

# SHINE™

STAY HEALTHY IN NATURE EVERY DAY • PROGRAM

In 2014, East Bay Regional Park District teamed up with UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland to launch the SHINE program to bring their patients - children with chronic illnesses such as obesity, diabetes or ADHD - to the outdoors as a way to improve their physical and mental health. Trained clinic volunteers follow up with the patients' families to schedule their park visit upon recommendation of the doctor. On the first Saturday of every month, the Park District and Regional Parks Foundation provide free transportation, healthy snacks, and a day of fun outdoor activities led by a park staff. Over 550 children and family members,

accompanied by medical and clinic staff, have participated - walking, playing games, learning about nature, making new friends, and improving their overall sense of well-being. For many of the families, this is the first time they have been to a Regional Park or an outdoor recreational environment.

The Park District has also integrated the outdoors into the clinic by installing beautiful park visuals and posters throughout the clinic to inspire and educate families to use their park resources and to get active outdoors. Seven clinic rooms have been named after regional parks.



East Bay Regional Park District

PARK PRESCRIPTIONS Rx

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FOSTERING HEALTHY, ACTIVE PEOPLE IN THE EAST BAY REGIONAL PARKS

# PARK PRESCRIPTIONS

East Bay Regional Park District



Roberts Regional Recreation Area, Oakland



Group hike, Sunol Regional Wilderness, Sunol



Every child in California should, by the end of their 14th year, have the opportunity to experience the following activities:

1. Play in a safe place
2. Explore nature
3. Learn to swim
4. Go fishing
5. Follow a trail
6. Camp under the stars
7. Ride a bike
8. Go boating
9. Connect with the past
10. Plant a seed



SHINE Program at Crab Cove, Alameda



Park visual on clinic wall

## References

Sections of this brochure were adapted from a manual Healthy Parks Healthy People Guide for Health Care Providers prepared by Nooshin Razani, MD, MPH (Children's Hospital & Research Center at Oakland) with invaluable assistance from Curtis Chan, MD, MPH; Dayna Long, MD; June Tester, MD, MPH. The manual is available at www.ebparks.org/hphp.

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### Dear Health Care Provider,

At East Bay Regional Park District we are invested in the health of the communities we serve. Over the years, growing scientific evidence confirms what we know to be true – that being outdoors, especially in natural settings, has essential health benefits. These benefits are discussed in this brochure, and include physical and mental health benefits to individuals, families and communities, as well as to the well-being of the environment.

We have created these Park Prescriptions materials to extend a hand to you as allies in a mutual goal of nurturing a healthy and active East Bay. We hope these materials will give you tools in the very hard work you do to encourage healthy lifestyles.

In addition to the materials provided here, we offer you an opportunity to create formal partnerships with us. An example of a partnership developed through the Park Prescriptions program is with UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland Primary Care Clinic. We have had the opportunity to share with resident physicians and doctors the health benefits of nature, the park resources available in the East Bay and to provide them with materials for their patients, as well as to bring over 220 of the highest health needs community members to our Regional Parks. Dr. Kelley Meade, Medical Director, says, "Chronic health issues such as obesity, behavioral issues and stress will require interdisciplinary interventions. We are grateful to EBRPD, and see them as an integral part of our team to help patients be healthy."

The Park District is also a leader in the Healthy Parks Healthy People initiative, a worldwide campaign to encourage healthy, active activities in the outdoors while appreciating and taking care of parks and open space. With over 120,000 acres in 65 parks and 1,250 miles of trails, our Regional Parks offer access to wilderness that is not far from home. There are many trails for hiking or biking, picnic areas for family gatherings, playgrounds, and lakes for boating and fishing. Our free or low-cost recreational programs promote physical activity, social connection, learning and fun outdoors. And most importantly, we have a staff dedicated to collaborating with you.

We encourage you to reach out to us for more information and to establish formal partnerships. Thank you for joining us in this movement to integrate the East Bay's natural environment with the health of our population.

Sincerely,

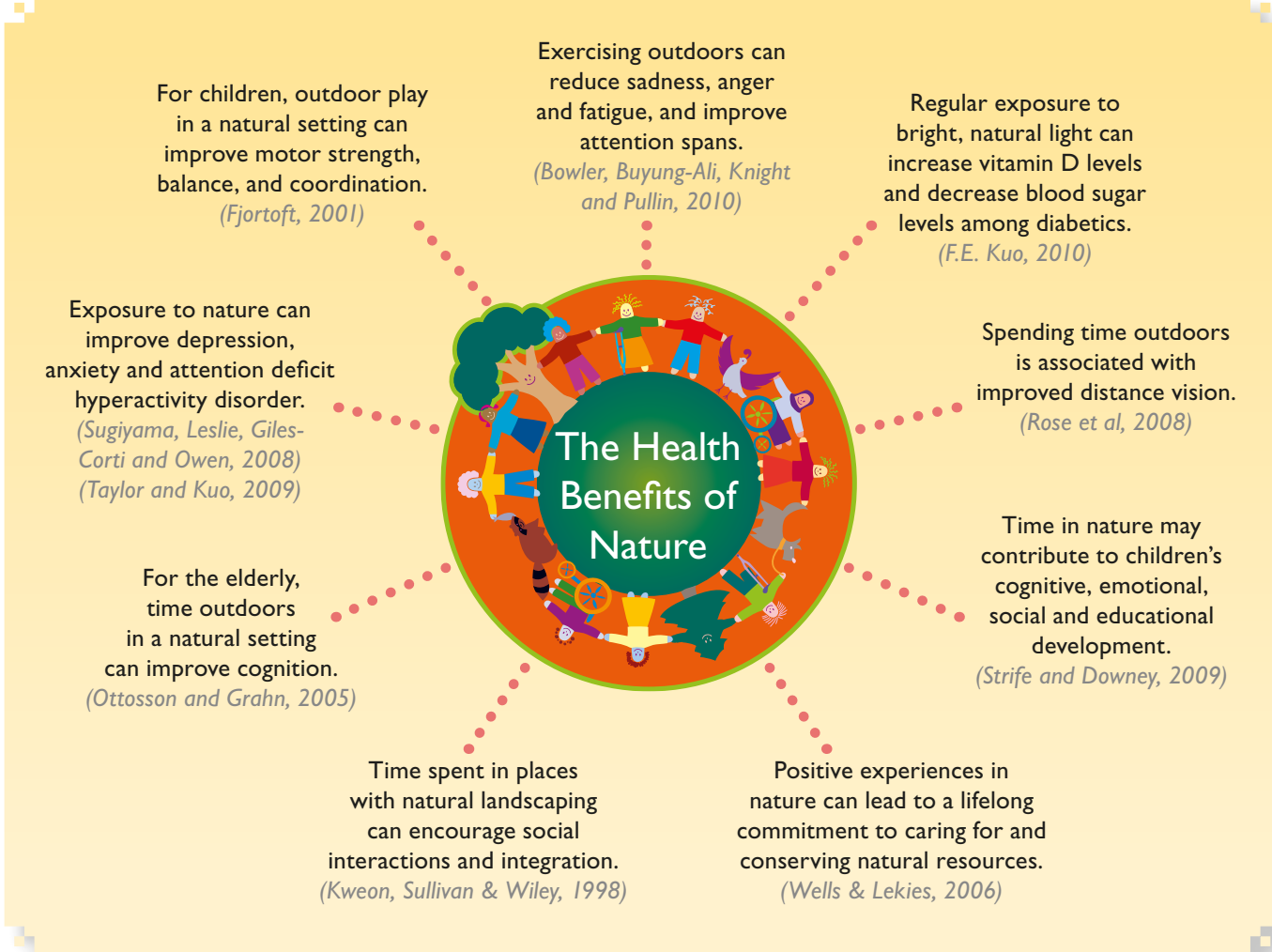
Robert E. Doyle, General Manager, East Bay Regional Park District



Garin Regional Park, Hayward

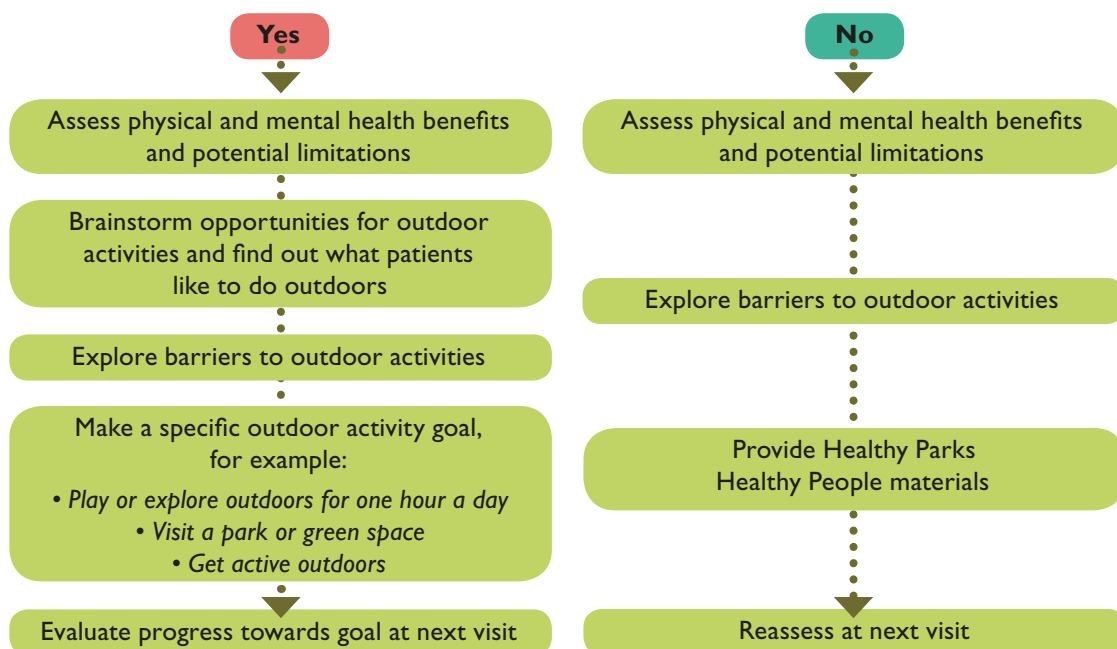


# THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF NATURE



## STRATEGIES FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

What outdoor experiences has the patient had?  
Is the patient interested in outdoor activity for health?



## Obesity Alert

**Thirty percent** of the world's population is obese, and that number is expected to rise to 50 percent by 2030, according to a report by the McKinsey Global Institute. The costs associated with obesity have topped \$2 trillion annually. The best way to tackle the problem is a multi-dimensional approach that involves schools, agencies, businesses, economics, transportation and policies that promote healthful living.

## Common reasons people don't get outdoors as often as they'd like:

### Lack of Time

- Some patients lack leisure time, while others may be juggling multiple priorities.

**A:** Help a patient identify a nearby Regional Park and activities that are suited for them. For those who have children or are older, the Park District offers age-specific programming including "Toddler Time" at Ardenwood, "Teen Volunteer Time" at Tilden, and the "Over the Hills Gang" for seniors. Alternatively, emphasize that being in nature can be a great family activity and discuss ways that everyone can get outdoors together.



### Financial Difficulties

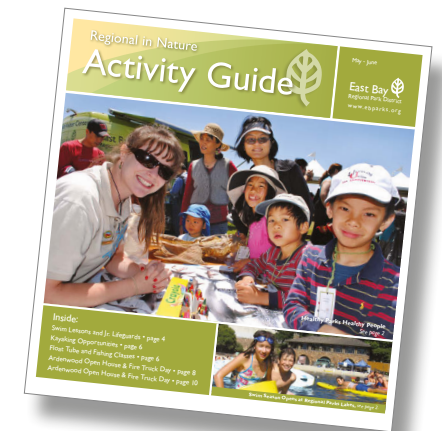
- Some patients lack the discretionary money that might be needed for entry fees, parking, food, and equipment.

**A:** The Park District offers many activities at no cost to park users, including Healthy Parks Healthy People guided hikes. Visitor Centers like Big Break in Oakley and the Tilden Environmental Education Center in Berkeley offer free hands-on fun every weekend. The "Parks Express" program partners with schools and community service groups to provide transportation for low-income students, families, seniors, or people with disabilities to experience the parks for free. Additionally, the Regional Parks Foundation offers "Camperships" so that low-income youths can attend summer camps, junior lifeguard training, and other fun programs in our Regional Parks for free.

### Lack of Comfort or Feeling of Welcome

- Language barriers or lack of culturally appropriate programming may deter some patients.

**A:** The East Bay Regional Park District has a range of activities for new park users, including beginner canoeing, birdwatching, and plant identification programs. Naturalists, volunteer docents, and other Park District staff can help welcome and educate patients about wildlife and the outdoors. The Park District hosts many multicultural Healthy Parks Healthy People events and also has brochures available in different languages.



### Lack of Transportation

- Some patients may not know how to get to their closest park.

**A:** If your patient lacks transportation, help by showing them public transportation options. Resources can be found on our website: [www.ebparks.org/parks/publictransit](http://www.ebparks.org/parks/publictransit)



## Integrating the outdoors into a clinical practice

Outdoor activity can be integrated into your practice or office by creating consistent messaging throughout the clinical visit. Engage your staff for support and input in creating this change in your clinical setting. If there is someone with interest in this area, they can serve as your nature advocate and liaison with the parks by providing resources or organizing activities.

### East Bay Regional Park District: Your Local Resource

Resources for your waiting rooms and patient rooms are available from the Park District for free. These include:

- Park locator postcard
- A guide/map of East Bay Regional Park District parks (five languages)
- Park Prescriptions waiting room posters
- "Regional In Nature" Activity Guide
- Trails Challenge (self-guided hiking) postcard
- Websites: [ebparks.org](http://ebparks.org), [regionalparksfoundation.org](http://regionalparksfoundation.org)
- Bay Area Open Space Council's Transit and Trails: [Transitandtrails.org](http://Transitandtrails.org)

