

Learning Conversation Notes

Name of Partner: Placer Nature Center	Date: May 19, 2009
Conversation Participants: Leslie Warren, Linda Desai, Megan Krekorian, Janice LeRoux, Nancy Baggett, Cathy Ferron, Heidi Kolbe, Janey Crider	
Outcome:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents, caregivers, and childcare professionals will incorporate “nature play” and appreciation in their children/s learning experience so that these children view their environment with care, curiosity, and enjoy outside play. 	
Performance Measures:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographics according to the categories mandated in the First 5 Placer Demographic Tool. In addition the following will be required; number of children served directly, the number of children served indirectly and the number of parents/caregivers served. • The results of a parent/caregiver survey to measure what “nature play” parents/caregivers have incorporated in their children’s lives, along with observations of the effect on their children. • The results of a teacher/childcare professional survey to measure what “nature play” has been incorporated into the educational environment (e.g., classroom curriculum, displays, library, outdoor time) and observations of the effect on the children in their care. • Photos and anecdotes/captions that address the outcomes. 	
Number of Children Served:	64
When served:	11/21/08 to 5/19/2009
Gender:	
- Male	33
- Female	31
- Unknown	
Ages:	
- Prenatal	
- < 1 year	5
- 1 year	10
- 2 years	16
- 3 years	19
- 4 years	4
- 5 years	8
- Unknown	
Ethnicity:	
- Alaskan Native/ American Indian	2
- Asian	2
- Black/African American	
- Hispanic/Latino	1
- Pacific Islander	
- White	39
- Multiracial	7
- Other	3
- Unknown	10

What is this data telling us about achievement of outcomes?

Demographics

Overall the program is successful at getting families with young children outdoors to enjoy nature.

“Our Day Outside”

64 children were served, 36 were returning children. High rate of returning families indicates that parents are appreciating the Placer Nature Center as well as the program curriculum. There is also a bilingual staff member to serve the Latino population.

169 children were served indirectly as a result of childcare providers and parents attending workshops at PCOE.

The results of a parent survey – “Our Day Outside”

Responses indicate that parents are enjoying the nature play as well as their children. There is a high rate of returning parents. By providing them a hands on nature experience including simple tools and how to use them, increases the likelihood that they will repeat the activity at home with their children. Returning parents indicate that they have incorporated nature play at home by using these simple tools and activities with their children. Additionally they are indicating using nature play and exploration at various places to increase their child’s awareness and appreciation of the environment.

Foothill Discovery

Programs were held in the fall between September and October representing 11 schools/daycares and 14 Surveyed Providers representing 246 children. Follow up surveys were conducted by phone.

The results of a teacher/childcare professional follow up survey

Survey responses after incorporating nature play and appreciation in the classroom indicate children are viewing the environment with care and curiosity as well as enjoying the outdoors.

Survey results also indicate that children are learning and changing behaviors regarding the environment.

PCOE Early Childhood Workshop Provider Surveys

Four workshops featuring different content were held in this reporting period. Surveys were administered directly after the workshop. It is the returning providers that truly indicate achievement of the outcome as they are using the lessons learned from the workshop and benefiting from new topics and information at each workshop.

Responses in survey indicate providers are incorporating information about nature play into children’s learning experiences. Number and quality of provider comments also demonstrate that information gained from workshops is being implemented and put into the curriculum.

A high percentage of teachers are using information gained from workshops to make inexpensive tools (like mosquito net out of a paint strainer and hanger) to encourage nature play with their children.

The number of providers including opportunities of nature play in their curriculum has increased significantly since the last learning conversation.

Photos and anecdotes

Photos indicate parents and children taking part in nature activities and attending workshops. Lessons include careful collection and observation of insects as well as learning how these insects help the environment.

In what ways will we apply what we have learned from our data?

Ask how parents/caregivers found out about the “Our Day Outside” program held at the Placer Nature Center.

Outreach to the Latino Population is ongoing:

- Staff has flyers in both English and Spanish that are given to teachers and childcare providers

Other possible outreach strategies are:

- Hand out door to door at Auburn Greens in the park
- Coordinate Auburn FRC or Rock Creek School
- PSA to Spanish Radio
- CAPC – KidsFirst, Lincoln Lighthouse, Chana, Headstart, MIC
- Consider conducting “Our Day Outside” at an off-site location

Discuss the possibility of video taping workshops for future trainings.

Look at ways to sell items and display donation box to increase revenue.

Six new (content) workshops are being planned using the same format to present at PCOE workshops.

They are planning to add two more sites to deliver Foothill Discovery Program (one may be Tahoe).

Other points that were made during the conversation:

There is capacity to serve more families and children, but transportation may be an issue.

Next Steps:

Next learning conversation will be Tuesday, December 15, 2009, 1:30 – 4 pm.