

Duluth Children's Outdoor Charter

(Adapted from the Ontario Children's Outdoor Charter)

As a city with exceptional outdoor amenities, Duluth can be at the forefront of providing its youth opportunity to discover and learn through outdoor experiences. The Duluth Children's Outdoor Charter aims to encourage children, families, and the organizations that support them to explore the outdoors, master skills and discover the wonders of the natural world.

Spending time outdoors is an invaluable component of every child's learning and development. Children who spend time outdoors develop lifelong qualities as critical thinkers, effective communicators, successful students, and healthy adults. Research consistently indicates the importance of providing meaningful, worthwhile opportunities for children and families to connect and grow together in nature.

The people, organizations, government agencies, and neighborhoods that support the Charter recognize that time outdoors is important for children's health and wellness. We believe that all children should experience the outdoors in multiple ways, such as:

- ❖ **Following a trail**
- ❖ **Exploring a park**
- ❖ **Harvesting something to eat**
- ❖ **Swimming in a lake**
- ❖ **Paddling a canoe**
- ❖ **Playing in the snow**
- ❖ **Climbing up hills and rocks**
- ❖ **Visiting a farm**
- ❖ **Camping under the stars**
- ❖ **Fishing on a lake or river**
- ❖ **Observing plants and wildlife**
- ❖ **Or creating a new adventure!**

Vision - In Duluth, our vision is that all children have opportunities to:

- ❖ **Develop** a connection with nature that inspires a sense of caring and conservation
- ❖ **Experience** active free-time in the outdoors and have regular contact with nature
- ❖ **Master** skills and knowledge that allow them to fully participate in outdoor adventures
- ❖ **Learn** about Duluth's ecosystems, natural history and cultural heritage

Principles – To achieve this vision, our community must promote:

- ❖ **Access-** All children should have access to nature in their neighborhoods and in the broader community. Preservation and creation of parks and protected areas, networks of trails, recreation areas and other public natural spaces enables this access.
- ❖ **Discovery-** Children should have formal and informal opportunities to discover and learn about nature through outdoor play and exploration.
- ❖ **Connections-** Families, communities and decision-makers across Duluth will be aware of the many personal and societal benefits of connecting children with nature. Increased collaborations and community involvement will result in increased opportunities.
- ❖ **Stewardship-** Children develop a deep personal understanding of and care for the natural world through outdoor experiences, and should learn how to take action to protect biodiversity and use resources sustainably.