

Let's Get Every Kid in a Park

President Obama is committed to giving every kid the chance to explore America's great outdoors and unique history. That's why today he launched the Every Kid in a Park initiative, which calls on each of our agencies to help get all children to visit and enjoy the outdoors and inspire a new generation of Americans to experience their country's unrivaled public lands and waters. Starting in September, every fourth-grader in the nation will receive an "Every Kid in a Park" pass that's good for free admission to all of America's federal lands and waters -- for them and their families -- for a full year.



The White House
Office of the Press Secretary

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As part of President Obama's commitment to protect our Nation's unique outdoor spaces and ensure that every American has the opportunity to visit and enjoy them, today he will launch an "Every Kid in a Park" initiative that will provide all fourth grade students and their families with free admission to National Parks and other federal lands and waters for a full year. He will also announce the creation of three new National Monuments across the country.

The President will make the announcements near the site of the historic Pullman town in Chicago, a location iconic for its history of labor unrest and civil rights advances, which will be the City's first National Park Service unit. He also will announce that he will designate Honouliuli National Monument in Hawaii, the site of an internment camp where Japanese American citizens, resident immigrants, and prisoners of war were held captive during World War II, and Browns Canyon National Monument in Colorado, an historic site of extraordinary beauty with world-class recreational opportunities that attract visitors from around the globe. Together, these monuments will help tell the story of significant events in American history and protect unique natural resources for the benefit of all Americans.

Every Kid in a Park

In the lead up to the 100th birthday of the National Park Service in 2016, the President's Every Kid in a Park initiative is a call to action to get all children to visit and enjoy America's unparalleled outdoors. Today, more than 80 percent of American families live in urban areas, and many lack easy access to safe outdoor spaces. At the same time, kids are spending more time than ever in front of screens instead of

outside. A 2010 Kaiser Family Foundation study found young people now devote an average of more than seven hours a day to electronic media use, or about 53 hours a week – more than a full time job.

America’s public lands and waters offer space to get outside and get active, and are living classrooms that provide opportunities to build critical skills through hands-on activities. To inspire the next generation to discover all that America’s public lands and waters have to offer, the Obama Administration will provide all 4th grade students and their families free admission to all National Parks and other federal lands and waters for a full year, starting with the 2015-2016 school year. The initiative will also:

- *Make it easy for schools and families to plan trips:* The Administration will distribute information and resources to make it easy for teachers and families to identify nearby public lands and waters and to find programs that support youth outings.
- *Provide transportation support to schools with the most need:* As an integral part of this effort, the National Park Foundation (NPF) – the congressionally chartered foundation of the National Park Service – is expanding and re-launching its Ticket to Ride program as Every Kid in a Park, which will award transportation grants for kids to visit parks, public lands and waters, focusing on schools that have the most need.
- *Provide educational materials:* The initiative will build on a wide range of educational programs and tools that the federal land management agencies already use. For example, NPS has re-launched a website with over 1,000 materials developed for K-12 teachers, including science labs, lesson plans, and field trip guides. And a number of federal agencies, including the Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Education, and NPS participate in Hands on the Land, a national network of field classrooms and agency resources that connects students, teachers, families, and volunteers with public lands and waterways.

To further support this effort, the President’s 2016 Budget includes a total increased investment of \$45 million for youth engagement programs throughout the Department of the Interior, with \$20 million specifically provided to the National Park Service for youth activities, including bringing 1 million fourth-grade children from low-income areas to national parks. This increase will also fund dedicated youth coordinators to help enrich children and family learning experiences at parks and online.

