



# Toolkit Handbook

**Everything you need to start your own  
Project Get Outdoors program!**



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Thank you to all who have contributed to Project Get Outdoors!

Special thanks to those who assisted with the development of the Project GO Toolkit Handbook:

- University of Minnesota interns—Rachel Gieseke and Bobbi Zenner
- University of Minnesota SE Regional Partnership staff
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- Project GO kids of Minnesota who appear in the many included photos.

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WELCOME:

## Introduction to the Project GO Toolkit Handbook

Your community is about to embark on an exciting adventure as you begin to design and implement your own unique Project Get Outdoors program for local children! Your community will benefit not only from the outdoor activities offered through your local Project GO club, but also through the sharing of ideas, resources and friendships that will result from the cooperation and collaboration on which these programs are built.

This handbook is one component of the Project Get Outdoors toolkit. A **Link to Google Drive Folder** with all helpful documents and activity ideas, **DVD** for training your volunteers, an **Activity Backpack**, and available **Themed Equipment Trunks** with some basic supplies to get you started are also included in the toolkit.

With this handbook, your community will be guided through the three phases of creating a sustainable program. Each phase is explained in detail in a separate chapter. All of the necessary documents you will need can be found on the Google Drive Account that we will personal add you to after signing up to be a GO Site. Referenced documents are *underlined italic*. They are listed in the Appendix at the end of the handbook. Volunteers on your local planning team are encouraged to divide up the tasks in each phase in order to share the responsibilities of planning and sustaining your local program.

This handbook is intended to help guide your local Project GO planning team through the major steps of planning, implementing and sustaining your program. Because each Project GO program is unique, some communities may find that their planning team is able to skip some of the steps while other communities may discover they need to follow each step very closely. Depending on the resources available in your community and the willingness and eagerness of local community members to volunteer to get your program going, one community may move quickly through the first two phases and have a program up and running within a couple of months while a different community may need a year or more to plan and implement their program.

There is no time limit as to how fast or slow you should go to complete the steps in this handbook. The important thing is that your planning team works together to develop a sound and sustainable program built on the strengths and assets of your local community.

Remember, the Statewide Project GO Coordinator and trained volunteers in each region are here to help you get your program up and running. Don't hesitate to contact them with any questions or concerns.

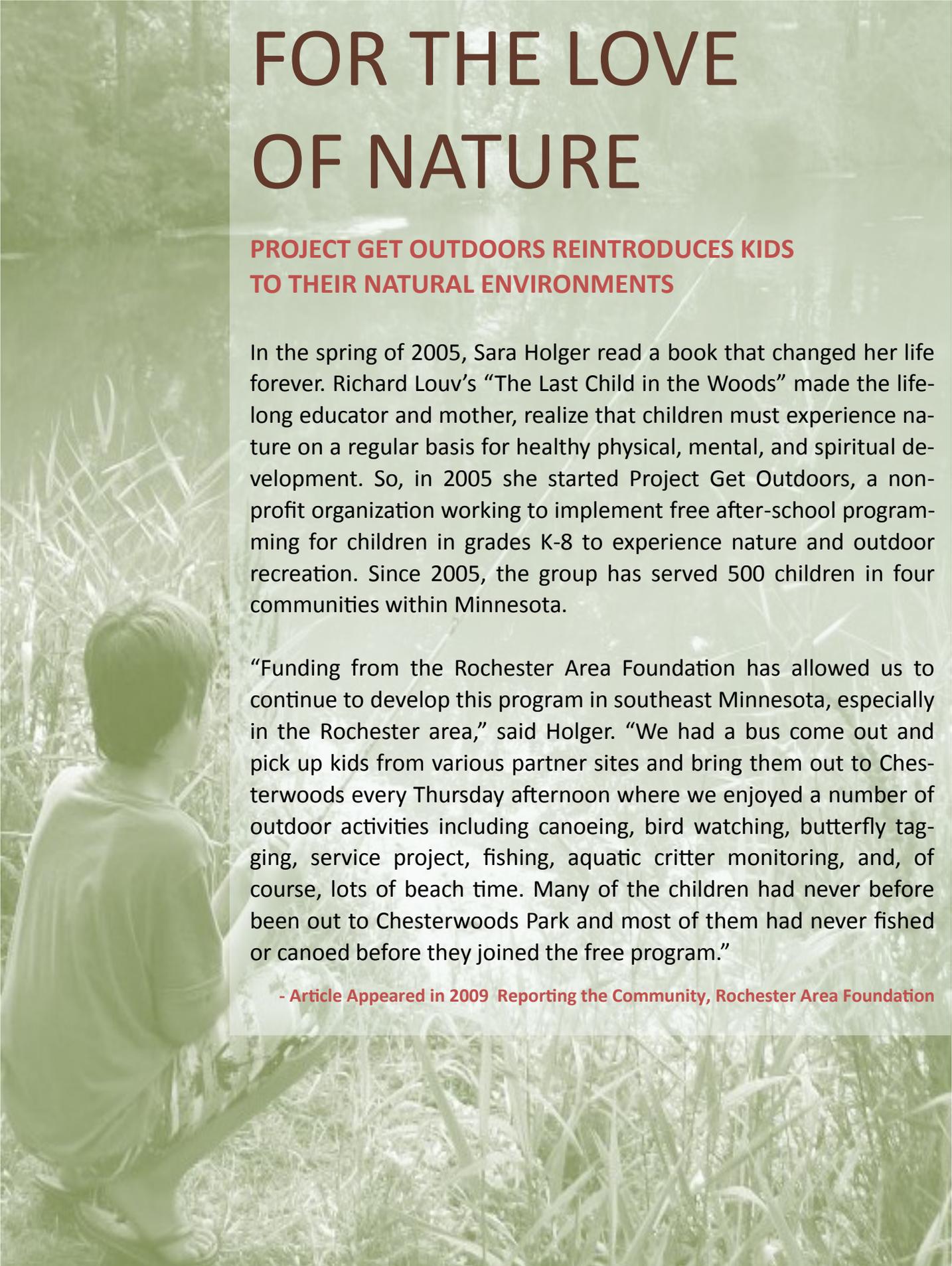
Best of luck to you and your community!

Sincerely,



Founder of Project Get Outdoors, Inc.





# FOR THE LOVE OF NATURE

## PROJECT GET OUTDOORS REINTRODUCES KIDS TO THEIR NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS

In the spring of 2005, Sara Holger read a book that changed her life forever. Richard Louv's "The Last Child in the Woods" made the life-long educator and mother, realize that children must experience nature on a regular basis for healthy physical, mental, and spiritual development. So, in 2005 she started Project Get Outdoors, a non-profit organization working to implement free after-school programming for children in grades K-8 to experience nature and outdoor recreation. Since 2005, the group has served 500 children in four communities within Minnesota.

"Funding from the Rochester Area Foundation has allowed us to continue to develop this program in southeast Minnesota, especially in the Rochester area," said Holger. "We had a bus come out and pick up kids from various partner sites and bring them out to Chesterwoods every Thursday afternoon where we enjoyed a number of outdoor activities including canoeing, bird watching, butterfly tagging, service project, fishing, aquatic critter monitoring, and, of course, lots of beach time. Many of the children had never before been out to Chesterwoods Park and most of them had never fished or canoed before they joined the free program."

- Article Appeared in 2009 Reporting the Community, Rochester Area Foundation

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*\*Indicates required tasks.*



## INTRODUCTION

### Our Vision

Project GO envisions a world in which all kids, every day, will spend time outdoors. High-quality, efficient outdoor programs will be embedded in communities and have stable funding. These programs will link youth and caring adult volunteers to exploration, play and reflection in nature near local communities so children will grow to be healthy, comfortable outdoors, and knowledgeable and passionate about their land and community throughout their lives. Contact with nature will provide physical, mental and social health benefits to all participants, and citizens will demonstrate environmental stewardship behaviors.

### Our Mission

The mission of Project GO is to facilitate outdoor experiences that develop healthy kids and increase environmental stewardship behaviors.

### Our History

Project GO was founded by a Minnesota naturalist in the fall of 2005. Inspired by Richard Louv's book, Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder, Project GO is fostering environmental awareness by connecting kids to nature and local outdoor exploration.

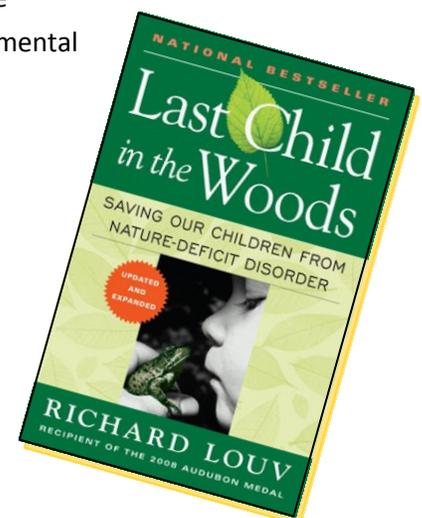
In 2005, with the support of various organizations and agencies, the first Project GO after-school program was launched in Plainview, Minnesota, targeting low-income and Latino children.

Since its start, Project GO has served thousands of children and families in the region through programs, special events and media exposure. Countless college students, parents, and senior citizens have volunteered their time to help introduce local children to the outdoors and nature.

Teaming up with 4-H, Scouts, Boys & Girls Clubs, YMCA's, child care centers and other youth-serving organizations, Project GO and our coalition of partnering organizations are working to implement FREE after school and out-of-school programs throughout all regions of Minnesota. These programs will target underserved children.

*"Within the space of a few decades, the way children understand and experience their neighborhoods and the natural world has changed radically...their physical contact, their intimacy with nature is fading...In a typical week, only 6 percent of children, ages 9 to 13, play outside on their own."*

—Leave No Child Inside; Richard Louv's testimony before the Interior and Environmental Subcommittee, February 27, 2007.





**The theory of change that drives the Project GO movement is illustrated by the Logic Model below.**

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes		
	Activities	Audiences	Short-Term	Medium Term	Long Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Qualified staff</li> <li>- Trained volunteers &amp; interns</li> <li>- Web site</li> <li>- Program supplies</li> <li>- Community partners</li> <li>- Community toolkit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop community partnerships</li> <li>- Implement free out-of-school, outdoor programs</li> <li>- Implement annual outdoor event in each GO community</li> <li>- Train communities to implement the GO model</li> </ul>	<p><i>Target beneficiary of our work:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- YOUTH</li> </ul> <p><i>Audiences we work with to generate the benefits for youth:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Youth</li> <li>- Volunteers</li> <li>- Community partners</li> <li>- Families</li> </ul>	<p><i>Environmental Stewardship</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop awareness of and experience in places near their community where they can experience nature.</li> <li>- Be aware of local ecosystems.</li> <li>- Express positive attitudes toward the environment.</li> <li>- Feel comfortable and safe outdoors.</li> </ul> <p><i>Health</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop skills to participate in outdoor recreation activities.</li> <li>- Feel comfortable engaging in self-directed outdoor recreation activity.</li> <li>- Develop relationships with peers and at least one adult.</li> <li>- Feel the self-confidence that comes with gaining new knowledge and skills.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Environmental Stewardship</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Positive attitudes towards and aspirations for participating in stewardship activities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Health</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-initiated outdoor activity discover self and increase feelings of self-worth</li> </ul>	<p>Citizens demonstrate environmental stewardship behaviors.</p> <p>Connection with nature provides physical, mental, social health benefits.</p>

**Organizational Values**

Our staff, board members, volunteers and partners represent a variety of agencies that share the following beliefs:

- We serve ALL youth while working to reduce participation barriers for under-advantaged youth.
- In order for youth to be healthy they must play and explore outdoors.
- Minnesotans will care more about protecting our natural resources if they have childhood experiences that allow them to bond with nature.
- All kids must have access to the outdoors during the hours out of school.
- All youth should be introduced to caring adult mentors who are passionate about the outdoors in order to provide safe outdoor experiences as well as guidance and inspiration during those experiences.
- All Minnesota youth and families must be introduced to our public parks and trails and the lifelong recreation opportunities available at these sites.

**Evaluation Plan**

Project Get Outdoors will implement several evaluation methods with the intention to improve the program and demonstrate program impacts.

- Beginning of the year survey: collect quantitative information (ie. How many minutes do you spend outdoors each week?) and evaluative information (“I like nature” or “I think skiing is fun” with a five-point agree/disagree scale).
- Mid and end of year survey: ask same questions as beginning of year survey in order to compare responses from the beginning of the year to the middle and end of the year and infer changes caused by the program.
- Collection of anecdotal stories: program leaders will e-mail program coordinator when they have a great story about something they heard a kid say, something that happened in the program or something they felt good about. Stories may be shared through Community Mapping. This builds a repertoire of stories to use in fundraising and marketing.



# PILOT PROGRAMS

## Our First Pilot Program—Established 2005

*Plainview-Elgin-Millville Project GO*

Key partners - Plainview Area Migrant Council, Plainview Community Presbyterian Church, PEM Schools, Hiawatha Land Transit, Wabasha County 4-H.

Local Funders - Plainview Area Migrant Council, First National and People’s State Banks, ABA Water Systems, Kreofsky Building Supply, Julie Walsh Eye Clinic, Plainview Lion’s, Plainview Area Foundation.

Program Logistics - Every Thursday from 3-5pm at the PCP Church. Transportation home is provided by shuttle bus.

Participants - During the school year, between 20 and 25 youth participate. Mostly elementary school age, half of whom are Latino and 95% of whom are low-income. During the summer months, 65+ children participate, mostly elementary school age and 75% or more are Latino, of whom around 30 are migrant Latino children from Texas.

## Established 2008

*Rochester Project GO*

Key Partners - Olmsted County 4-H, Rochester Public Schools, Friendship Place, Boys and Girls Club, Olmsted County Parks, Quarry Hill Nature Center.

Key Funders - Rochester Area Foundation, Olmsted Medical Center, Think Credit Union, Mayo Clinic, Olmsted County Public Health Steps to a Healthier Rochester.

Program Logistics - Programs are offered at various locations in Rochester, Busses pick up children from the Friendship Place and Boys and Girls Club and bring them out to Chester Woods Park for GO activities each Thursday from 1-3pm during the summer months.

Participants - Mostly non-Caucasian ethnicities as the community has many Latino and Somali families. During the summer program, around 50 youth enroll in the program with approximately 1/3 being Caucasian, 1/3 being Somali and 1/3 being Latino.



## Established 2006

*St. Charles Project GO*

Key Partners - St. Charles Public Schools, St. Charles Community Education, St. Charles City Park and Recreation, Winona County 4-H, Leo’s Helping Hands Club.

Local Funders - Moose Lodge, St. Charles High School Student Council, Leo’s Club.

Program Logistics - Meet each Wednesday from 3-5pm at the elementary school in the hallway near the gym. During the summer months, meet at the City Park in the picnic shelter.

Participants - Year round 50 children are enrolled in the program, 75% being low-income and around 20% being non-Caucasian or mixed ethnicity.

## Established 2008

*Winona Project GO*

Key Partners - US Fish and Wildlife Service, Winona County 4-H, Boy Scouts of America, Girl Scouts, Winona State University, Saint Mary’s University, Winona County Housing and Re-development Authority.

Key Funders - Winona Eagles, Hiawatha Valley Audubon Chapter, Hy-Vee, Winona Wal-Mart.

Program Logistics - Currently one site hosts a GO program, the Maplewood housing complex (apartments overseen by the Housing & Re-development Authority). There are 30+ children participating on a regular basis each Tuesday from 3-5pm while an additional 30 children attend activities irregularly throughout the year.

Participants - Most of these children are African-American transplants from inner-city Chicago.



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### Q. What is Project GO?

A. Project GO programs are community-driven outdoor programs that introduce children to nature during the after-school and out-of-school hours. These programs are implemented by local communities using the GO Toolkit designed by Project Get Outdoors, Inc., a non-profit organization that created this program.



### Q. When was Project GO founded?

A. The first pilot project began in September 2005, but the actual non-profit organization was officially chartered in November 2006 and approved as a 501c3 tax exempt organization in February 2009. Project GO was fortunate to be able to operate under the fiscal sponsorship of the Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota for the first few years while securing 501c3 status.

### Q. How are Project GO programs different from other programs already offered at nature centers, parks, zoos and museums?

A. Project GO programs are community driven, meaning they are built upon community collaboration. Volunteers, funds, program activities, etc. all come from members of the community. The focus is on local natural resources and outdoor exploration opportunities at local public parks, trails and nature areas. Programs meet consistently, year-round to introduce participants to the diverse seasonal outdoor activities available in the region. Also, Project GO programs must meet the criteria described in this handbook as well as strive to provide the 8 Keys to Quality Youth Development as identified by the University of Minnesota Center for Youth Development.

### Q. Are volunteers screened?

A. Yes. On-going volunteers age 18 or older are required to complete a criminal background.

### Q. How do communities find volunteers for Project GO?

A. Each community planning team is guided through a mapping process of identifying key organizations and individuals in the community that would be a good fit with their Project GO program (i.e.: outdoors groups, active outdoorsmen and women, gardening clubs, sportsmen's clubs, retired teachers, etc.).

### Q. Does a Project GO program leader need a science or natural resource degree?

A. No. Although a science or natural resources background is helpful, it is not required. What we've found from our pilot sites is that those program leaders who are retired teachers or who have teaching experience tend to have the easiest time getting successful GO programs off the ground.

### Q. On average, how many volunteers does it take to run a single GO program?

A. It takes around 10 volunteers to operate one program for a year. The suggested ratio of adults to youth is 1:5.





**Q. What kinds of supplies does a program leader need to keep on hand in order to be well prepared?**

**A.** A program leader should always have the club roster with emergency contact information for all participants and volunteers, a first aid kit and a cell phone. The Project GO Activity Backpack provides program leaders with a variety of supplies for planning outdoor activities and coming up with rainy day and free time activities. You may also choose to keep some spare winter clothing on hand.

**Q. What kinds of activities are appropriate for Project GO programs?**

**A.** With easy adaptations, most any outdoor or nature activity is appropriate for Project GO. The focus of GO is to allow children to experience and explore. Unlike most traditional environmental education and naturalist programs, Project GO does not lecture or expect children to recite or memorize concepts, facts or taxonomy of species. Rather, Project GO activities are designed to provide children opportunities to try outdoor activities that help them to connect with nature in new ways. The Activity Ideas Booklet in your Activity Backpack will provide you with more information on planning Project GO activities.



**Q. How is Project GO funded?**

**A.** Project Get Outdoors, Inc. is funded through grants and donations by corporations, organizations, and individuals as well as through a variety of fundraisers. The non-profit organization works closely with its statewide partners to share resources in order to have a large impact using a limited amount of funds. Community GO Clubs are funded locally by local businesses, organizations, individuals and club fundraisers.

**Q. Who are the partnering agencies of Project GO?**

**A.** Project GO is proud to be part of a network of countless agencies and organizations committed to connecting children with nature. Our key statewide partnering agencies include: the US Fish and Wildlife Service, University of Minnesota Extension, Conservation Corps of MN & IA, the Parks and Trails Council of MN, 4-H, and the Boy Scouts of America.

**Q. Who are the largest contributors to Project GO as of February 2015?**

**A.** Mayo Clinic (\$30,000), Parks and Trails Council of MN (\$20,000), Sheltering Arms Foundation (\$20,000), MN Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (\$15,000), U of MN Southeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnership (\$12,200), Southern MN Initiative Foundation (\$10,000), General Mills Foundation (\$10,000), National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (\$10,000), THINK Mutual Bank (\$10,000), MN Department of Natural Resources (in-kind support 2007—2011), and many other foundations and corporations.



## Nature Deficit-Disorder (NDD) Defined

"A lack of routine contact with nature may result in stunted academic and developmental growth. This unwanted side-effect of the electronic age is called Nature Deficit Disorder (NDD). The term was coined by author Richard Louv in his book *Last Child in the Woods* in order to explain how our societal disconnect with nature is affecting today's children. Louv says we have entered a new era of suburban sprawl that restricts outdoor play, in conjunction with a plugged-in culture that draws kids indoors. But, as Louv presents in his book, the agrarian, nature-oriented existence hard-wired into human brains isn't quite ready for the overstimulating environment we've carved out for ourselves. Some children adapt; those who don't, develop the symptoms of NDD, which include attention problems, obesity, anxiety, and depression.

Nature-deficit disorder is not a medical condition; it is a description of the human costs of alienation from nature. This alienation damages children and shapes adults, families, and communities. There are solutions, though, and they're right in our own backyards." Learn More about NDD at [Education.com](http://Education.com)

## Benefits of Kids Outdoors

*(From the Fish & Wildlife Services Website)*



### 1. It makes kids happier.

**Studies indicate that children who play and explore outdoors are less stressed** and may further benefit by learning confidence and social skills. In nature, kids and families get a chance to move at life's natural pace, where time disappears, no one is bored, and exploration turns into fun adventure. Key to nature play is the chance for kids to explore on their own terms and with their own choices, so they can discover themselves what is interesting and fun (this builds confidence too!). Choosing to climb a tree, hanging onto a rope swing, jumping over a log, skipping stones — all of these are examples of experiences in which children learn more about themselves, their decisions, and what to do in new settings.

### 2. It makes kids healthier.

**Keeping kids active helps keep kids healthy.** And nothing keeps kids active more than giving them fun and interesting things to explore and do. Studies indicate that even as little as 30 minutes of activity a day will keep you healthy. It can be as simple as a bike ride around the neighborhood or a hike in a local park. There are so many options when you're in nature -- running, jumping, climbing, building and more. Research suggests that the most important thing for kids to make a habit of an active life is being introduced to their activities by a parent. And of course it's good for the parents too!

### 3. It makes kids smarter.

**Better focus without any hokus pokus!** Nature has all sorts of patterns and parts. And all the parts somehow fit together. When children get to play in the outdoors from the earliest age, they learn - what is what, how things fit together, what they do. Opportunities for regular play in the outdoors — especially in gardens, woods, and creeks -- are especially beneficial.

### 4. It's free!

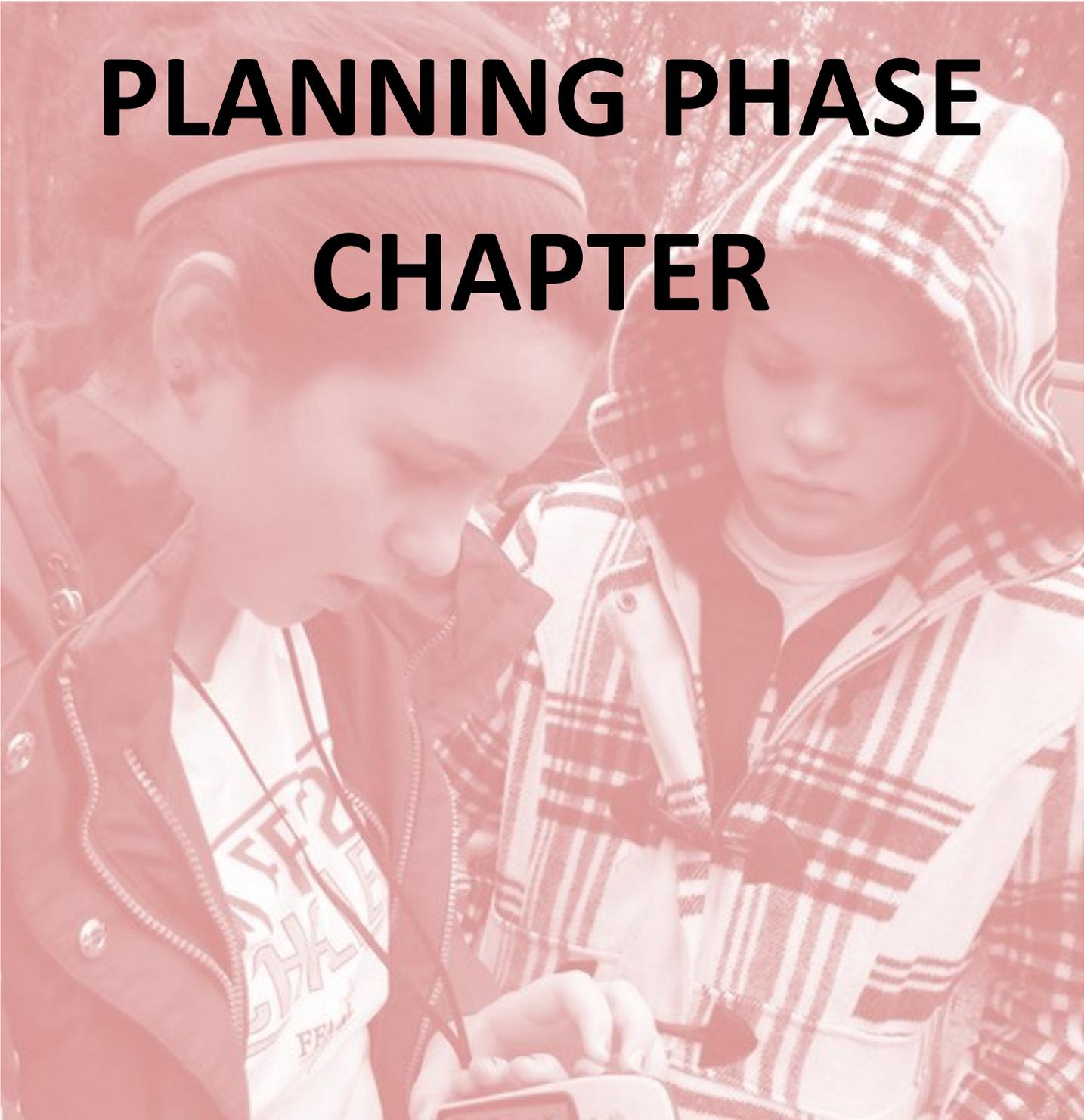
**Most activities you can do outside don't cost a single penny.** The outdoors can offer you your very own economic stimulus package. You want to make your dollar go the extra mile. What could be better than having a great time for free? There are more things you can do in and around your home and nearby that will fill your family's days with great adventures. It's not far away, you don't need a plane ticket or big entrance ticket. All you have to do is go explore!

### 5. It's fun for the entire family.

**Unplug, relax and explore, together.** Want to do something for the family that is easy and fun for you too? Activities in nature are something the whole family can enjoy. Whether the whole family, a grandparent and a grandchild, a dad or mother and a son or daughter, or others spend time outdoors, they may be changed in positive ways for ever.

# PLANNING PHASE

## CHAPTER

A photograph of two young women looking at a smartphone together. The woman on the left is wearing a dark jacket over a white t-shirt with a logo. The woman on the right is wearing a plaid hoodie. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter.

Chapters 1, 2, & 3 highlight the phases of designing a Project GO program unique to the needs and assets of your community.

These phases are broken down into tasks that your planning team can divide up in order to share the responsibilities.

# Planning Phase Checklist

## Timeline: 3 – 6 months before program start up

All of the necessary forms and documents you will need are listed in the Appendix and can be found on the accompanying Google Drive Account.

Done	Task	Description	Assigned To
<input type="checkbox"/>	#1	Pre-Planning Checklist	
<input type="checkbox"/>	#2	Information Article Series	
<input type="checkbox"/>	#3	Community Mapping	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	#4	Community Planning Meeting	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	#5	Logistics Planning	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	#6	Establish Program Account & Implement Fund Drive	



Planning Phase: TASK #1

## TASK #1: Pre-Planning Checklist

Your community's adventure with Project GO began when someone from your town contacted the Project GO Program Coordinator to request information. A Pre-Program Checklist was sent to your community. This checklist directs volunteers from your community to do the following before the Program Coordinator will come and present to your group:

- Form a planning team of 5 to 10 volunteers from the community.
- Begin identifying the programming gaps in your community.
- Identify the at-risk populations in the community.

Once the pre-planning checklist is completed, the Program Coordinator will set up a time to meet with your planning team members.

### Recruiting and Constructing Your Planning Team

Working with representatives of a cross-section of the community is very important. Think of the various agencies, organizations and individuals in your community who share an invested interest in youth. Think of groups that share the mission of Project GO in connecting children to nature. Also consider if there is a conservation organization that might be a sponsor organization for your program.

#### Outdoor Group

- Hunting/Fishing Clubs
- Trout Unlimited
- Ducks Unlimited
- National Wild Turkey Federation
- MN Master Naturalists (UM Extension)
- Woodland Advisors (UM Extension)
- Izaak Walton League
- Pheasants 4-Ever
- Whitetails Unlimited
- Audubon Chapter
- MN Master Gardeners (UM Extension)
- Cycling Clubs

#### Community Organizations

- School Board, Teachers (Science, PE, Health, Spanish)
- Church Councils, Clergy
- City Park & Recreation Staff
- Local Health Clinic
- Senior Center
- Local Clubs (Lions, Legion, Eagles, etc.)
- Local Minority Organization Representatives
- Community Education Staff
- Early Childhood Family Education
- Public Health
- School Nurse
- Community Action Coalition

#### Youth Organizations

- FFA Advisors
- Scouts
- Youth Centers (Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, etc.)
- Local Daycare Centers
- 4-H Leaders/Volunteers
- School Age Child Care Program
- Church Youth Groups





## TASK #2: Informational Article Series

Your planning team may use the 17 pre-written articles on the Handbook’s Appendix folder on Google Drive to launch an Informational Article Series within your local newspaper. The informational article series is a critical tool for conveying the importance of the Project GO mission in the community prior to launching your program.

As the community becomes more aware of the critical connection between nature and human health, local support for programs such as Project GO begins to grow. This will aid in your efforts to get volunteers and donations for your local program.



## TASK #3: Community Mapping

Disperse the Community Asset Survey to identify adult and youth leaders, green spaces, equipment and other resources within the community and follow up with the Skill & Interest Survey to identify potential program volunteers and their specific skills.

Based on the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation’s and the McKnight Foundation’s “Asset Based Community Development” approach, the Project GO community asset survey is intended to help committee members and other volunteers identify the assets of the local community and build a program upon the strengths and resources that already exist.

Each member of your planning team should complete one of these surveys as well as disperse a minimum of five copies to others they know in the community who may be interested in contributing ideas to develop a local Project GO program. The planning team will establish a deadline by which time all surveys must be completed and returned.

Once the completed surveys are received, the planning team will begin dispersing the skill & interest surveys to individuals referred to in the asset surveys. This will help your team assemble a core of local volunteers who specialize in different outdoor skills and who have diverse outdoor backgrounds. The skill and interest surveys will help team members identify specific projects that volunteers are willing to assist with as well as specific days of the weeks and times of day that work for volunteers to meet.



Planning Phase: TASK #4 & #5

## Task #4: Community Meeting

Use the [Planning Meeting Press Release](#) to submit a press release to your local newspaper announcing Project GO and inviting local residents and community leaders to attend a Community Planning Meeting to discuss the program and seek ideas and input from people. This is an important part of community/grassroots organizing as it allows the local citizenry to put their fingerprint on the program and have a shared investment in program outcomes.

Follow the outline for the community planning meeting, once again found on the CD. The goal of this meeting is to review the community asset survey results with the broader community and seek additional input regarding program specifics; transportation, volunteers, funding sources, program activities, etc.



Have a [Volunteer Committee Sign Up Sheet](#) at the meeting. Have copies of the Community Asset Survey results for everyone, or make them available via email. Also, have copies of the Skill & Interest Survey for those who are interested. It is most helpful to bring a large note pad to the meeting in order to take notes so all can see. Also, assign a planning team member to take official meeting notes that can be typed up later for use by the planning team.



## Task #5: Logistics Planning

**Meet with Planning Team** to begin logistics planning. Discuss critical components of programming including transportation, activity schedule, program days and times, and interested volunteers. If you haven't already identified who will serve as Program Leader for your local program, now is the time to do so. You may also find that having two or three people to “tag team” and share the responsibilities of program leader is a better fit for your program.

### **This Logistics Planning Task is somewhat like putting together a puzzle!**

It is very important to figure out the logistics of your Project GO program before implementing a fund drive. That way you have detailed information to share with potential funders and an increased chance that they will be excited about your program.



### **Meeting Location & Target Youth Audience**

Prior to the logistics meeting, have planning team members investigate potential program sites that have been approved by the appropriate agency staff. For example, meeting with the superintendent and area principals can quickly provide you with the information you need. Getting these school administrators on board and excited about Project GO will allow your committee to easily identify the gaps and needs within the local school system and set you up for success.



School administrators can be your greatest advocates as they have access to all of the teachers and have a strong voice in swaying overall support for your program in the school. They can network through teachers and other school faculty to help you plan your program.

If school administrators are reluctant to meet with you, talk with local community education staff, School Age Child Care staff, science and PE/Health teachers, FFA advisors about current programming and any gaps that exist and discuss how Project GO might help enrich a program that is already being offered, or might fill a gap. Some school staff may not see any gaps; that is why it is very important to talk with as many different school faculty as possible in order to identify the needs and various capacities in which a Project GO program can benefit the school and local children.

Project GO programs are encouraged to work with local schools and to meet on-site at local schools because schools are trusted, safe places in the eyes of parents. Also, by meeting at a school site, transportation barriers can oftentimes be avoided or reduced. But it is understood that this is not always practical or possible. If for some reason a school is reluctant to work with your committee, there are many other organizations and agencies with which you can form partnerships.

Looking at area low-income housing sites, especially if you are located in a large city, you may be able to team up with the Housing Re-development Authority or local Park and Recreation Department to develop a program that targets the children who reside in a specific neighborhood. Teaming up with after-school sites such as the YMCA, Boys and Girls Club or local youth center, a Project GO program can be developed to reach children who are already congregated at a certain location.



We've found that most after-school organizations, including School Age Child Care programs offered on school grounds, are eager and willing to work with outside organizations that will provide free enrichment experiences for their youth participants. Project GO can also train staff at these already existing after school sites in your community so that they may lead their own nature programming once a week.

**Be creative!** Each community is unique and has different niches where Project GO can build a strong program to meet a critical need. One community may work with local church youth groups to offer Project GO activities on Saturday afternoons, while another community may decide to form a Project GO 4-H Club and meet at the local library each week. One community may work closely with the local middle school while another community forms a Project GO program working with elementary school age children who sign up through their local city Parks and Recreation Department. Some communities may have the resources to implement multiple programs at various sites. Find what works for your community by identifying partners and supporters and the needs of the children and families you wish to serve!



## Transportation

Try to keep transportation costs to a minimum. This is usually the largest expense as fieldtrip bussing can add up quickly. In 2011, bussing costs averaged around \$150 per trip. Typically, each Project GO club will schedule one fieldtrip per month and try to utilize sites within walking distance for the other three days.

In order to keep transportation costs low, look at creative sources such as local organizations or agencies that may have 15 passenger vans or small busses. Work to form collaborations with such groups as Head Start and Senior Dining to share transportation vehicles. Some scouting units and 4-H regions have access to large passenger vans as do various colleges and universities.

Carpooling is allowed for smaller groups as long as drivers are program leaders or parents of participants and over 25 years of age.



## Local Green Spaces and Outdoor Activities

Using the asset surveys, work to identify the green spaces on or near your planned program site. Once again, be creative in identifying and utilizing the small pockets of nature that exist in your community. Project GO pilot programs in SE Minnesota have utilized forest areas at cemeteries, pools of water in road ditches, small patches of trees and prairie remnants near local walking and biking trails, etc. To a child, one or two trees can provide a great nature experience.

Once you've listed green spaces that are within walking distance of your site, begin looking at nature sites on the fringes of the community and up to 30 miles from your site. Public lands, including state parks, county parks, city parks, as well as county, state and federal forests and trails, are all great places to utilize as the children can visit these sites throughout their lives to experience nature and outdoor recreation.

Once you've got a fairly complete list of accessible green spaces within a 30 mile radius of your site, begin looking at what kinds of activities you could offer to help the children experience those different places via diverse outdoor activities. While doing this, keep in mind the skills and talents that your identified volunteers have agreed to help teach.

When you have completed your logistics planning using the Planning Worksheets on the four following pages, you should have an Activity Calendar assembled. There are sample activity calendars in the Activity Ideas Booklet that accompanies the Activity Backpack.





Planning Phase: TASK #6

## TASK #6: Establish Account & Implement Fund Drive

Some communities may find a local nature or conservation organization to sponsor their GO program, thus eliminating the need for fundraising and setting up a bank account. However, most sites will work with Project Get Outdoors Inc. to designate a subaccount under our parent organization. Local club funds will be deposited into the Project GO Inc. account and club leaders can submit expense reports at the end of each month to get reimbursed for program expenses.

Tapping into local businesses, organizations and individuals for funding is fairly easy using the Project GO fund drive templates—a Startup Fund Drive letter, Fund Drive Press Release, Example Club Budget, Project GO Letter of Determination, Donor Card Club Fund Drive, Repeat Fund Drive letter, and Fund Drive Thank You.

The Fund Drive Press Release document in the Fundraising folder will help make the greater community aware of your fundraising program and will invite others to donate toward your cause.

Key funders in most communities include the local banks, sportsmen clubs, and service clubs such as Lions and American Legion. Oftentimes, service clubs will request a presentation at one of their meetings before they will issue a donation.

Repeat fund drives are launched once per year after the initial start-up



fund drive. A different letter is used for a repeat fund drive. Your club leader or volunteer from your planning team may enter site- specific data and information into the template form found on the Google Drive Account, or you can choose to develop your own fund drive materials.

# Congratulations, you have completed the PLANNING PHASE of your Project Get Outdoors program!



# GROWING PHASE CHAPTER

Chapter 2, Growing Phase, will take you step by step through growing your Project GO program; from announcing your program to implementing program activities.

# Growing Phase Checklist

## Timeline: 1 month – 1 week before program start up

All of the necessary forms and documents you will need are listed in the Appendix and can be found on the accompanying Google Drive Account.

Done	Task	Description	Assigned To
<input type="checkbox"/>	#1	Announce Your Program	
<input type="checkbox"/>	#2	Register Participants	
<input type="checkbox"/>	#3	Volunteer Screening & Training	Program Coordinator
<input type="checkbox"/>	#4	Schedule Open House Event	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	#5	Prepare Program Documents	Program Leader
<input type="checkbox"/>	#6	Charter with 4-H/Scouts	Program Leader



Growing Phase: TASK #1 & #2

**TASK #1: Announce Your Program**

Distribute program information using the Program Announcement Flyer template to local organizations such as Parks and Recreation, daycares, libraries and churches. Make sure to reach out to under-advantaged families.

Update the program announcement flyer to include specific information about your program including start-up dates. Distribute this flyer throughout the community. To better reach underserved families, consider posting at the following locations:

- Laundromat
- Restaurants
- Library
- Gas Stations
- Grocery Store
- Community Center
- Food Shelf
- Churches
- Banks
- Housing Developments
- City Hall
- Head Start
- Minority Organization Offices



**TASK #2: Register Participants**

Create registration papers using Registration Form Template (found in the Handbook’s Appendix on the Google Drive) and deliver to K-8 schools.

If you are partnered with an organization that is going to oversee your program’s registration (community ed., etc.), make sure their registration form has the same information as our GO form on the Google Drive.

Work with local minority organizations to find assistance in translating registration information into other major languages in the community. The school may have bi-lingual staff as may the city. High school language teachers and local colleges may also be able to help with translating materials. Our partners at the University of Minnesota Extension and the Scouts have access to language translators as well.

It is usually helpful to local families if the registration form is printed in English on one side and Spanish on the other side. If the information is going to be available in more than two languages, try if possible to print things double-sided to conserve paper.

The registration form will list a deadline, a sign-up event/open house you’re planning and a date when the program is to start. You can also choose to limit the number of children who can sign up and have that stated on the form: “Maximum enrollment will be 25 children. First come, first served.”

Work with your partner organizations to distribute the registration information to youth who are most in need of your program. Some partnering agencies may oversee your registration process, for example if you’re partnered with a community education or park and recreation program.



## Growing Phase: TASK #3 & #4

### TASK #3: Volunteer Screening & Training

Along with the Volunteer Skill and Interest Survey, make sure to hand out *Project GO Volunteer Applications* to all adult volunteers who will be volunteering on an on-going basis (more than five times in a year).

The volunteer application is very important as it requires volunteers to sign a form allowing Project GO to authorize a criminal background. We require all adults over age 18 who are volunteering frequently to complete one, regardless of whether or not they will ever be alone with youth.

Project GO programs that collaborate with the Boy Scouts and 4-H are also asked to instruct all adults who will be volunteering on a regular basis (once a month or more) to complete a scout leader application and 4-H Volunteer Application. These applications will also include a background check. These volunteers will be added to the scout leader database and 4-H leader database and will be allowed to access the database for training videos, activity ideas and many other resources.



Once you have set a start date for your program, the Program Coordinator will set up a volunteer training where your site will be issued an Activity Backpack. All volunteers who will be working with the children are required to attend the training. If they cannot make the in-person training, they can view the Project GO training DVD included in the toolkit and complete the worksheet that accompanies the video. All completed training worksheets should be mailed to the Program Coordinator.

All sites that charter with 4-H and Scouts will be required to send their volunteers to additional trainings/orientations offered through those organizations.



### TASK #4: Schedule Open House Event

Coordinate an open house event for local families to sign up for Project GO and to meet staff and volunteers.

An open house event is a great way to get families excited about your program. These events allow parents to meet staff and volunteers face-to-face and for program staff to address any questions or concerns parents may have. It is also a way to recruit parent volunteers and better convey the need for programs such as Project GO.

Your open house event may be in conjunction with school conferences, park and recreation sign-up night, community education open house, etc. Collaborating with other organizations to hold a larger program sign-up event will help attract more families to your program and save you time in planning and coordinating an open house of your own!

Bring welcome packets to this event so you can disperse them to families as they sign up. This way you can save postage. Ask the Program Coordinator about borrowing the Project GO display!



## TASK #5: Prepare Program Documents



**Welcome Packets:** Mail **Welcome Packets** to families that have registered.

Welcome packets are crucial in conveying the importance of your program to families. In the welcome packet, each family will receive a Welcome Letter explaining the mission and goals of the program and how they can incorporate outdoor recreation into their family time.

The packet will also contain a tentative schedule for the year/summer so that parents have an idea of the kinds of activities and field trips their children will be experiencing.

One final document in the welcome packet is the Adult Skill & Interest Survey. We ask parents to complete these surveys in order to help program volunteers identify parents who have access to outdoor equipment or who have outdoor skills they are interested in sharing with the group.

**Record Keeping Documents:** Allow enough time between the registration deadline and the program start date so that you can assemble a Club Roster and Club Attendance Sheet (on Google Drive folder). Send a copy of the roster to the Program Coordinator along with all original registration forms.

The Club Roster will have all of the emergency contact information and important health information pertaining to each child. This roster must be carried at all times by at least one program staff or volunteer so that in case of an emergency, the information is close by. Keeping your roster on a clip board is recommended.

The Club Roster should be copied to other partnering organizations, especially other youth organizations or agencies that are co-sponsoring your program. For example, 4-H and the Scouts are two major sponsors of Project GO programs in SE Minnesota and their agency representatives always receive copies of rosters.

The club attendance sheet will be used weekly to track attendance. Those who do not attend regularly may not be allowed to attend field trips.

**Safety & Insurance Documents:** Launch your program, making sure to reference the safety and insurance documents when planning and implementing program activities.

Have program volunteers keep on hand the roster and Certificate of Insurance in case of emergencies. Project Get Outdoors, Inc. will provide you with the Certificate of Insurance. The dates of the Certificate of Insurance will change annually. The Program Coordinator will update you with the most recent form.

Always keep blank copies of the Accident & Incident Report on your clipboard in case of an accident or incident. Complete these forms for each incident or accident and send the original copy to the Program Coordinator to be kept on file.

During cold winter months, it is good to keep spare hats, gloves and even a couple coats with you. If you check with the local schools in the springtime, you can often get their lost and found winter clothing and keep that for Project GO participants who come improperly dressed for the weather. A first aid kit and cell phone are also necessary.



Growing Phase: TASK #6



## TASK #6: Chartering with 4-H & Scouts

Project GO programs are encouraged to partner with area 4-H clubs and Scout units in order to create a better opportunity to share resources and volunteers as well as to enrich your program by offering opportunities such as scout camp and county fair project showing.

As we have done in several communities in SE Minnesota, you can collaborate with both 4-H and the Scouts to set up your programs as Project GO 4-H/Scouting Clubs. This provides the best opportunities for participation with both youth organizations.

### 4-H Chartering Instructions



Your county 4-H Extension Educator should already be aware of the Project Get Outdoors movement in your county and ready to work with you and your group to help you establish your own local Project GO 4-H Club. You will need to contact your County 4-H Extension Educator to talk with them about setting up your Project GO 4-H Club as a site-based, after-school program. A list of the 4-H Extension Educators in each county can be found in the 4-H/Scout Club Chartering folder of the Planning Phase folder on the toolkit Google Drive Account.

**Completing 4-H Charter Forms** Your county 4-H Extension Educator will have you fill out a [4-H Charter Application](#) and then ask a youth from your program to sign it. Once you have chartered for the first time, you will need to re-charter your club each year.

### Scout Chartering Procedures



Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts are very different in their chartering processes and in their operations. Typically, there is one Scout Council that oversees a large geo-graphic region. Unlike 4-H which has one Extension Educator assigned to each county, the Scouts have one district executive assigned to several counties in a region. Therefore, working with the Scouts is a much more independent process.

### Boy Scouts—How to Charter



To charter your GO program with the Boy Scouts, you will need to first contact your regional Scout Executive. A [Contact List for the Scout Councils](#) in Minnesota can be found in the Handbook's Appendix on the Google Drive. A Scout executive will then set up a time to meet with you and provide the paperwork necessary for setting up a Scout unit.

### Girl Scouts—How to Charter



The Girl Scouts operate in a very different manner than the Boy Scouts and most often would prefer to send a staff person to work with your club rather than charter a Girl Scout unit. Contact your regional Girl Scout representative to find out more about collaborating with the Girl Scouts. A contact list for Girl Scouts in Minnesota can be found on the Google Drive Account under the 4-H/Scout Chartering folder in the Planning Phase folder.

# Congratulations, you have completed the GROWING PHASE!

# ON-GOING PHASE CHAPTER

Chapter 3, On-Going Phase, will help you evaluate your growing program, report on progress, solve problems, discover new ideas, and continue to build on your success.

# On-Going Phase Checklist

## Timeline: On-going throughout each year

All of the necessary forms and documents you will need are listed in the Appendix and can be found on the accompanying Google Drive Account.

Done	Task	Description	Assigned To
<input type="checkbox"/>	#1	Re-charter with 4-H/Scouts	Program Leader
<input type="checkbox"/>	#2	Evaluation & Reporting Tools	Program Leader/Intern
<input type="checkbox"/>	#3	Schedule Volunteer Meetings	Program Leader
<input type="checkbox"/>	#4	Publicize Your Successes	
<input type="checkbox"/>	#5	Program Coordinator Site/Visit	Program Coordinator
<input type="checkbox"/>	#6	Coordinate Annual Family Event	
<input type="checkbox"/>	#7	Fundraise	All
<input type="checkbox"/>	#8	Thank Volunteers	



On-going Phase: TASK #1 & #2

### Task #1: Re-chartering with 4-H & Scouts

If your site has partnered with 4-H or the Scouts, you will need to re-charter each year. The 4-H Charter Renewal Form is included in the 4-H Chartering Club Application in the Handbook's Appendix on the Google Drive. Here are some details to use in filling out both the charter and re-charter applications.

**On page 2** of the 4-H charter and re-charter applications enter the following for your club goals, as all sites share the same goals:

- Introduce children to the outdoors and local nature spaces.
- Introduce participants to outdoor skills that allow them to be comfortable and feel safe outdoors.
- Provide caring adult volunteers.
- Incorporate meaningful service projects.



**On page 3**, write, "**No funds are run through 4-H with Project GO.**" You do not need to fill out the financial information on pages 3 and 4 of the Charter and Re-charter form as funds are not run through 4-H for your program. Funds are run through Project GO, Inc. All of your Club bank accounts should be titled with the name of your community and then Project GO. For example, in St. Charles, the account is titled St. Charles Project GO. The funds we raise and spend through Project GO are all associated with Project GO, not 4-H.

**Mail your completed 4-H Charter and/or Re-charter Applications to your Regional Extension Office, not your County Extension Office. The Project GO Program Coordinator can provide you contact info.**

### TASK #2: Evaluation & Reporting Tools

Implement evaluation tools found in the Ongoing Phase folder on the Google Drive Account: Pre-Program and Post-Program Surveys. Forward testimonials from teachers, parents and participants to the Program Coordinator.

Evaluation tools are critical. These tools help us monitor the successful accomplishment of the goals, objectives and out-comes laid out in our Project Get Outdoors logic model.

#### Community Green Space Mapping

Project GO is partnered with the Conservation Corps of Minnesota & Iowa to receive AmeriCorps members each year. These AmeriCorps members work in various capacities to expand the reach of Project GO throughout Minnesota.

The Community Green Space Mapping Project is organized by these AmeriCorps members, who are responsible for training GO interns and volunteers to upload photos, videos, audio, stories, artwork and other expressions of the youth, to inter-active, on-line story maps for each GO community.

These community maps are accessible for free through the Project GO website and a link on the Project GO Facebook Page.





## Community Green Space Mapping

**WHY?** To demonstrate the impact of Project GO by showing through the eyes of the children the diverse locations within each GO community where nature exploration and outdoor learning can happen.

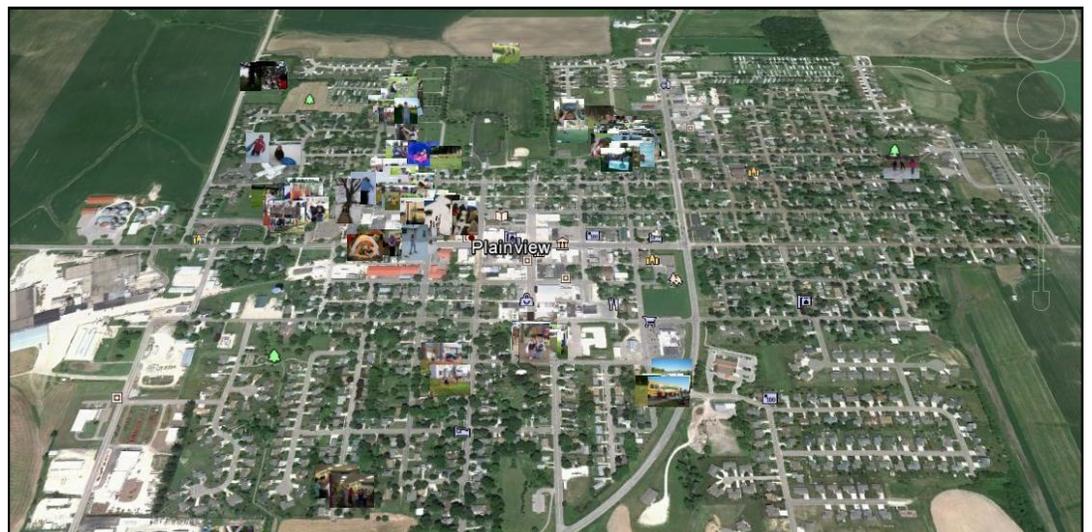
**WHO?** Project GO AmeriCorps members will train interns and volunteers to implement the Community Green Space Mapping activities at GO sites throughout Minnesota.

**HOW?** Interns will lead Project GO participants through a Community Mapping exercise where youth will develop their own map of green spaces in their community. Throughout the year, as the group explores new outdoor locations, photos, videos, audio clips, artwork, poetry and stories will be collected and uploaded into a customized story map for each community. Parents, funders, stakeholders and the greater community will be able to access these maps via the Project GO website to explore the green spaces in the community.



Youth participants will work with Project GO interns to draw a map of the green spaces in their local community. Over the course of the year, the children will expand their awareness of green spaces and be able to visually see their knowledge has expanded by viewing the ever-growing map that highlights their adventures.

Free Google Earth tools and ArcGIS software, combined with Picasa photo software, allow program interns to upload photos, videos and other expressions of youth participant's outdoor adventures to inter-active story maps of the local community green spaces.





## Club Report Form

Report to the Program Coordinator annually on the progress of your program using the Club Report Form.

The Club Report Form allows you to report participant numbers, volunteer numbers, summarize each week's activities and field trips, and track your revenues and expenses for the year. This is critical information that is needed for reporting to the Project Get Outdoors Board of Directors, partner organizations, funders and to the general public.

The Club Report Form is in Word format. The form is four pages and provides you with an expense Log sheet and a Donation/Volunteer Time/In-Kind Contribution Log you can use throughout the year to keep track of your club's finances.

As you do this, you must keep receipts for all expenses. It is recommended you keep all receipts together in a manila envelope labeled with the name of your GO Club.

Inserting your attendance information should be easy if you've been keeping accurate records throughout the year using the Club Attendance template and the Club Roster.

At the end of every December, each program leader will need to complete the Club Report Form and send it to the Program Coordinator along with all receipts. These will be kept on file indefinitely for auditing purposes.

Take time early on to review the Club Report Form and begin using the tracking logs at the very beginning of your programming effort. Don't hesitate to contact the Program Coordinator with questions regarding the reporting process.



Project Get Outdoors Annual Club Report Form	
DATE <u>3-11-13</u>	NAME OF CLUB <u>PEM GO Club</u>
LOCATION (town & county) <u>Plainview, Wabasha</u>	
PROGRAM LEADER (S) <u>Sara Grover</u>	
TOTAL # Registered Participants this year	<u>45</u>
TOTAL # Non-Caucasian Registered Participants	<u>30</u>
TOTAL # Adult Volunteers this year	<u>10</u>
TOTAL # Teen Volunteers this year	<u>2</u>
FINANCIALS	
<small>Please include receipts for all expenses in an envelope labeled with an appropriate calendar year and the name of your club.</small>	
<u>REVENUES</u>	
Donations	\$ <u>100</u>
Fundraisers	\$ _____
Fund Drive	\$ _____
Fee from Project GO Inc.	\$ _____
Grants	\$ _____
Other: Explain <u>In-kind</u>	\$ <u>2,560</u>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ <u>100</u></b>
<u>EXPENSES</u>	
Snacks	\$ <u>49.42</u>
Project Supplies	\$ <u>27.00</u>
Fieldtrip Costs (bussing, rental vehicles, mileage reimburse)	\$ <u>500 GO Inc.</u>
Volunteer Stipends	\$ _____
Other Misc: Explain <u>pool passes</u>	\$ <u>12</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ <u>88.42</u></b>
<b>Beginning of Year Balance</b> <u>648.06</u>	<b>End of Year Balance</b> <u>659.64</u>



On-going Phase: TASK #3

### TASK #3: Schedule Volunteer Meetings

Hold occasional staff/volunteer meetings to talk about new activities and opportunities within the program and to discuss issues and possible solutions. These brief meetings allow opportunities for program helpers to offer suggestions or ideas, and to discuss action plans for dealing with difficult children and/or parents.

Oftentimes, there will be one or two children in the program who need more one-on-one attention. It is okay to assign a volunteer to work specifically with one child who needs that kind of support and supervision. These are the kinds of things to discuss at these meetings.

These occasional meetings can also be used to introduce new volunteers to the group and give them an abbreviated orientation to the program, allowing the other volunteers to help get new volunteers up to speed on the current program activities, participants, strengths and weaknesses.



### TASK #4: Publicize Your Successes

Submit press releases to local newspapers describing current and upcoming program events.

**Press releases are powerful tools** to keep the local community in the loop of your program success. Monthly press releases are encouraged but it is understandable if you do not have the time or manpower to execute monthly submissions.

**Therefore, a minimum of one quarterly press release is suggested.** Use your creativity to identify others in the community who may be able to oversee the assembly and submission of your Project GO press releases. Oftentimes, the local newspaper editors will love the opportunity to print frequent articles highlighting the outdoor opportunities explored through your program. Invite the editor to attend your field trips or activities of special importance. Invite youth involved in the local high school newspaper, yearbook or speech team to be involved in this component of your program. Even local high school art students who are interested in photography could shadow your weekly gatherings, taking photos to submit to the local paper. If you have an intern assigned to your site, they will oversee the publicity of your program.

The Project GO Facebook Page is another great tool for sharing updates about your program. In your Welcome Letter, you can encourage parents to “Like” the Facebook Page. Then you are able to tag parents on the photos of their child and the photos will automatically appear on the Facebook Page of the parents. What a great way to spread the word!

Project Get Outdoors, Inc. also publishes an E-newsletter that can be sent to your local newspaper. Information, articles and stories in the newsletter will be available at no charge for local newspaper editors to incorporate into their papers.





On-going Phase: TASK #5 & #6

## TASK #5: Program Coordinator Site Visit

Coordinate a site visit with the Program Coordinator to assist with program and evaluate needs.

At least once each year, the Program Coordinator will schedule a Corps member to visit your site during a scheduled program day to assist and to evaluate the strengths and gaps in your local program. The site visit can be viewed as a mini-training, as the Corps member will be able to sit down with your staff and volunteers to lead a discussion and generate innovative ideas on ways to improve your program and engage participants.

The Corps member will use a Site Evaluation form and you will receive a copy to keep for your program planning file to help with future program efforts.



## TASK #6: Coordinate Annual Family Event

**Coordinate one free family event** to raise awareness about outdoor opportunities in or near your community.

**This is where you really get to showcase your local program!** Have the kids help decide and plan this event. Look at the outdoor resources that are available in your community and be creative as to how to get local families excited about such locations!

For example, remember back to the Planning Phase of your program and all of the organizations and agencies you listed in your asset survey.

Which of those groups are committed to outdoor recreation or building healthy kids? Brainstorm ways you can collaborate with these groups to hold a free family event.

### Examples have included:

- Annual Outdoors Fair where local nature, outdoor and youth groups set up hands-on activities.
- County Fair 4-H Club Project impacts hundreds of families who visit the fairgrounds.
- Earth Day project in coordination with other local Earth Day efforts.
- Work with local health clinic to hold a Healthy Families Event.
- Work with local state or County park to offer an Outdoor Skills Day for families to try different outdoor equipment (geo-caching, canoeing, bird watching, campfire cooking, etc.)
- Invite local families or church congregations to participate in a collaborative nature service project with other area organizations (ie; Izaak Walton League, Trout Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, etc.)
- Coordinate a Kiddie Nature Fair working with your local elementary school. This event could be held the last part of the school day. Your Project GO club could oversee various booths and stations with hands-on nature games, activities and projects that get kids excited about going outdoors.



On-going Phase: TASK #7

## TASK #7: Fundraising

### Implement at least one club fundraiser besides the annual fund drive.

The annual fund drive is typically launched each August or September before your school year program kicks off. But throughout the year, it is good to have one or two other fundraisers lined up. This is important because club fundraisers show the community that your participants are willing to help work for their program and typically, adults have a harder time saying “no” to a child who is genuinely excited about the cause for which they are working.

Club fundraisers must be sustainable and must try to incorporate nature or outdoor activity into the theme. Fundraisers must fit in with the mission and beliefs of Project Get Outdoors and foster sustainability that helps contribute to the local economy or to the health and wellbeing of children, families and/or our natural world.

For example, we do not want children selling candy or other unhealthy food items. We do not want children selling gift certificates to chain stores that take away from the local entrepreneurs. We don’t want to sell items or services that contribute to the sedentary lifestyle that most children in this nation live.

Remember that area businesses may also donate in-kind items such as snacks and special project supplies. All donations are tax-deductible and should be recorded by the program leader on the Club Report form.

### Possible fundraisers might include:



- Walk-A-Thon, Bike-A-Thon, Skateboard-A- Thon
- Native Prairie/Butterfly Garden Seed Mix sales
- Tree sales
- Nature field guides
- Plant/flower sale in collaboration with a local nursery
- Bird Seed sale
- Outdoor Gear Swap
- Wild Game Feed in collaboration with a local sportsmen’s club
- Nature photography note cards highlighting local nature areas

Many items can be made or assembled by your club and sold as fundraisers at your annual outdoor event.

Examples include:

- dried natural flowers/  
plants
- gently used outdoor gear
- wild edibles
- recycled cards
- walking sticks
- nature art
- nature photos
- willow baskets
- wildflower seeds
- bird houses
- nature photos
- kites





## **TASK #8: Thank Your Volunteers**

Thank volunteers for their time with Project GO Thank You Cards.

Perhaps the most important task your committee must oversee is the acknowledgement of your volunteers. Without the talent and time volunteers dedicate to your local Project GO program, it would be very difficult and impractical to provide these free opportunities for youth to experience nature on a consistent basis.

It is suggested that at the very minimum, volunteers receive praise and recognition at least once per year. In early December, before the turn of the New Year, that is a good time to put together thank you cards and recognize volunteers for specific tasks they have overseen. Without this recognition, it is very difficult to retain volunteers for consecutive years.

Volunteers can also be recognized through the Project Get Outdoors, Inc. newsletter as well through the Facebook Page. Local press releases can also highlight the commitment and passion your volunteers contribute to your program.

Remember, volunteers do what they do because they want to help. But without being recognized for their worth in your program's success, volunteers can quickly burn out or feel unappreciated.

A Volunteer Appreciation Certificate is another tangible way to show your appreciation to volunteers for their faithful service.



**Keep up the great work and remember to complete these on-going phase tasks each year!**

**APPENDIX**



**PLANNING PHASE CHAPTER DOCUMENTS**

**APPENDIX CODE**

**Pre Program Checklist** .....A-01

**GO Power Point Presentation** ..... Toolkit

**Informational Article Series** .....A-02a

- 17 separate articles .....Appendix Folder

- Letter to the Editor of your local newspapers .....A-02b

**Community Asset Survey** .....A-03

**Volunteer Skill & Interest Survey** .....A-04

**Community Planning Meeting**

- Community Planning Meeting Press Release Template.....A-05

- Volunteer Committee Sign Up Sheet .....A-06

**Logistics Worksheets**

- Four planning worksheets ..... A-07a-d

- Sample activity calendar for one year .....A-08

**Fundraising**

- Start up Fund Drive Letter.....A-09

- Fund Drive Press Release .....A-10

- Example Club Budget .....A-11

- Project GO Letter of Determination.....A-12

- Donor Card Club Fund Drive .....A-13

- Repeat Fund Drive Letter .....A-14

- Fund Drive Thank You .....A-15





**GROWING PHASE CHAPTER DOCUMENTS**

**APPENDIX CODE**

**Program Announcement Flyer** ..... B-01

**Registration Form Template**..... B-02

**Project GO Volunteer Application – Background Check**..... B-03

**Welcome Packets**

- Welcome Letter..... B-04
- Skill & Interest Survey ..... A-04

**Club Roster** ..... B-06

**Club Attendance Sheet** ..... B-07

**Safety and Insurance Documents**

- GO Certificate of Insurance Binder ..... B-08
- Accident & Incident Report..... B-09

**4-H Scout Club Chartering**

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- 4-H Charter Application ..... B-11
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