



Annual Report

NATURE PLAY WA, 2015-16



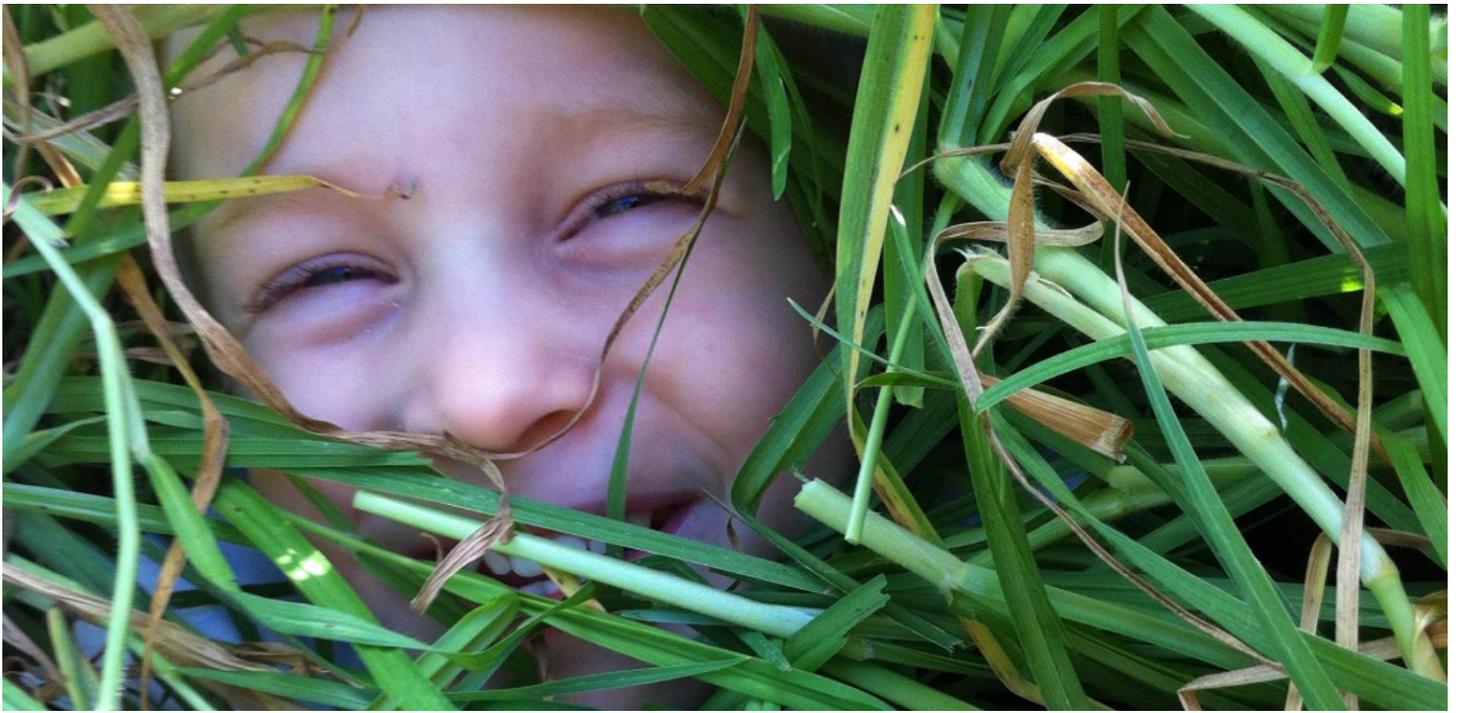
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



Department of
Sport and Recreation

CONTENTS

<u>FOREWORD</u>	4
<u>IMPACT STATEMENT</u>	6
<u>ABOUT US</u>	7
<u>PROGRAMS AND EVENTS</u>	13
<u>Play Out Days</u>	15
<u>Harmony Week events</u>	17
<u>Family Geo-challenge</u>	19
<u>Advocacy workshops and presentations</u>	23
<u>Event and presentation audience breakdown</u>	25
<u>Passport Program</u>	26
<u>Family Nature Clubs</u>	31
<u>Membership program</u>	33
<u>RAISING AWARENESS</u>	35
<u>News media coverage</u>	37
<u>Website traffic</u>	38
<u>Facebook engagement</u>	39
<u>National Day of Real Play campaign</u>	40
<u>Quarterly e-newsletter</u>	41
<u>GROW with Nature Play</u>	42
<u>GROWING OUR CAPACITY</u>	43
<u>THANK YOU</u>	45
<u>SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY</u>	48



Foreword

Message from the CEO

In this short video CEO Griffin Longley, provides a brief overview of the 2015/16 year for Nature Play WA.



Video link: <https://vimeo.com/195570084>



Message from the Chair, Allan Tranter

Nature Play WA has been on an adventurous journey over several years helping promote and support a return to unstructured play outdoors for WA children. The past twelve months have been exciting and successful - with more opportunities being presented than resources have stretched to incorporate.

The Department of Sport and Recreation's on-going funding - based on its insight into the deep need to develop fully rounded people through play - continues to provide the base for the organisation to flourish.

This year has seen a fully engaged and diverse Board provide the governance and strategic overview of a dedicated and talented team under the leadership of Griffin Longley, keeping the concept of Nature Play uppermost in minds of decision-makers, families and professionals alike.

The pages of this report will demonstrate that the role of Nature Play WA, though continually evolving, remains crucial to the continuing need to provide a focus on the role of play in daily life.

2015/16

Impact statement



Family events/programs	Number of participants*
9 x Family events	4,058
Passport Program	23,002
Family Nature Club Program	728
TOTAL	27,788



Advocacy events	Number of participants
33 x Presentations/workshops	2,057 industry professionals
25 x Play space consultations	25 schools/communities
TOTAL	2,082



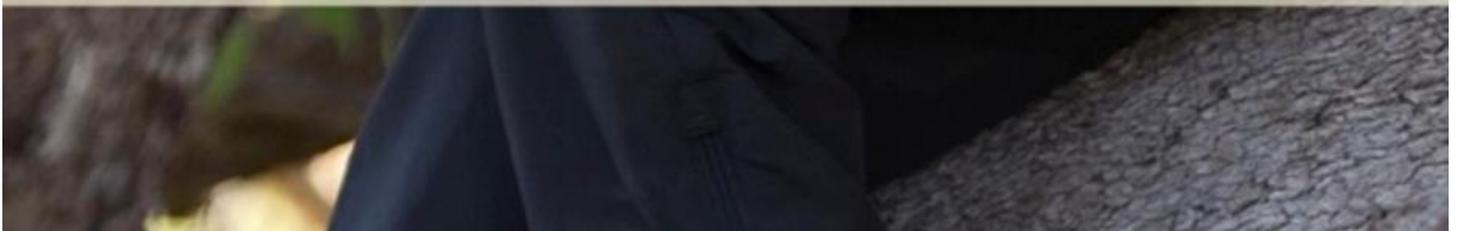
Communication		Engagements**
Media	86 stories	9,008,367 viewers/readers/listeners
Website	84,000 users	270,000 pages viewed
Facebook	18,000 followers	9,800,000 page impressions
Newsletter	11,000 subscribers	44,000
Membership	150 families	700
TOTAL		19,123,067

*Participation figures do not take into account that some programs involve multiple events (eg: on average, Family Nature Clubs hold 21.5 events per year).

**Media engagement is calculated on the readership per item of each publication stories were featured in. Newsletter and membership engagement represents number of subscribers/members multiplied by the number of communication events (eg: newsletters sent out, competitions run etc.)



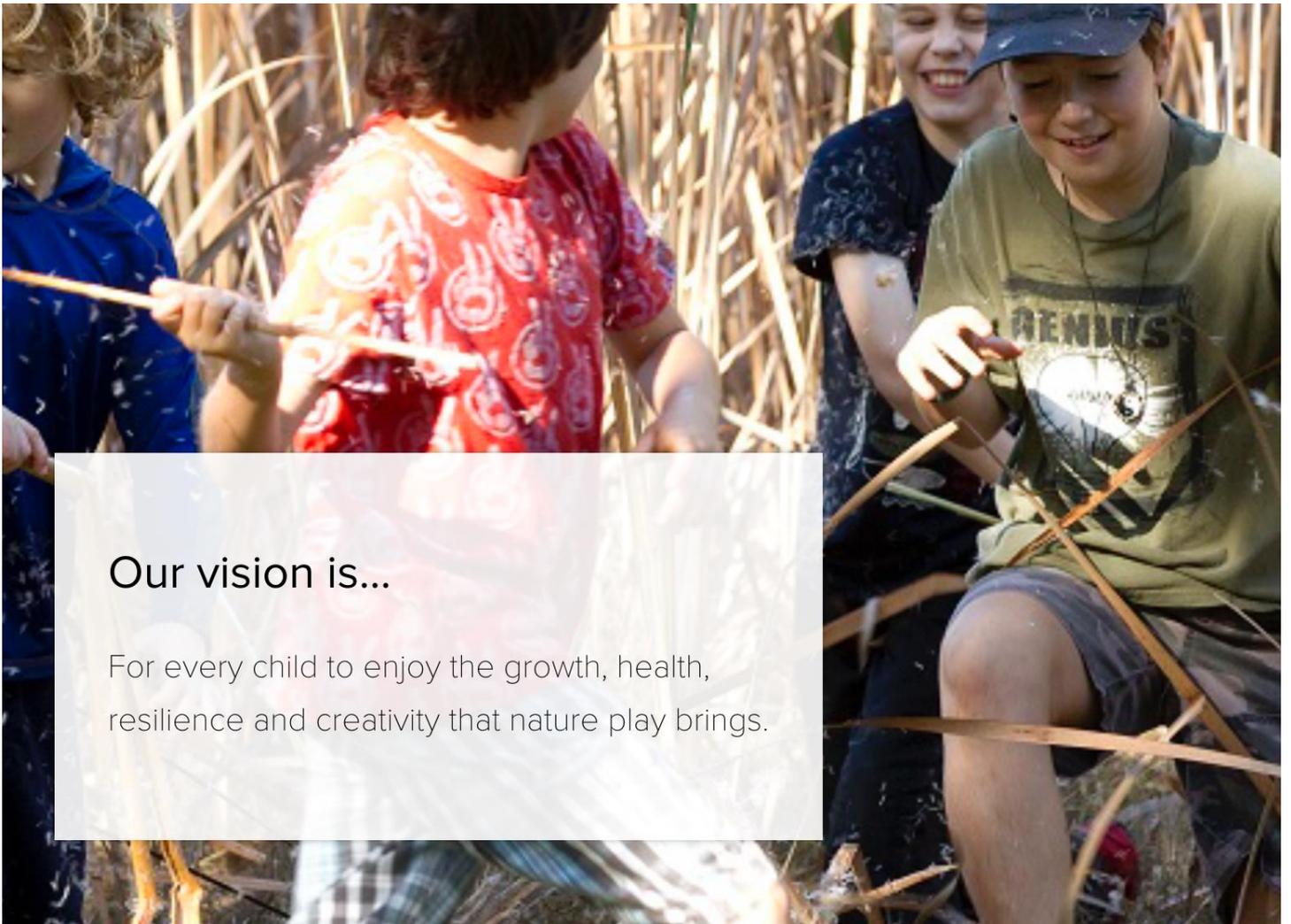
ABOUT US



The world of childhood is changing fast. Modern kids spend less time playing outside than any other generation in history. And they are suffering from a parallel growth in mental health disorders, chronic disease, and an increasing disconnection from the natural world.

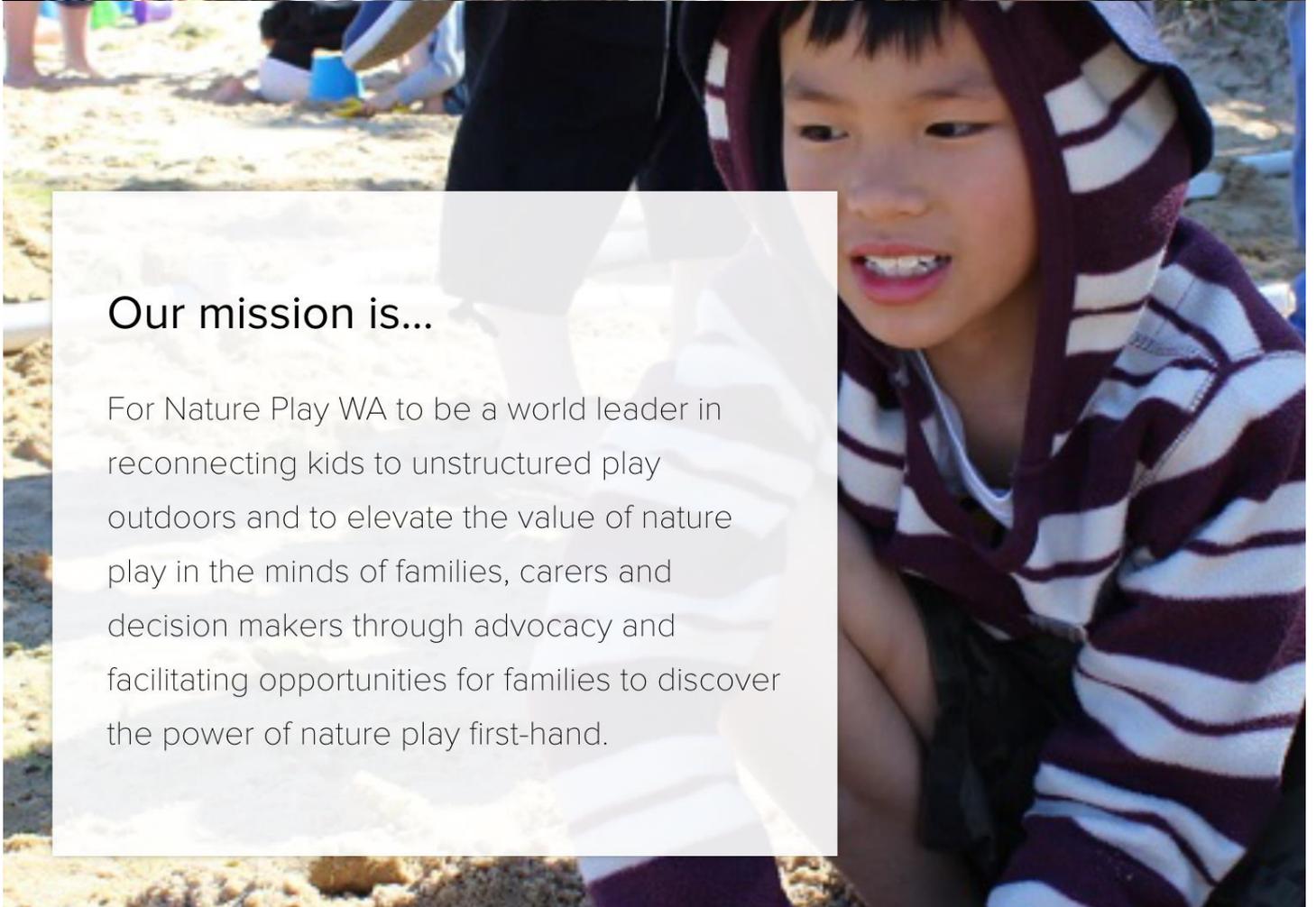
It does not have to be this way.

At Nature Play WA we believe childhood should be a time of movement, creativity, wonder and awe. We are dedicated to helping families balance the sedentary and entertainment-focused nature of modern life with unstructured play outdoors (nature play) for the benefit of children's health and happiness.



Our vision is...

For every child to enjoy the growth, health, resilience and creativity that nature play brings.



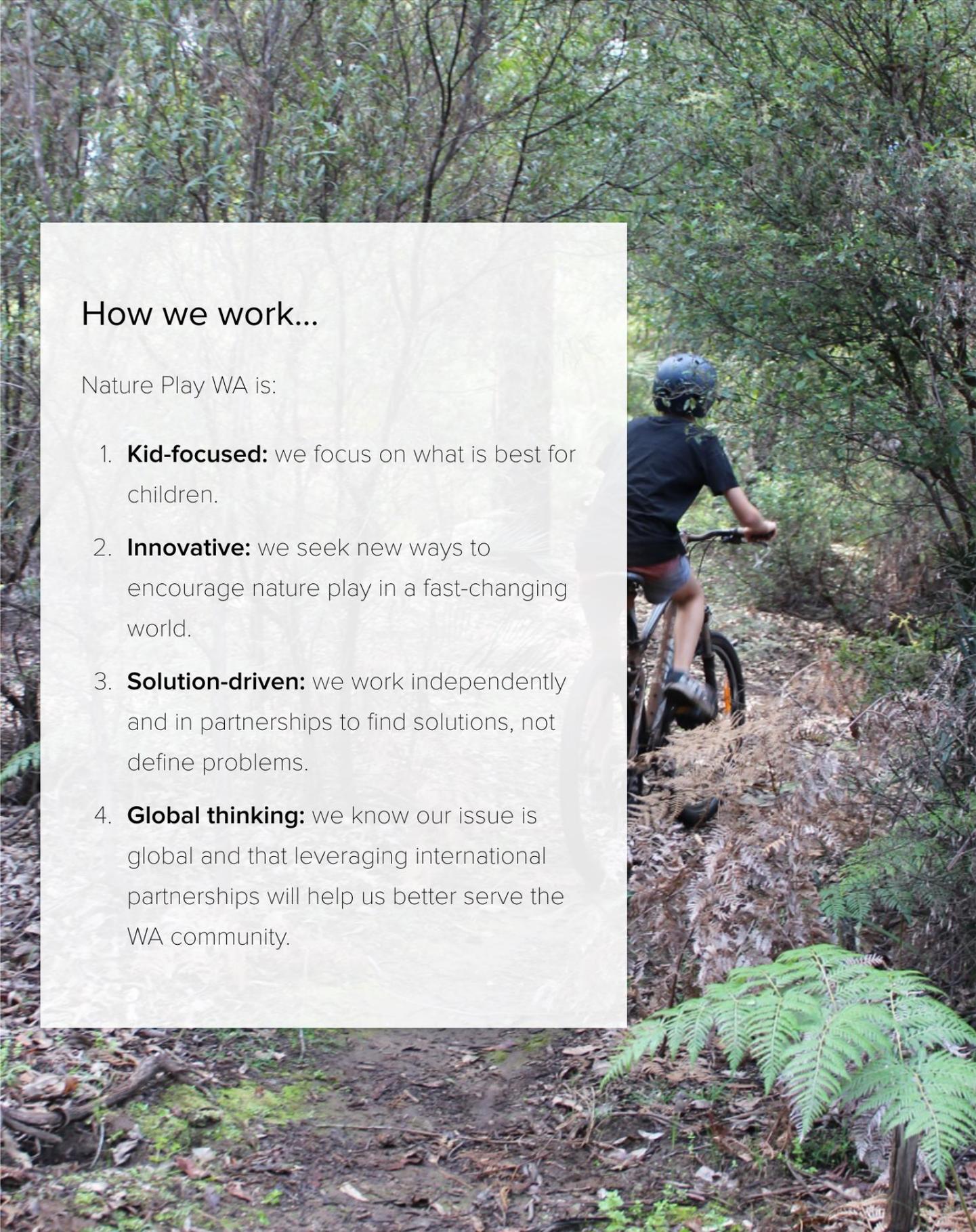
Our mission is...

For Nature Play WA to be a world leader in reconnecting kids to unstructured play outdoors and to elevate the value of nature play in the minds of families, carers and decision makers through advocacy and facilitating opportunities for families to discover the power of nature play first-hand.



Our target groups are...

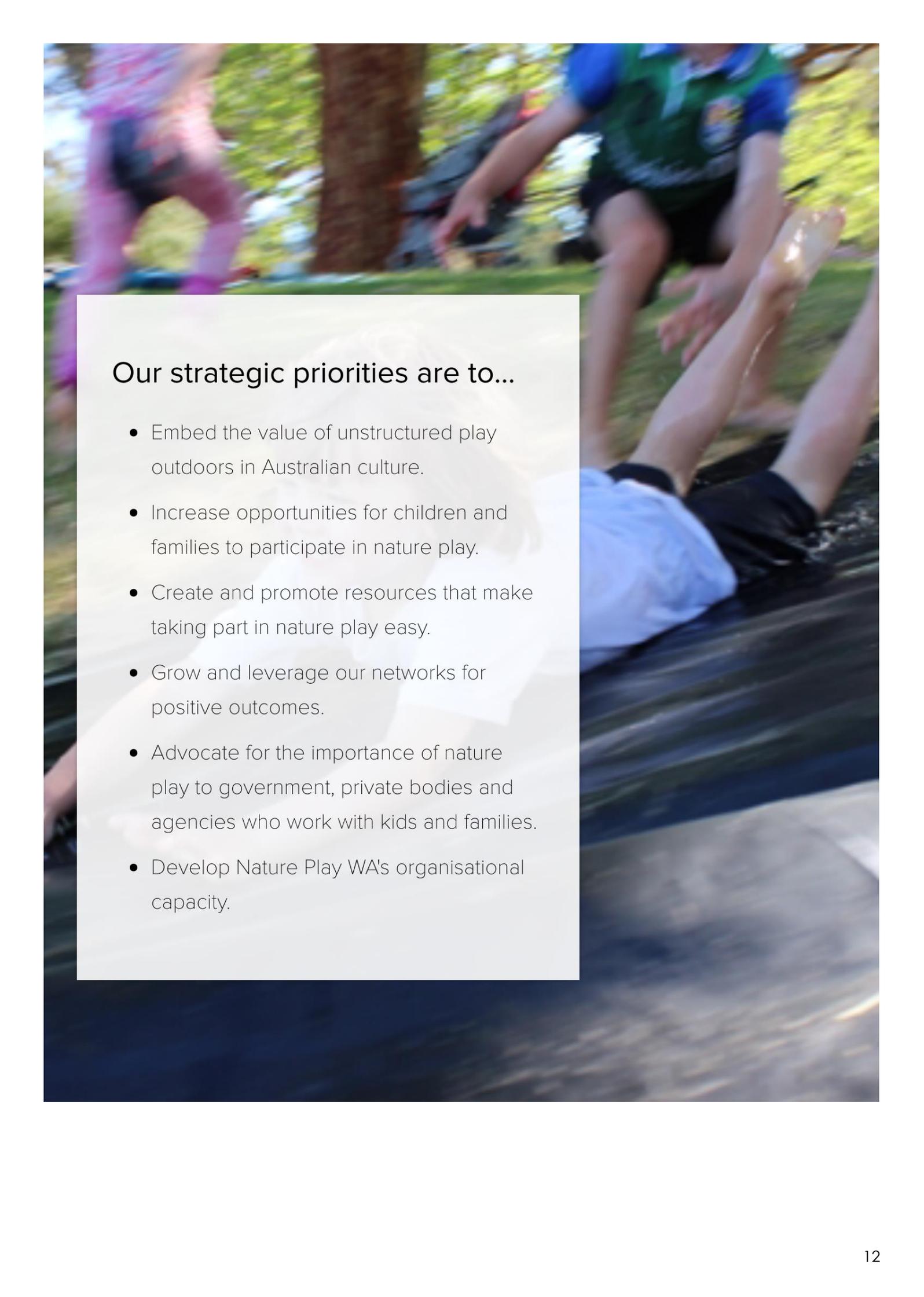
1. Families and carers of kids aged 0-12 (including expectant parents).
2. Children aged 0-12.
3. Decision makers and organisations that impact the lives of children.

A person wearing a black helmet and a black t-shirt is riding a mountain bike on a dirt trail through a dense forest. The trail is covered with fallen leaves and ferns. The background is filled with green trees and foliage.

How we work...

Nature Play WA is:

1. **Kid-focused:** we focus on what is best for children.
2. **Innovative:** we seek new ways to encourage nature play in a fast-changing world.
3. **Solution-driven:** we work independently and in partnerships to find solutions, not define problems.
4. **Global thinking:** we know our issue is global and that leveraging international partnerships will help us better serve the WA community.

A photograph of children playing outdoors on a grassy area. In the foreground, a child's legs and feet are visible, wearing black shorts and black shoes. In the background, other children are playing, including one in a blue and green shirt and another in a pink shirt. The scene is set in a park-like environment with trees and greenery.

Our strategic priorities are to...

- Embed the value of unstructured play outdoors in Australian culture.
- Increase opportunities for children and families to participate in nature play.
- Create and promote resources that make taking part in nature play easy.
- Grow and leverage our networks for positive outcomes.
- Advocate for the importance of nature play to government, private bodies and agencies who work with kids and families.
- Develop Nature Play WA's organisational capacity.



PROGRAMS AND EVENTS



Family events/programs	Number of participants*
9 x Family events	4,058
Passport Program	23,002
Family Nature Club Program	728
TOTAL	27,788



Advocacy events	Number of participants
33 x Presentations/workshops	2,057 industry professionals
25 x Play space consultations	25 schools/communities
TOTAL	2,082

*Participation figures do not take into account that some programs involve multiple events (eg: on average, Family Nature Clubs hold 21.5 events per year).

This year we focused predominantly on facilitating tangible nature play experiences for WA families and on creating and sharing resources that make taking part in nature play easy.

We ran large scale community events and delivered intensive advocacy workshops and presentations to decision makers and industry professionals from the education, health, local government, sport and recreation, environment, conservation and built environment sectors.

We also continued to create and build on several key programs and initiatives which had high levels of participation.



Play Out Days

Offered for the first time in 2015/16, our Play Out Day events resonated extremely well with WA families – giving them the opportunity to see first-hand the resilience, problem solving, creativity and independence that can be fostered by unstructured outdoor play.



Held on the banks of the Swan River, our Play Out Days offer a great range of self-guided activities including:

- Building huts, cubbies, boats and dens with sticks and cardboard boxes;
- Creating and flying kites;
- Music, messing around with clay; and,
- Lots of sand and water play

The play activities are set up so that parents are involved and leave feeling motivated and well-equipped to help their children discover the wonders of an active and outdoors life.



Play Out Day event activities

We ran five Play Out Day events (July, September, October, January and April) – all of them fully allocated with between 550 - 650 participants at each event (a total of more than 3,000 participants).

The Play Out Days also generated some great news media coverage – including ABC and FM radio interviews and stories in the West Australian and local newspapers.

The feedback from families taking part was overwhelmingly positive and we hope to expand the reach and frequency of these types of events in the year to come.

“93% said the event had inspired their family to find ways to enjoy more active outdoor unstructured play together”.



Harmony Week events

With the support of the Department of Local Government and Communities we were also able to run two Harmony Week events for families (13 and 20 March).

Based on the format of our Play Out Days, the events brought **214 families (over 700 participants)** together to enjoy some of the simple games that children around the world have played for hundreds of years.

Many of the families were from diverse cultural, religious, linguistic and ethnic backgrounds, and regardless of their heritage or culture, they all experienced the same thing – a wonderful awareness that their kids were actively and creatively enthralled.



Harmony Week event photos

I could see the joy and satisfaction on their faces. My children loved the activities and being able to run freely from station to station.

- participating parent



Family Geo-challenge

For the past three years Nature Play WA has run a major event for families – the Geo-challenge weekend. It is one of our most popular and exciting offerings.

This year, the event took place over three days (5-7 May) at Wharncliffe Mill Eco Bush Retreat (Margaret River) and incorporated seven participation events: geocaching, kite making, bike riding, cubby building, nature crafts, Aboriginal campfire sessions and night stalking.

“The kids were entertained all weekend and the facilities were excellent. Staff were helpful and the atmosphere in general was relaxed but fun”.

- participating parent



The Geo-challenge itself is a massive treasure hunt which sees excited families, armed with GPS-enabled smartphones, set out in search of over 50 geocache canisters hidden by Nature Play WA.

There are clues hidden within the canisters and prizes for being the first to find them.

As in previous years, the event was fully allocated with 60 families (200 participants) from all over Perth and regional WA taking part.

The self-guided geocaching experience provides a great chance for families to share an outdoor adventure at their own pace.



“Such a great weekend that the whole family can enjoy. Well organised, fantastic location out in the bush and a very good way to get some exercise.”

- participating parent



Geo-challenge event photos

It is also a successful way of introducing families to geocaching – a fun outdoor activity they can do in their own neighbourhoods,

87% said their family is likely to continue geocaching after the event.

And it's an opportunity for families who want to try camping for the first time, to do so in a fun, safe environment.

13% of families had never been camping before and 38% had only been once or twice.

Feedback from participants was that they had an amazing time and that the event had inspired many of them to find ways to enjoy more active unstructured play together.



100% said the event was 'just right' in terms of difficulty and that they would be interested in attending a similar event again.



ADVOCACY

2015/16

33 workshops/presentations

Workshops and presentations

In addition to running events for families, Nature Play WA conducts professional development sessions and workshops for the early years, schools, local government, corporates and professional industries. These workshops provide information, resources, training and networks for those interested in planning, designing and creating nature play strategies and spaces.

This year a new Engaging Outdoor Learning workshop suite for educators was developed and implemented. The full day professional development workshops (1, 2 and 3) are a comprehensive introduction to the ways natural spaces in and around schools can be used as learning spaces and outdoor classrooms.

Five Engaging Outdoor Learning workshops, with 120 teachers from schools all over Perth, were run in 2015/16. Participants left with the confidence to engage with Nature Pedagogy, the motivation to act as nature play advocates within their school and the inspiration to create their own outdoor learning spaces.



Engaging Outdoor Learning workshops

We also delivered **15 presentations at conferences and events run by schools and industry groups** and ran:

- **11 nature play space information sessions/workshops** for schools, local councils, parents and child care centres;
- **two stakeholder networking events**; and,
- held our **Annual General Meeting** (31 October).



Event and presentation audience breakdown

A full breakdown of the **6,140 individuals** reached through our **42 family events and advocacy workshops/presentations** is as follows:

- 4,808 parents and kids
- 562 teachers and early years professionals
- 146 industry professionals from the environment and conservation sector
- 125 developers, urban designers and landscape architects
- 104 industry professionals from the sport and recreation sector
- 83 university students
- 312 others (mix of key stakeholders at networking events and functions)



In addition to our events, we continued to implement several new and existing programs that help make nature play easy.

Passport to an Amazing Childhood program

The ‘Passport to an Amazing Childhood’ program is Nature Play WA’s flagship program – an exciting, interactive and fun way to get kids mucking around outside.

Kids (3-12+) are provided with a series of no (or low) cost “missions” delivered through our signature passport booklet that WA schools, child care centres, government and community groups can order from our website, free of charge.

The booklets have ten “mission” pages, stickers, suggestions on great places to go and things to do outdoors.

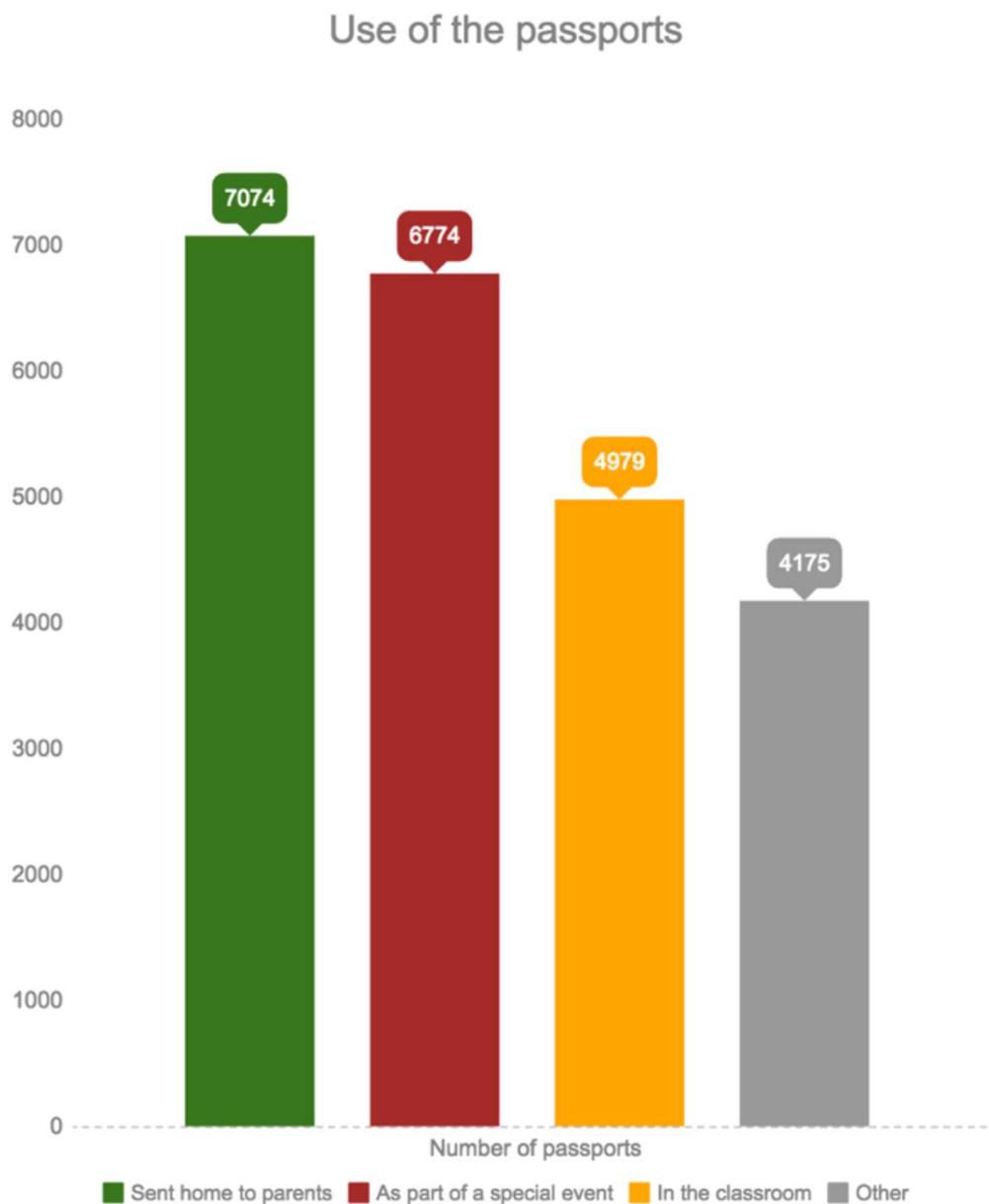


This year we received 193 orders, totalling 23,002 passports.
That brings the total number of passports distributed to WA kids
to 212,312!



As in previous years, most of the orders came from **schools, government organisations, after-school activity providers and childcare centres**, with passports either:

- sent home as a resource for parents (**7,074 - 31%**);
- used as part of a special event (**6,774 - 29%**);
- incorporated into classroom learning (**4,979 - 22%**); or;
- as part of other activities (**4,175 - 18%**).



Online passport interface

Kids who receive the passports have the option of registering them online to receive more missions than those they already get in the hardcopy booklet.

There are **200+ more fun free/low-cost missions** waiting to be unlocked.

Once registered online, kids can simply choose their mission, go outside to complete it, and earn virtual points that can be used to build avatars and win great prizes.



Nature Play WA has given us a fabulous resource to utilise. We need to re-educate parents, grandparents, educators and planners about the value of unstructured play in natural environments.

Community Development Officer Team Leader, Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup.

Register online now for loads of fun outdoor missions

This year 13% (2,988) of kids who received hardcopy passport booklets chose to step beyond the printed missions and register online, with 7,129 known participations throughout the course of the year.

We also made some improvements to support teachers and community groups in using the online passport interface as part of their classroom/out of school activity programs.

- **Groups can now be uploaded** and managed easily.
- A **'play list' of activities** can be created.
- **Mission PDFs** can be generated with ease.

"As a teacher when planning, the Nature Play Passport inspires me to look at resources in the 'outdoor classroom', to make use of and think of ideas of how to incorporate them into my lessons."

Year One Teacher, Freshwater Bay Primary School.



Family Nature Clubs

Another initiative that continues to gain traction is our Family Nature Club program.

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





WA families can use Nature Play WA's online directory to join an existing club or create their own with the help of the Nature Play WA Family Nature Club toolkit.

This year we recruited 11 new clubs – three regional and eight in metro locations. That brings the total number of Family Nature Clubs to 56 – some with as many as 38 families taking part.

"As parents, I think we learn that our kids are tougher than we think; that getting outside and climbing a tree or getting their hands dirty is good for them."

Club leader, North Perth Primary School Family Nature Club



MEMBERS

2015/16

150 Families

Membership program

On 1 December 2015 we launched the 'Friends of Nature Play WA Membership Program' for families. Annual membership is just \$55 and is primarily about supporting our mission to get kids outside enjoying unstructured play more often.

Families who support us by becoming a member are rewarded by our corporate program partners, including the likes of Anaconda, Mainpeak, Rottnest Express and Sea to Summit, who give them special offers, gifts and prizes all year round.

There are currently 150 family members, who are engaged with every month (700+ communication engagements through emails and competitions over the course of the year) and 34 corporate program partners, a number that continues to grow steadily.

For more information, or to become a member, click below:

[Become a member](#)



RAISING AWARENESS



Communication		Engagements*
Media	86 stories	9,008,367 viewers/readers/listeners
Website	84,000 users	270,000 pages viewed
Facebook	18,000 followers	9,800,000 page impressions
Newsletter	11,000 subscribers	44,000
Membership	150 families	700
TOTAL		19,123,067

***Media engagement is calculated on the readership per item of each publication stories were featured in. Newsletter and membership engagement represents number of subscribers/members multiplied by the number of communication events (eg: newsletters sent out, competitions run etc.)*

Just as important as our on the ground presence is our ability to embed the value of nature play in Australian culture and successfully advocate its importance to government, private bodies and agencies who work with kids and families.

We achieved this through our strong presence in the news media and through our high level of website and social media engagement.



News media coverage

This year the media was particularly interested in covering our activities and what we had to say, with a **total of 86 news stories, reaching an audience of 9,008,367 people***. Stories were spread through a broad range of outlets and included:

- **14 TV spots** (Channel 7, 9, 10, ABC and Fox Sports)
- **36 radio interviews** (ABC 720, 6PR, 98.5FM, 93.7FM and regional stations)
- **16 printed and 20 online articles** (The West Australian, The Sunday Times, Perth Now, The Online Guardian and various other online news sites and publications).

**Figure based on publication audience per item.*



Website traffic

The WA public was also very interested in our information and resources with 84,145 people (over 270,000 page views) visiting our website. This represents a 20% increase on last year!

Our website is our most significant resource for parents and industry professionals and has loads of content, which is regularly reviewed and updated, including:

- Hundreds of things to do and places to go;
- Research and resource links;
- Nature playground information;
- Competitions, blogs and case studies.



Facebook engagement

Facebook also provided an extremely important platform for communicating with WA families, with **9.8 million page impressions**, **6,405 new page likes** (bringing our total number of followers to **18,485**) and **988 posts** that were:

- shared **22,769** times;
- commented on **9,839** times; and,
- received **106,070** reactions (eg: post 'likes').



National Day of Real Play campaign

Capitalising on our Facebook and website following, on 5 June we joined forces with OMO to promote and the inaugural National Day of Real Play - a day to rejoice in everything that makes play so important for kids' health and happiness.

With OMO we created some resources to help families get started and offered a great range of prizes for participating.

[Click here for more on the campaign](#)



Quarterly e-newsletter

In addition to communicating with families via our website and Facebook, each school holidays we sent our **quarterly newsletter to our 11,000 subscribers (44,000 communication engagements)**

The newsletter is packed with activity ideas, upcoming events, Nature Play WA's key messages and the latest resources, research and information.

[Subscribe to our newsletter](#)



GROW with Nature Play

For parents and carers of children aged 0-3 years, the GROW with Nature Play App was launched this year.

Coming out of our licensing agreement with Nature Play Queensland, the practical play app features heaps of things to do, tips, hints, and all sorts of information about how and why playing in nature can benefit your baby.

[Click for more on the GROW with Nature Play app](#)



GROWING
OUR CAPACITY

While our programs, events and advocacy work is at the heart of what we do, our consultancy services are an important part of ensuring our organisational sustainability.

To this end, we were engaged in 22 play space consultations and three PEET development projects this year.

As consultants, Nature Play WA helps ensure school communities get the best nature play outcomes from their limited resources and their already stretched time. We do this by supporting them to identify nature play opportunities that already exist in, or near, their school, and by working through the best and most cost effective way of creating new nature play opportunities where needed.

We also provide consultancy services to help organisations create their vision for vibrant family-friendly outdoor spaces.

Our primary role is to act as facilitators, providing input and expertise into the theory and benefits of nature play spaces, what these spaces look like and how they contribute to families and residents in a community.

Increasingly, we are also working with businesses, local governments and not-for-profits to activate spaces through family events and virtual trails.

We are an innovative and solutions driven organisation and if you are interested in working with us to achieve positive outcomes for the WA community please contact our office on **08 9389 4050** to discuss ideas and options.



THANK YOU

The State Government through the Department of Sport and Recreation is a major supporter of Nature Play WA. Sport and recreation builds stronger, healthier, happier and safer communities.

Nature Play WA would not be able to achieve all that it does without this support.

We also thank our local and international partners and, in particular, our Board, for the time and effort they have invested in our organisation and our mission.

Allan Tranter



Chairman

Founding Director, Creating Communities

Stephen Breen



Deputy Chairman

President, WA Primary Principals' Association

Griffin Longley



Chief Executive Officer, Nature Play WA

Desiree Silva



Professor of Paediatrics, UWA

Richie Baston



Director, Azure Capital

Darren Cooper



CEO, Blackburne Property Group

Will Peart



Head of Client Services, Meerkats

Linda Daniels



Executive Director, Bibbulmun Track Foundation

Charles Hayne



Director Strategic Communications,
Department of Corrective Services WA

We are also most grateful to the following organisations for their financial, pro-bono and in-kind support this year:

- Caravan Industry Association of WA
- Clayton Utz
- Department of Parks and Wildlife
- Grant Thornton Australia Ltd.
- Iluka Resources

Nature Play WA is a collaborative organisation and our voting member organisations also play an integral role in encouraging the WA community to value nature play and families to prioritise it in their children's lives.

Voting member organisations include: The Australian Medical Association (AMA) - WA branch; Act, Belong, Commit - Mentally Healthy WA; The Bibbulmun Track Foundation; The Conservation Council of WA; Creating Communities; The Department of Sport and Recreation; The Department of Parks and Wildlife; The Heart Foundation; The Kings Park and Botanic Garden Authority; Parks and Leisure Australia - WA branch; Playgroup WA; The Public Health and Advocacy Institute of Western Australia; The Royal Australian College of Physicians; The WA Local Government Association; The WA Primary Principals' Association; and, The WA Council of State School Organisations

And finally, we thank our extended family, our counterparts Nature Play SA, Nature Play QLD and Nature Play CBR, whom we share resources and knowledge with, working together under the Nature Play Australia umbrella to grow the nature play movement.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY



PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

- 5 x Play Out Day community events (3000+ people)
- 2 x Harmony Week family events (700 people)
- Family Geo-challenge (3 days, 200 people)
- 33 x Advocacy events (2,057 industry professionals)
- 23,002 passports distributed (program total: 212,312 passports)
- 11 x new Family Nature Clubs (program total: 56 clubs)
- Family membership program launched (150 families, 34 partners)



TOTAL PARTICIPANTS: 27,788

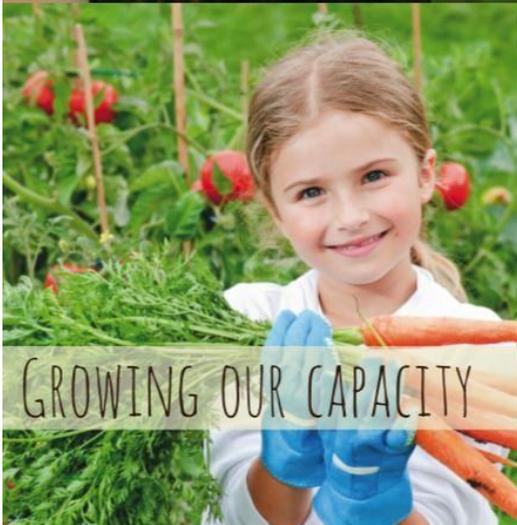


RAISING AWARENESS

- 86 news media stories (audience of >9 million)
- Website: >84,000 users (270,000 engagements)
- Facebook: achieved >18K page likes (>9.8 million page impressions)
- National Day of Real Play social media campaign with OMO
- Quarterly newsletter: 11,000, subscribers (44,000 engagements)
- Family membership engagements: 700
- GROW with Nature Play app launched (Nature Play QLD)



TOTAL ENGAGEMENTS: 19,123,067



GROWING OUR CAPACITY

- Nature Play Canberra established through licensing agreement
- Elizabeth Quay, PMH and Perth Stadium play space consult role
- 11 x school play space consultations
- 5 x community consultations (4 regional, 1 metro)
- 3 x child care play space consultations
- 3 x PEET projects
- Geocaching project for Curtin University completed
- Volunteer program developed (72 volunteers registered)
- Staff training: First Aid and fire courses



For more on Nature Play WA, our resources, programs and events, please visit:

www.natureplaywa.org.au