching weekend. The family event sold out very quickly with 59 families taking the challenge.

We have continued to build and diversify our communication network - through the mainstream media (generating 86 news stories), social media (more than 7,500 Facebook likes), our e-newsletter (more than 11,000 subscribers) and our website (204,878 page views).

During the year Nature Play WA staff delivered 19 presentations attended by a total of more than 2,500 people. These were primarily keynote presentations delivered to decision makers and industry professionals from health, local government, government, schools and the early years.

The awareness built through media coverage and speaking engagements fuelled a huge public interest in the development of nature play spaces. Our organisation responded to this demand by moving into facilitating the planning and design of nature play spaces by offering a play space consultancy service. We also ran a series of three nature play space workshops and created a Nature Play Spaces Manual. We see these as growing areas of business for Nature Play WA, and expect them to develop significantly in coming years.

It's certainly been a busy year – I hope you enjoy reading all about it in this report and that you are inspired to get involved and help make unstructured outdoor play, 'nature play', a normal part of childhood.



ABOUT US

Vision

For unstructured, outdoor play to become a normal part of every Western Australian child's daily life, so they can develop into resilient, healthy and creative members of the community.

Mission

To work innovatively and collaboratively to make nature play a normal part of childhood again.
Our primary target group is families of children aged 0-12 years.

Guiding Principles

- **Collaboration:** We will work collaboratively with our partners and stakeholders.
- **Community based:** The primary focus of our efforts will be in working directly with families and community groups.
- **Flexibility:** We will be flexible, agile and innovative in our approach.
- **Respect:** Respect for nature and others is fundamental to our mission.
- **Equity:** We will strive to service Western Australia's diverse community equitably.



Australian children spend under two hours outside per day - that's less than our maximum security prisoners.*

*Growing up in Australia, the Longitudinal study of Australian Children, 2005



Who we are

Nature Play WA is an incorporated not-for-profit organisation committed to helping Western Australian families make unstructured play outdoors, “nature play”, a normal part of their daily lives. We are a collaborative organisation with 18 founding Western Australian partner groups from across a diverse range of sectors including health, environment, education and sport.

Nature Play WA strives to develop novel initiatives and resources that inspire children to play, learn and be physically active in nature while raising awareness of the importance of unstructured outdoor play for children’s health, wellbeing and resilience.

Our core objectives are to:

- Increase awareness among all Western Australian parents of the benefits of nature play.
- Increase opportunities for families to participate in nature play activities.
- Create new resources and promote existing resources that make nature play easy and accessible.
- Establish a broad communication network with partner groups and Western Australian families.
- Advocate for the importance of nature play to government and private bodies and agencies who work with children.



Being physically active every day is important for the healthy growth and development of infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers.

The National Physical Activity Guidelines



Expanding our reach

Nature Play SA and Nature Play QLD Launched

Nature Play WA achieved many milestones this year with some exciting expansion into offerings of nature play space consultation and workshops, as well as family camps and much more. But the achievement we are most proud of in 2013/14 is our launch of sister organisations.

In February 2014, the Nature Play family expanded to include Queensland and South Australia after their respective State Governments announced the launch of Nature Play SA and Nature Play QLD.

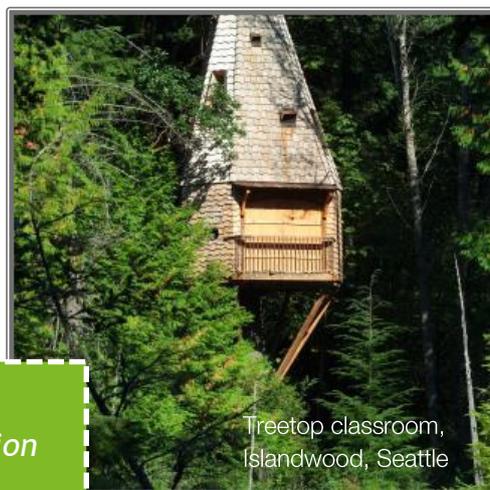
These organisations are built on the Nature Play WA model and under licence form part of the Nature Play Australia umbrella organisation.

All three States are working together to raise awareness of the importance of unstructured play and to build the nature play movement throughout Australia.



International Collaboration

Nature Play WA is working closely with Islandwood, a not-for-profit organisation based in Seattle (USA) that runs a unique 255-acre outdoor learning centre, to develop a smart phone application that aims to get more children outdoors, more often. The application is based on the concept and content of one of Nature Play WA's major child engagement initiatives – the Passport to an Amazing Childhood - with a beta to be launched in the coming months.



Treetop classroom, Islandwood, Seattle

In the coming months Nature Play WA and Islandwood (Seattle, USA) will be launching a smart phone application (in Beta form) that aims to get more children outdoors, more often.



PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Nature Play Spaces

Nature Play WA has moved from raising interest in nature play spaces to facilitating their planning and design on the ground, at a range of budget points.



Targeting schools, child care, community, playgroups, government and industry, the following Play Space Strategy components were implemented this year: consulting, workshops and resource development.



Nature play space consulting

Nature Play WA has begun offering a consulting service as a means to help drive positive nature play outcomes in the community at the same time as generating a new income stream.

With the addition of Shea Hatch, Landscape Architect and Playscape Consultant, the service is picking up quickly with initial clients including:

- City of Vincent (Braithwaite Park); and,
- City of Cockburn (Risk Benefit Strategy)

For more information visit:

<http://www.natureplaywa.org.au/nature-play-space-consultancy>



Creating engaging play spaces, activating public open space and connecting local communities are vital to ensuring our kids get to enjoy the unstructured play every other generation has taken for granted.



Workshops and professional development

Nature Play WA's Play Space Workshops form an integral part of the Play Space Strategy. Workshops are tailored to meet specific target audience requirements and can be planned for regional locations in Western Australia where applicable. Partnerships with agencies, organisations and professionals form an essential part of workshop delivery.

Play Space Workshops are a growing area of business for Nature Play WA with each of the following sessions, fully booked and cost positive, taking place this financial year:

DATE	TITLE	AUDIENCE	FORMAT
11/09/2013	Getting started with nature play spaces	40 metro - teachers, parents, Principals, P&C members	Afternoon session 4.00pm to 5.30pm Introductory information.
15/11/2013	Hands-on workshop: creating nature play spaces	41 metro - teachers, Principals, P&C, parents	Day workshop 9.00am to 2.30pm Mixture of policy, practice and hands-on walk through Naturescape, Kings Park. Included local schools presenting on current projects.
20/06/2014	Early years nature play space workshop	60 educators, early childhood centre managers, P&C, parents and allied health practitioners	Day workshop 9am – 3pm Presentations from Nature Play WA, Fiona Robbe, early years play space design expert and Sue Deveraux, Quality Manager of the Education and Care Regulatory Unit with Department of Local Government and Communities.

Nature Play WA also partnered with Parks and Leisure Australia in November 2013, and again in April 2014, to deliver two professional development sessions for local government, developers, landscape architects, relevant organisations, professional bodies and not-for-profits. These sessions involved a mix of presentations and practical guidance, including nature places and spaces tours.



Nature Play WA was invited to be on the judging panel for the 2014 PLA Awards - Play Space award - Category B (projects valued \$250 000 to \$1 million) - April 2014.



Resource development

A Nature Play Spaces Resource Manual has been developed and produced to assist in the provision of information, skills and expertise.

The Manual forms the foundation of the Nature Play Space Workshops, and provides the 'Who, What, Where, How and Why' of nature play spaces.



Natural, irregular and challenging spaces help kids learn to recognise, assess and negotiate risk and build confidence and competence.



Camps

Nature Play WA is becoming an increasingly dynamic organisation – offering on the ground programs and activities for Western Australian families.



This year Nature Play WA, in partnership with the Department of Sport and Recreation, offered three fantastic family adventure camps.

Two of the camps took place at the Department of Sport and Recreation's Camp Quararup in Albany (October 2013 and April 2014) and one at the Department's Bickley Camp (April 2014).

One hundred and thirty five people from 34 families participated in the camps, where kids could easily tick off more than 30 of Nature Play WA's *51 Things To Do Before You're 12*.



Imagine getting through childhood without having climbed a tree, or spent a night camping. Let's not let our children be the first generation to miss out on playing outdoors, it's too fun and it's too important.

Mike Wood, Bibbulmun Track Foundation Chairman



Family Geocaching Weekend

For the first time ever, Nature Play WA, the Department of Sport and Recreation and the Rottnest Island Authority were excited to offer WA families a chance to participate in a high-tech treasure hunt – the Nature Play Family Geo-Challenge - over the Mother's Day weekend (9 - 11 May 2014).

Nature Play WA hid 46 geocache canisters around the island and provided participating families with a GPS device, clues and instructions to find them.

The self-guided geocaching experience was a great chance for families to share an outdoor adventure at their own pace on WA's majestic Rottnest Island. It was not a race, but families had the opportunity to win prizes just for participating.

A special package deal that included accommodation (two nights), ferry, bike hire and entry in the Nature Play WA Geo-Challenge treasure hunt was offered as part of the event, which sold out rapidly.

Fifty-nine families, including loads of grinning kids on bikes, had the time of their lives and each went away with the knowledge, skills and enthusiasm to continue geocaching in their local communities.



Schools Geo-challenge

Coinciding with the geocaching weekend for families was the annual Nature Play WA Schools Geo-Challenge, held on Friday 9 May 2014, in partnership with the Rottnest Island Authority and the Department of Sport and Recreation.

Thirty eight teams (152 students and 38 teachers), representing 26 schools, braved rough seas to navigate Rottnest Island using a GPS unit and map to find 46 hidden geocaches (canisters with clues and prizes). In the process the teams learnt about the Island's unique heritage and discovered how geocaching can help them be active outdoors and connect to the world around them.

Not only did schools get the opportunity to use the Island as their outdoor classroom but they also received lesson plans and information on how to get their whole class involved in geocaching on their return. Some also got a few seconds of fame on the Channel 10 news report!



The Schools Geo-challenge would not have been possible without the help of the 32 volunteers from Geocaching WA, Nature Play WA's Facebook group, the Department of Sport and Recreation, The Big Help Mob, the University of Notre Dame and the University of WA.



“What a great day and way to engage students - incorporating team building, problem solving and environmental recreation”.

Attending teacher



Media interest

The Nature Play WA Family Geocaching Weekend and Schools Geo-Challenge were very successful in garnering media interest with:

- Channel 9 doing a live cross to CEO, Griffin Longley, at the E-Sheds on the morning of May 9 2014 and
- Channel 10 doing a lead story as part of their 6pm news (May 9 2014).

Radio station 6PR also covered the two events as did the **Western Suburbs Weekly**, **Cockburn Gazette** and **Wanneroo Times** who ran follow up stories during the week of 20 May 2014.

The Family Geocaching Weekend was also successfully promoted on Nature Play WA's Facebook page with the post reaching 4,560 people.

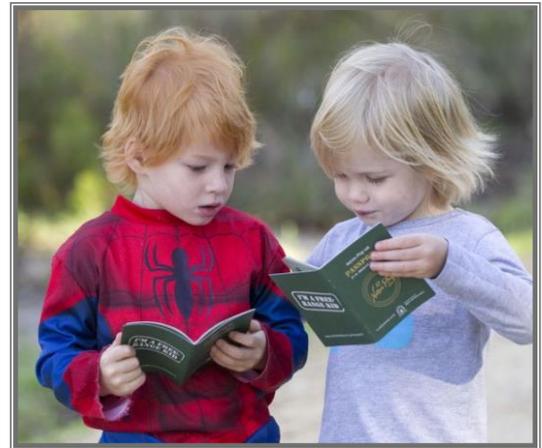


Passport to an Amazing Childhood

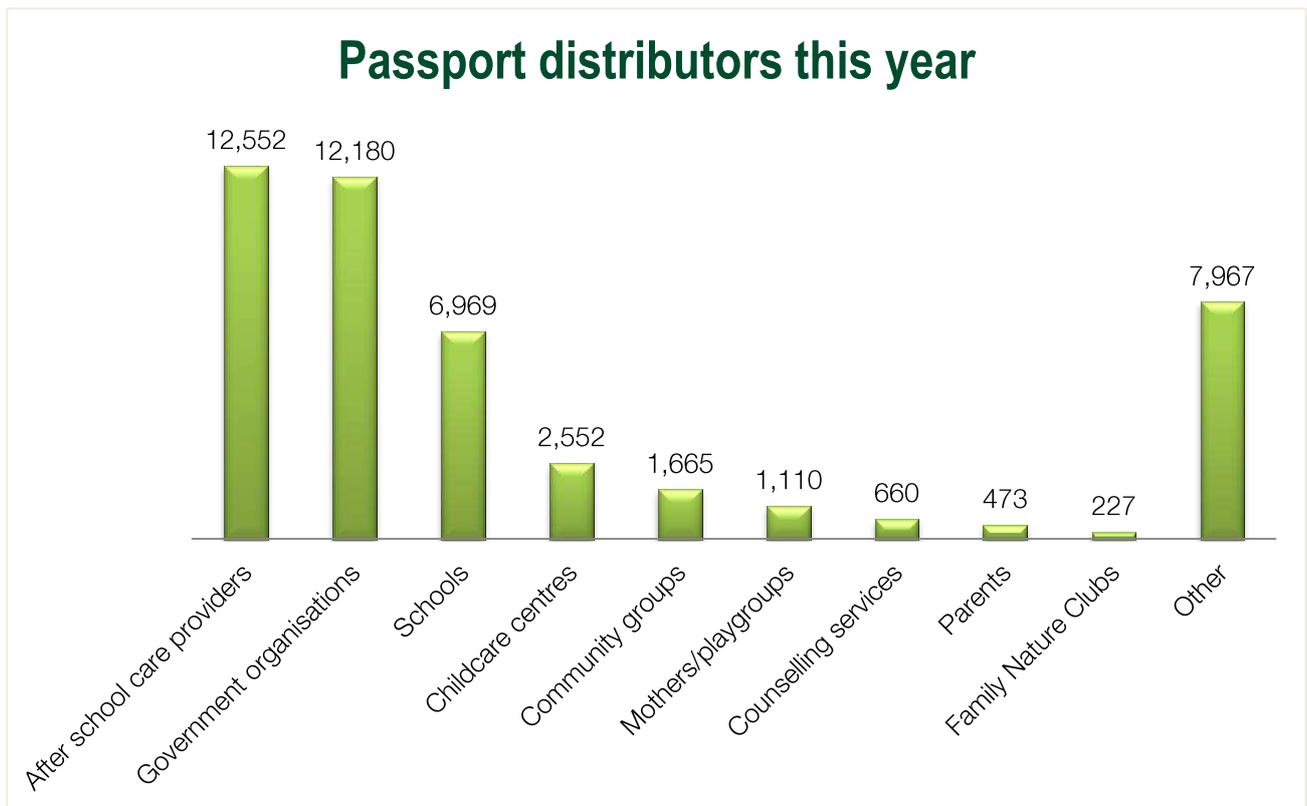
The Nature Play WA Passport to an Amazing Childhood program is an exciting, interactive and fun way to get active and outdoors.

The idea is to get kids (3-12+) outside by completing a series of fun, low (or no) cost "missions" delivered through Nature Play WA's signature passport booklet, available free to Western Australians.

The passport has ten "mission" pages, stickers and suggestions on great places to go and things to do outdoors. Also, at the back, there is a list of *15 things every kid should do before they're 12*.



The passport initiative has been met with extraordinary enthusiasm. More than 161,679 passports have been distributed through schools, community groups, counselling services, childcare providers, parent groups and events since the program began in April 2011. Of these, 46,355 were distributed this financial year.



For those looking for additional missions, an exciting online interface, optimised for smart phones and tablets, allows kids to earn virtual points for completing outdoor activities. These points can be used to build avatars and to win great prizes!

The online interface includes more than 150 age-appropriate missions, great prizes and more. It is all about getting kids (3-12+) to run, jump, climb, splash, invent and play!

Passport program benefits

- Provides an easy, fun introduction to outdoor play for those with little experience.
- Distribution through educational institutions validates, for parents, the importance of nature play in child development.
- Provides educators with opportunities to incorporate nature play into the curriculum.



I intend to use (the passports), both as part of the 'Environment' themed program I'm building, and to encourage the kids to participate in outdoor play outside of Scouts. Thanks for all the really useful info!"

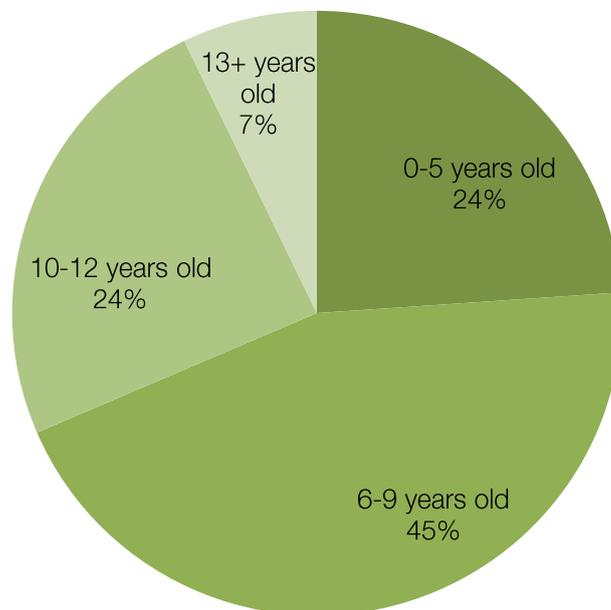
1st Bayswater Sea Scouts



Many of the WA children who have received the Nature Play WA passport booklet have gone on to register online (<http://passport.natureplay.org.au/>) to complete additional missions. There are now 8,218 Western Australian kids registered online* with roughly a 50:50 split between boys (4,150) and girls (4,068). The age breakdown of children registered online is shown below.

*NOTE: These numbers do not represent total engagement - our surveys demonstrate that missions are often printed off and used in hardcopy.

Age breakdown - kids registered online



Register at:

<http://passport.natureplay.org.au/>

START HERE
Nature Play has created a checklist of success reasons for kids to complete online.
These are fun and easy to use!
A parent/guardian simply needs to register before to get started.
The online missions can be used with the Nature Play Passport or an existing children's art kit activity and community groups can order in bulk. The passports have two 'mission' pages, stickers, suggestions on great places to go and things to do outdoors.
Get ready to play!
REGISTER

SIGN IN
Children Adults
Your first name
Your passport number
Forgot your password?
SIGN IN

Leaderboard
Most missions - last 30 days
Henry 54 missions completed
Most missions overall
#1 Chloe 107 missions completed
#2 Willow 106 missions completed
#3 Skye 101 missions completed
You are currently ranked #2651 overall.

MISSION
Special sundials
2 points
Do you want to learn to tell the time? Why not make your own clock? Attach a pen, marker or piece of dowel to the top of an upturned empty flower pot. Go outside to a sunny location on a porch, driveway, or footpath and place the flower pot upside down on the concrete with the pen or marker (or dowel rod) poking out the top. Trace the pot with a piece of sidewalk chalk. Mark the pen's shadow from the sun on the concrete. Check it every hour and mark the shadow. How is the shadow moving?
ACCEPT MISSION or skip mission

COMMENTS
Chloe ★★★★★
I did the one with Mum a while ago. It was fun to see the shadows.
Aki making a real life clock!
Brent where's the sun when you need ?????
Mia ★★★★★
1 Reviews Next = 1 - 4 of 5

The following initiatives were implemented this year as program enhancements.

INITIATIVE	ABOUT/WHY
Boarding pass	<p>In October 2013 a 'boarding pass' with a QR code was developed. When the QR code is scanned with a smart phone it lands on the sign up page to register your passport. The reverse side explains how to get started.</p> <p>The boarding pass has increased the link between hardcopy passports and the online interface.</p>
Facebook promotion	A 'Mission of the Day' dinkus has been used regularly on Nature Play WA's Facebook page to promote the program, resulting in increased requests for passports.
'Take the Challenge' competition	Nature Play WA launched a 'Take the Challenge' competition at the end of 2013 to encourage families to complete 52 Nature Play WA missions in 2014. Once completed families go into a prize draw to win a holiday at Karri Valley Resort.
Teacher resources – lesson plans & certificates	Early in 2014 Nature Play WA developed lesson plans, accompanied by certificates, for use in schools as an extension to the passport program. The lesson plans are available to download from Nature Play WA's website and have gained strong support from school teachers across the State.



I have received the passports! They are even better than I imagined. I cannot wait to plan our outdoor experiences and use the passports in my classroom! Thank you."

Teacher, Carnarvon Community College



Active School Diaries

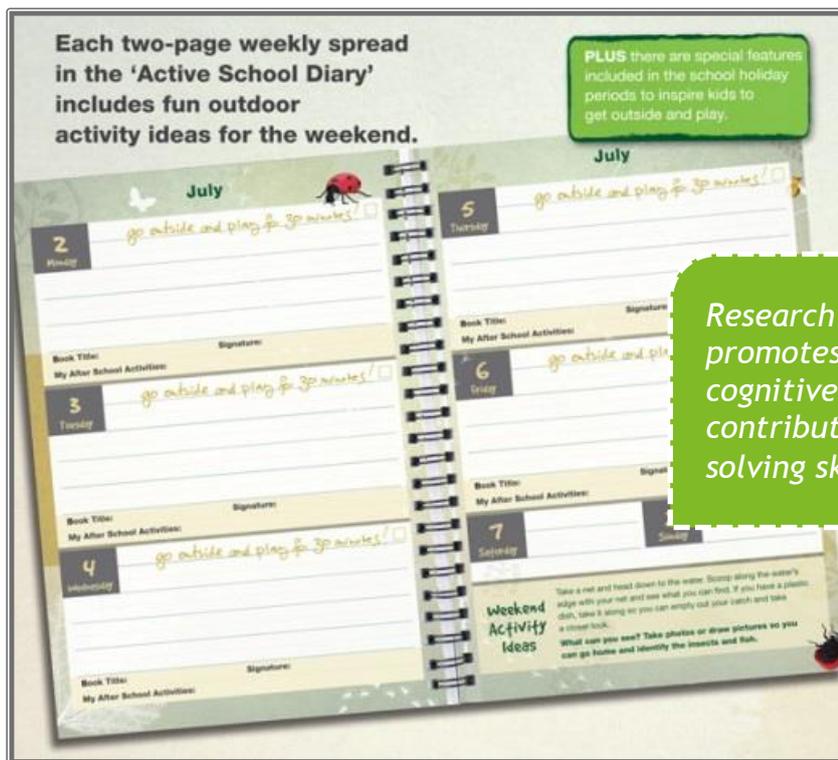
For the second year running Nature Play WA designed and developed Active School Diaries.

The diaries represent an exciting opportunity to effect real behaviour change, with a printed line of homework (Monday to Friday) that says 'Go outside and play for 30 minutes'. There is also an outdoor activity idea included for each weekend and fun holiday suggestions.



Active School Diaries for the 2014 school year were successfully distributed to a total of 2,491 children throughout WA. This is a 21% increase on the number of diaries distributed in 2013.

Promotion of the 2015 school diary is currently underway.



Research shows unstructured outdoor play promotes children's healthy physical, cognitive and emotional development and contributes to their resilience, problem solving skills and capacity to learn.

For more information visit:

<http://www.natureplaywa.org.au/resources/active-school-diary>



Family Nature Clubs

A Family Nature Club is a group of people with an interest in connecting children with nature.

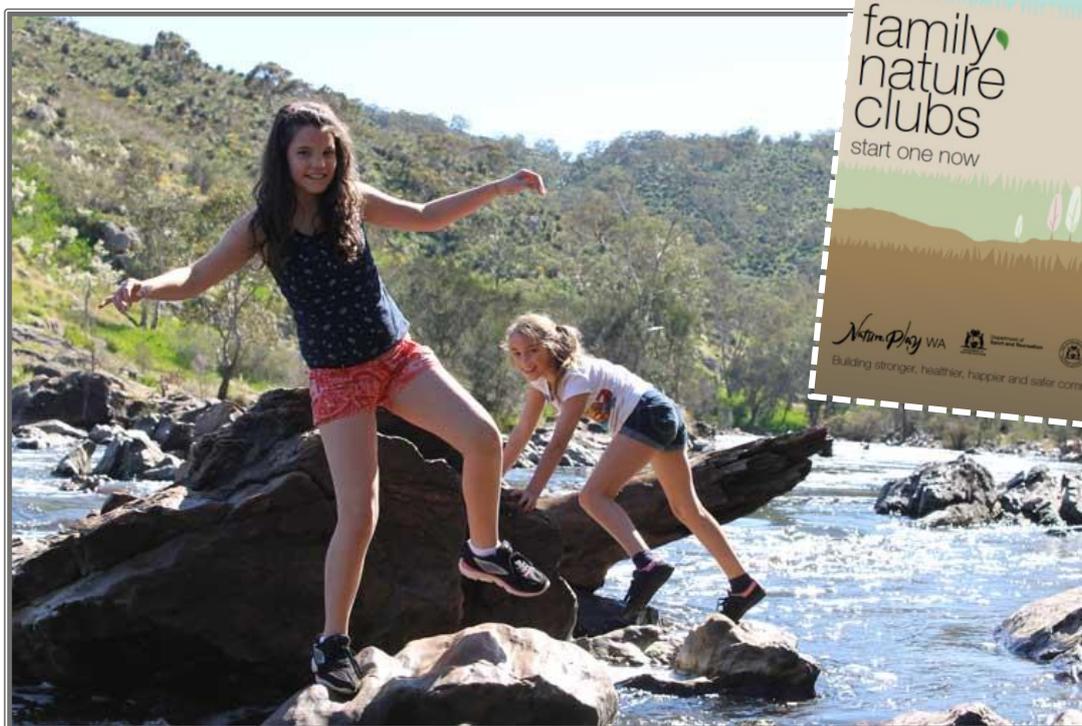
Each Family Nature Club is unique. Some meet weekly at the same local park – playing, building friendships and singing with pre-schoolers and their parents. Some take homeschooling families on walks for focused nature study or the form of boisterous bush walks that combine kid-driven play with spontaneous nature observation.

Whatever their forms, all share these basic goals: get outside in nature on a regular basis; gather families to share outdoor adventures; and experience the benefits of time spent together outside.

Resources

Resources that currently exist for Family Nature Clubs include:

- the Family Nature Club toolkit;
- quarterly newsletters
- sample Family Nature Club session plans;
- a club directory; and,
- registration forms for clubs and their participants.



In response to the 2012/13 program evaluation a quarterly Family Nature Club newsletter was developed and distributed to connect clubs and provide them with inspiration.

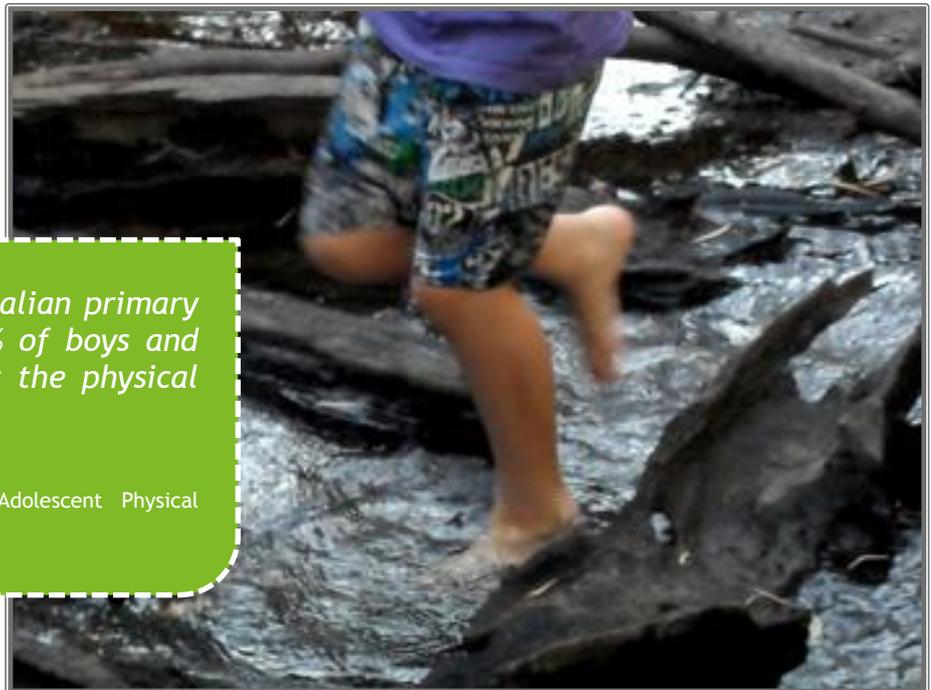
Newsletters, which had a high 60% click through rate, featured:

- stories from clubs;
- research;
- 'how to' suggestions (eg: how to make a grass caterpillar); and,
- upcoming event information.

This year also saw a re-vamp of the online Family Nature Club section of the website – making it a more interactive and dynamic place for clubs to connect by sharing stories, photos and events.

Family Nature Clubs were also promoted widely through Nature Play WA's website and Facebook page.

The combined result was significant growth in clubs with 23 new clubs being formed, seven of which are in regional Western Australia. This brings the total number of Family Nature Clubs to 42.



A survey of Western Australian primary school children found 59% of boys and 73% of girls did not meet the physical activity guidelines.

The Western Australian Child and Adolescent Physical Activity and Nutrition Survey, 2008



For more information visit:

<http://www.natureplaywa.org.au/programs/family-nature-clubs>



Geocaching

Geocaching is a high-tech treasure hunting game played throughout the world using GPS-enabled devices to navigate to hidden containers called geocaches. Often these containers are filled with small toys and trinkets that children can swap. They then record their comments and observations online at www.geocaching.com.

The game has proven a fantastic way to bridge the gap between technology and active play. Best of all, it is free, easy and fun. It can be combined with virtually any outdoor activity and can be enjoyed by people of all ages, shapes, sizes and abilities.



Since 2011, Nature Play WA has placed and maintained nine kid-friendly geocaches in the Perth metro area with 1,757 comments left online by geocachers who have found them.



Garden Week

Garden Week is Western Australia's most prestigious garden and outdoor lifestyle event attracting over 25,000 people each year.

This year (3-6 April 2014) Nature Play WA had a strong presence at the event with a booth and competition for kids. On entry, kids were given a Nature Play WA passport and competition card with missions to complete. On completing the missions they submitted their entry card and went into the draw to win one of five Nature Play WA backpacks full of great gardening gear.

Kids' competition

Hey kids, it's time to have fun and win great prizes! Get secret letters from Perth Garden Festival staff when you complete the fun missions below. Use your letters to complete the mystery word on your entry, and post it in the competition tree stump!

MISSIONS

- 1 Create a critter for your garden using recycled materials at the RErida workshop at the Education Playground presented by Water Corporation.
- 2 Attend a H2O Show presented by Scitech at the Education Playground.
- 3 Make your own take-home miniature garden with the Eco Faeries at the Education Playground.
- 4 Get creative and paint your own garden gnome at the Education Playground.
- 5 Name two waterwise plant species at the Waterwise displays near the main entry?



Competition entry

MYSTERY WORD

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Name: _____

Mum or Dad's email: _____
Winners will be notified on April 7





Encouraging children to learn gardening boosts their development by helping them become happier, more confident, and more resilient.

Isaacs, Tony. Teaching Children Boosts Their Development and Health.



RAISING AWARENESS

News Media Engagement

At its core, Nature Play WA is an advocacy organisation. We work collaboratively with partner organisations and the media to remind Western Australians of the benefits of unstructured outdoor play.

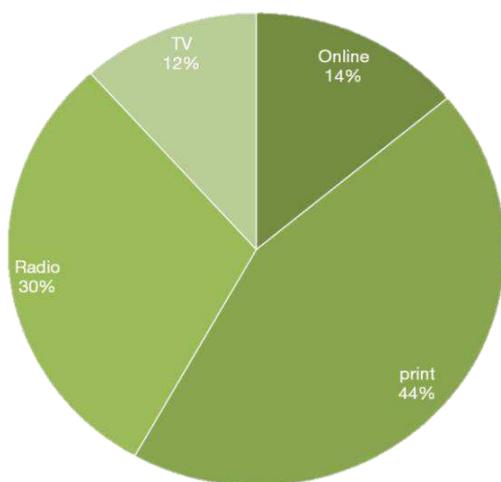
Nature Play WA has consistently punched well above its weight in the media by positioning itself both as a respected commentator on news issues as well as a reliable content generator.

As a commentator, Nature Play WA has quickly assumed a position in the media landscape as a 'go to' on a range of issues from urban planning, health and well-being to the rise of the digital device.

Over the 2013/14 financial year this unique positioning resulted in the generation of 86 stories (more than 1.5 media spots per week) broadly spread across traditional and new media.

These opportunities included ten TV stories and a particularly strong showing on ABC metropolitan radio and in The West Australian newspaper; the two key news drivers in the State.

Nature Play WA generated an average of 1.5+ media stories each week spread broadly across traditional and new media.



Media highlights included:

- The successful launch of Nature Play SA and Nature Play QLD with more than 20 media stories generated in the week of 26 February 2014.
- The *Spring into Spring* photo competition run in partnership with the Western Australian newspaper and Department of Sport and Recreation. The West Australian published a three part story as part of the competition and Nature Play WA was thrilled with the number of entries - 219 images of children outdoors enjoying spring.
- Coverage of the Nature Play WA Schools Geo-challenge and Family Geocaching Weekend.



Website

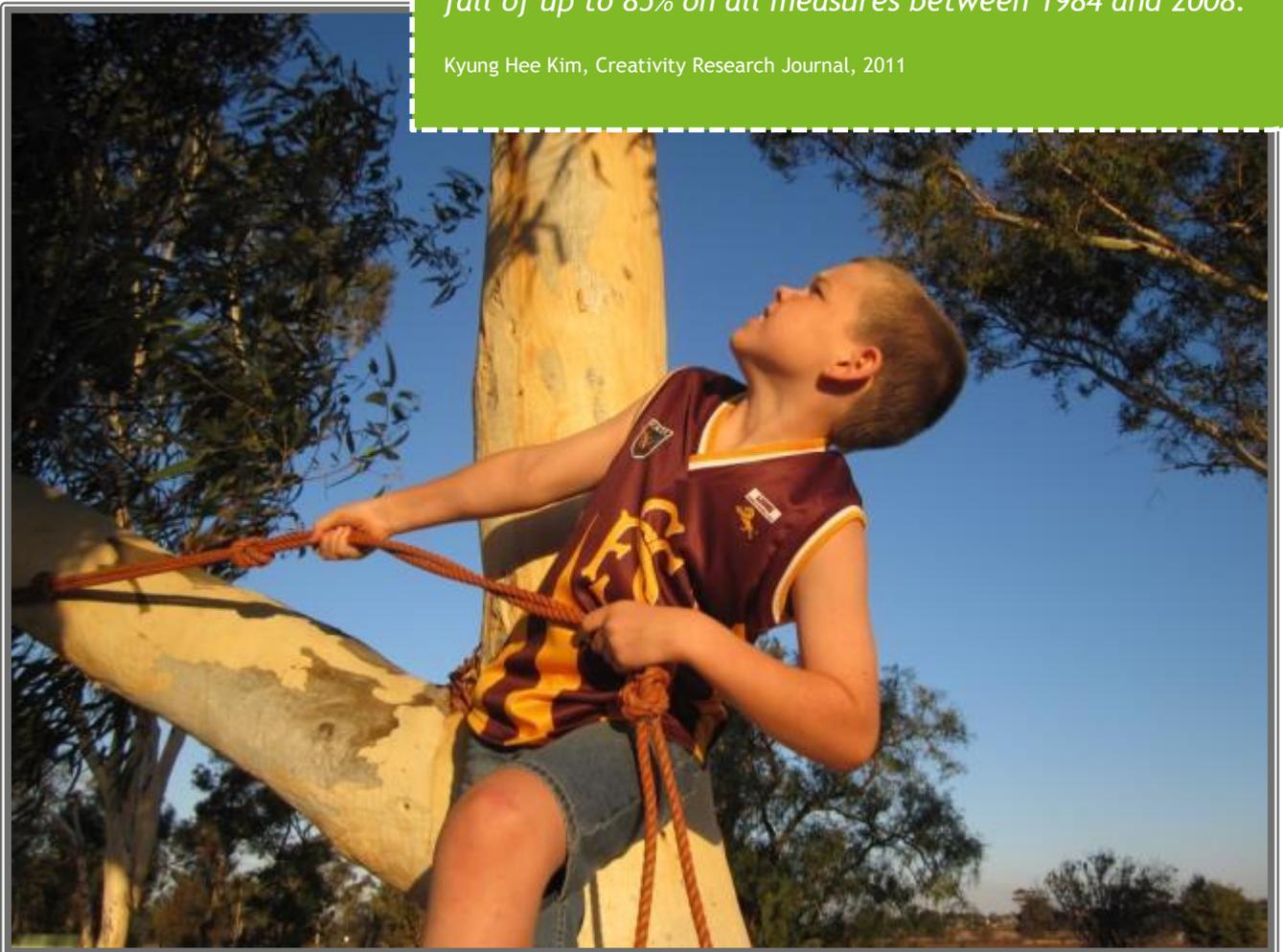
The Nature Play WA website is a great resource for parents with hundreds of things to do, places to go, resources and deals.

This year, with support from Lotterywest, Nature Play WA worked on the re-development of the site, to be launched in July 2014. The new site features dramatic improvements such as the ability to map events, activities and places to enjoy nature. It also provides opportunities for advertising, is much easier for staff to update and allows for user interaction with blogs, comments and ratings.

Even in its current format the Nature Play WA website saw a 48% increase in users (57,035 from 38,325) representing 204,878 page views. The most popular pages (in addition to the home page) were our 'Things to Do' and 'Nature Playgrounds' sections.

Childhood creativity is declining - a recent study shows a fall of up to 85% on all measures between 1984 and 2008.

Kyung Hee Kim, Creativity Research Journal, 2011



Social Media

Social media has played a particularly important role in spreading the word about the importance of nurturing nature play.



Facebook

Nature Play WA launched an official organisation page on Facebook in December 2013.

The new page has been a huge success and has been 'liked' by 7,588 people with some posts reaching between 40,000 - 50,000 people.

Facebook is proving an extremely important tool in communicating with Western Australian families and is an increasingly important way of linking visitors to the Nature Play WA website.

Twitter

Launched at the same time as the new Facebook page (December 2013), the Nature Play WA Twitter account is linked to Facebook, automatically tweeting any post Nature Play WA makes on Facebook.

This has proven to be an unexpected success with many global 'nature play hero's' including Richard Louv, Ben Klasky (Islandwood) and Martin LeBlanc, (Children and Nature Network) linking to Nature Play WA (@natureplaywa) in their tweets as well as retweeting Nature Play WA's posts.



Active outdoor play is vital in promoting healthy child development.

David Zarb, Chief Executive Officer, Playgroup WA



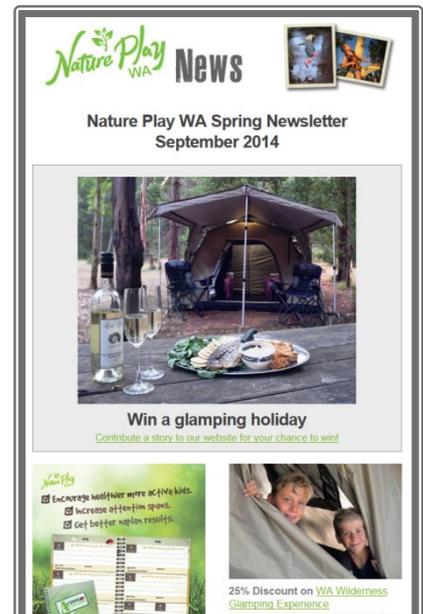
Newsletter Communications

Nature Play WA's newsletter database continues to grow with more than 11,000 Western Australian families now receiving Nature Play WA communications.

In 2013/14 the newsletter took on an exciting new format with easy to follow headlines and short articles requiring click through for further details.

Six newsletters were distributed during the year with topics covered including:

- Nature Play WA competitions;
- Activity ideas for the holidays;
- Upcoming events (run by Nature Play WA and key stakeholders);
- The latest research; and,
- Special offers.



Nature Play WA's newsletter has more than 11,000 subscribers.



Speaking Engagements

This year Nature Play WA delivered 19 presentations attended by a total of more than 2,500 people. Most of these speaking engagements were keynote presentations delivered to decision makers and industry professionals from health, local government, government, schools and the early years.



Some highlight presentations delivered by Nature Play WA's CEO, Griffin Longley, included:

- the TEDx presentation (October 2013) which has been viewed by over 2,500 people on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LyO2UOFXhcl>).
- The International Nature in Education Conference (Nov 2013, New Zealand) attended by over 450 delegates from New Zealand, Australia and beyond.
- The Early Years in Education Conference (May 2014) with approximately 350 K-3 early childhood educators from all over Western Australia and the Cocos Islands
- The Asia Oceania Camping Conference in Sydney (October 2013) with 400 delegates from around the world.
- The presentation hosted by Cottesloe Primary School (March 2014) with the Mayors of Cottesloe and Mosman Park in attendance.



OPERATIONS

Founding Partners

Nature Play WA is fortunate to have a supportive and dynamic group of 18 founding partners who work collaboratively to help ensure our vision of making nature play a normal part of childhood again becomes a reality.

These partners, as shown in the below diagram, have come from a broad cross-section of organisations with strong commitments to the health and well-being of children and/or the environment.



The Board

The Nature Play WA Board is made up of members appointed from amongst its founding partners.

The 2013/14 Board included:

Dr David Roberts (Chair)
*Paediatric Chair, The Royal
Australasian College of Physicians*



Mr Stephen Breen
*President, Western Australian
Primary Principals' Association*



Dr May Carter
Member, Parks and Leisure Australia



Darren Cooper
*Chief Executive Officer,
Blackburne Property Group*



Mr Charles Hayne
*Communications Manager
Department of Sport and Recreation*



Mr Zoran Jovanovic
*Department of Parks and
Wildlife's Manager of
Public Information
and Corporate Affairs*



Dr Melissa Stoneham
*Senior Research Fellow,
Public Health Advocacy Institute
of Western Australia*



Mr Allan Tranter
Director, Creating Communities



Mr Piers Verstegen
Director, Conservation Council of WA



The Staff

Nature Play WA is proud of its small, but dedicated team of employees. Their skill sets and training vary greatly, but they are united by their passion for promoting outdoor play for children.

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Get Involved!

Get involved and help make nature play a normal part of childhood.

At home:

- ✓ Allocate specific time during the day or week for nature play; incorporate 'nature hour' each day, when children know this is a time for them to be outside.

At school:

- ✓ Incorporate the natural environment into the design of children's outdoor spaces; use vegetation and the landscape as the playground not the background.
- ✓ Incorporate nature play into outdoor education and make it part of the curriculum.
- ✓ Incorporate the 'walking school bus' program into school and neighbourhood groups – use this time to integrate children with nature learning and interaction.

In the community:

- ✓ Support organisations both at a local and national level that are driving programs and initiatives to get children outdoors.
- ✓ Protect open spaces and natural bush areas and encourage people to use and interact with it.
- ✓ Incorporate natural spaces into urban designs and plans.
- ✓ Create neighbourhood watch groups that watch over children but don't interfere or dictate children's play or interaction with nature.

At a government level:

- ✓ Advocate for nature play.
- ✓ Support organisations that facilitate nature play.
- ✓ Facilitate research into the importance of nature for children's development.
- ✓ Create legislation that supports children's nature play in both urban design and education.
- ✓ Educate parents on the importance of children's interaction with nature, provide support to those who are interested in nature activities and subsidise equipment that will help promote nature play.



Acknowledgments

Nature Play WA acknowledges our special partnership with the Department of Sport and Recreation. Nature Play WA started its life as a program within this department, and is now wholly funded by a grant administered through it. We are grateful for the department's generous monetary, in-kind and moral support.

Huge thanks to the Western Australian State Government in extending the initial commitment to fully fund Nature Play WA for four years to July 2015 out to July 2017 with a two year extension on funding as announced in the 2014 State Budget.

Nature Play WA Patrons

Nature Play WA would also like to thank our patrons, the Western Australian Governor, Mr Malcolm McCusker AC CVO QC, and his wife, Ms Tonya McCusker, pictured (right) with their children.

Sponsorship and promotions

Nature Play WA is a dynamic organisation that is continually evolving and seeking new ways to engage families in unstructured outdoor activity. We are brimming with great ideas we plan to implement, some of which will generate cash flow and help us realise our dream of becoming a self-supporting not-for-profit.

In order to kick-start new initiatives and expand the reach of existing programs, we welcome financial or in-kind support from businesses and philanthropists in the form of donations, sponsorship or advertising.

By getting involved you will be helping to improve our children's cognitive, emotional and physical development and to build the resilience and imagination that are so important to a fulfilling and productive life.

Nature Play WA is grateful to the following organisations for their financial and in-kind sponsorship during the 2013/14 financial year:

- Lotterywest;
- Department of Parks and Wildlife;
- Caravan Industry Association of WA;
- Sea to Summit and Mainpeak.



If you or your organisation would like to be part of this amazing and important nature play movement, please contact our office on (08) 9286 1006 or email info@natureplaywa.org.au.



Nature Play WA



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