

GREEN STEMS

Little things that crawl and creep
In the green grass forests,
Deep in their long-stemmed world
Where ferns uncurl
To a greener world
Beneath the leaves above them;
And every flower upon its stem
Blows above them there
The bottom of a geranium,
The back side of a trillium,
The belly of a bumblebee
Is all they see, these little things
Down so low
Where no bird sings
Where no wind blows,
Deep in their long-stemmed world.

by Margaret Wise Brown

In Bloom in Maine

Saturday, June 19, 2021

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Juniper Hill School
for Place-based Education
Alna, Maine



In Bloom Lives!

Yes, Virginia, we really are planning two face-to-face **In Bloom conferences** this year. Or perhaps we should say, masked-face-to-masked-face conferences. Antioch University New England will host three In Bloom conferences this spring—two in person conferences and (to hedge our bets) one digital conference. The in-person conferences will be open to a maximum of 50 participants and we're hoping that participants will be mostly from the state where it's occurring. The entire conference will occur outdoors or in open-air pavilions. For more far flung participants, we encourage you to attend the digital conference.

In Bloom in Western Massachusetts will happen on 15 May 2021 from 9:00 - 4:00 at the beautiful Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst, Massachusetts. The maples, sassafras and inspiring ideas will be flowering by this time in the spring. Hopefully, we'll mostly be immunized and the pandemic will be a fading memory.

In Bloom in Vermont will be a digital conference co-sponsored by the North Branch Nature Center in Montpelier on 5 June 2021 from 12:30 to 4:30. This conference will accommodate 150 participants.

In Bloom in Maine will be on 19 June 2021 from 9:00 to 4:00. We've loved being at the Kittery Community Center in Kittery for the past four years but this year we're heading downeast to the Juniper Hill School in Alna, ME. Juniper Hill School has been a leader during this school year in training teachers to take learning outside during the pandemic.

From Early Childhood into the Elementary Grades

In the beginning, **In Bloom** conferences catered to teachers of children between the ages of 3 and 6, but children grow up, so we've been catching up over the past few years. There's been an interesting upward migration in New England schools as the result of successful nature-based early childhood initiatives. First, second and third grade students look out the window at kindergartners learning outside and long to smell the roses and feel the sunshine on their faces. Preschool teachers help their upper grade colleagues learn how to teach math in the woods and how to do appropriate outdoors behavior management. And so the doors open up and the school gets turned inside out. This has been particularly true during the 2020-21 year. It's been healthier to have children outside. Our workshops will be geared to preschool through third grade, so invite your elementary teacher colleagues. We'll have regional presenters to lead workshops in each state and we'll also continue to spotlight the work of Antioch University New England faculty members who teach in the Nature-based Early Childhood Certificate program.

We look forward to seeing you at one of this year's spring In Blooms. Please be aware that we will be following the state and host's guidelines for COVID 19 and that our programming flexibility will be determined by the conditions at the time of each event. Registrants will receive additional information as needed.

This event is sponsored by:



Structure for the Day

8:00am-9:00am	Registration Opens Workshop signups Morning refreshments
9:00am-9:15am	Opening Circle
9:15am-10:15am	Morning Keynote
10:30-Noon	Morning Workshops
Noon-1:00pm	Lunch Inside-Outside network
1:00pm-2:00pm	Afternoon Keynote
2:15pm-3:45pm	Afternoon Workshops
3:50pm-4:00pm	Closing Circle

Morning Keynote

The Sky Above and the Mud Below: Lessons from Nature Preschools and Forest Kindergartens

David Sobel, Author and Professor Emeritus, Antioch New England, Keene, NH

Whew! What a long, strange trip it's been. And during that trip, lots of early childhood programs and elementary schools learned that outdoor learning was cool. It kept students healthier, more physically active and more engaged in school. They looked to and learned from the educators who had been doing this for decades. Lots of those stories of innovation over the past decade are captured in David's new book, **The Sky Above and the Mud Below**. He will share some of those stories collected from around the United States. From searching for pirate gold to big animal drills to singing in the rain to literacy and math outdoors, David will share compelling practices that presage the future of nature-based education.



David Sobel is a Professor Emeritus in the Education Department at Antioch University New England in Keene, NH. He founded the Nature-based Early Childhood Certificate program at Antioch in 2012. He consults and speaks widely on child development, place-based education, and nature-based early childhood education. He has authored nine books and more than 70 articles focused on children and nature for educators, parents, environmentalists and school administrators in the last 30 years. His most recent books are **Wild Play: Parenting Adventures in the Great Outdoors** published by Green Writers Press and **The Sky Above and the Mud Below: Lessons from Nature Preschools and Forest Kindergartens** published by Redleaf Press. And he has a young adult novel for which he'd love to find a publisher!

Lunch

We enjoy treating you to a tasty and healthy lunch. During the lunch hour, **Liza Lowe** and other regional coordinators will update you on **Inside-Outside:**

Nature-based Educators of New England, our growing professional network. There are now a dozen **Inside-Outside** chapters throughout New England. Interested in joining or starting a chapter? Contact Liza Lowe at elowe@antioch.edu.



Morning Workshops

How To's of Emergent Curriculum with Young Children

Katie Baker, Lead Teacher, Turn Back Time, Paxton, MA

Exploring the outdoors, we come upon a tree stripped of its bark, gnawed so thin that it has cracked in two pieces. Sawdust and woodchips at the base of the tree seem fresh. Who has been here? In this workshop, participants will go on the adventure of an emergent curriculum--where the interests and experiences of the children inspire learning opportunities in an exciting and interactive way. We will guide you through the emergent process, starting with the excitement of finding a new interest, demonstrate how to integrate an emergent theme into hands-on learning experiences, and reflect upon and relate the learning that has taken place to educational guidelines.

Outdoors with All Kids: Garnering Administrative Support for Nature-Based Programs

Marie Robinson, Superintendent, RSU #89, Katahdin Schools Stacyville, ME

All 21st century children need nature! Learn how to talk to your administrator about nature-based programs and delve into outdoor lessons that align to Common Core State Standards. This session will consist of a discussion around sharing the value of nature-based programs with public school administration and families. Participants will then have the opportunity to practice those conversations and share ideas about how we can meet standards outdoors.

Storytelling (even in the Winter!): The Why and the How ...

Landere Naisbitt, Outreach Coordinator, Blue Hill Heritage Trust, Blue Hill, ME

Everyone can tell a story! This workshop will explore the use of storytelling in outdoor learning for early childhood for both beginner and experienced storytellers. We will look beyond picture books to see how important it is to continue the tradition of oral storytelling to capture the imagination, create community, teach ecology, build relationships, inspire a sense of place, and learn land stewardship ethics. There is an extensive, "hidden curriculum" in storytelling which also includes literacy, science, social skill development, and classroom management. We will look at ways to connect storytelling to school curriculum and follow up activities as well. We will explore how to find stories, how to create and co-create stories with your students from the inspiration of place, and explore natural materials for storytelling props. Join this workshop for an active, collaborative journey designed to show how nature- and place-based storytelling can nurture students, teachers, and the land.

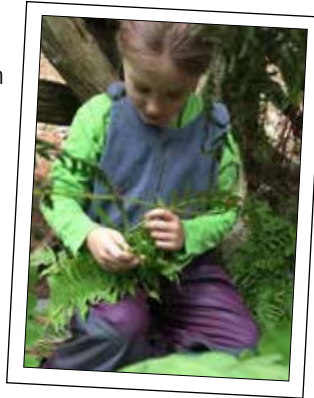


Morning Workshops *(continued)*

Thriving in Nature: The Importance of Integrating Social Emotional Learning in Nature Based Education

Kate Ziminsky, *Social-Emotional Learning and Middle School Curriculum Coordinator, Waynflete School, Portland, ME*

What are the potential impacts of months of mask wearing, social distancing, and social isolation on a child's social and emotional development? The short answer is, we don't yet know. What we do know is that health and safety guidelines created to protect our physical health have compromised the emotional well-being of humans around the globe. Health experts have promoted time in nature as a gateway to healing and it is clear that environmental literacy is inextricably linked to a child's social-emotional competence. Nature-based education provides children with the ideal setting to explore their identity, gain agency, experience wonder, appreciate diversity, and foster compassion. This workshop will provide participants with hands-on lessons and activities that focus on skill acquisition in the core competencies of social-emotional learning (SEL) within nature-based programming. It is more important than ever to offer educational experiences that support the healthy growth of body, mind and spirit.



Afternoon Panel Discussion

Changing the Face of Education in Maine: 21st Century Children Need Nature

Why does it matter if you bring students outdoors to engage in meaningful learning? What is happening in this movement across the region? How can all we help support its growth? Anne Stires will facilitate this groundbreaking, forward-thinking panel in which administrators, higher education professional, an environmental philanthropist, and an educational consultant discuss the importance of nature-based education for all children, everywhere. The fragile planet we are living on needs children who are immersed in and connected to the natural world and their communities so that they become active, contributing citizens.

Marie Robinson, *Superintendent, RSU #89, Katahdin Schools, Stacyville, ME*

Patti Bailie, *Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education, University of Maine, Farmington, ME*

Zak Klein, *Environmental Philanthropist, Program Officer, Quimby Family Foundation, Portland, ME*

Nathan Broaddus, *Manager, Nature-based Education Consortium, Portland, ME*

facilitated by **Anne Stires**, *Founder and Director of Development, Outreach, and Advocacy, Juniper Hill School for Place-based Education, Alna, ME*

Afternoon Workshops

The Importance of Teaching Children Outdoors: An Occupational Therapist's Perspective

Sue Ford, *Occupational Therapist, Kids Thrive OT, Kittery, ME*

Participants will engage in interactive practice to learn how to incorporate strategies for organized movement, sensory regulation, and developmental progression in the outdoor classroom. We will model how to support sensory challenges and preferences in students (early preschool to elementary grades) by incorporating nature-based concepts for sensory processing, emotional regulation, and nervous system development. We will also identify developmental progressions for fine and gross motor pre-academic and academic tasks, and learning strategies for educating students about sensory preferences in outdoor classrooms.



Not IF, but HOW:

Inclusion and Advocacy in Nature Based Programming

Lisa Burris, *Founder and Director, Turn Back Time, Inc., Paxton, MA*

If you work with children, you likely have encountered challenging behaviors. The trends for children with diagnoses of autism, ADHD, and trauma-related conditions are on the rise. In this workshop, we will discuss (and model) inclusion and diversity practices—and how we can make sure our programs are inclusive and diverse. Many children who struggle with behavior have challenges in the following domains: emotional regulation, sensory challenges and social/emotional connections. We will show how children use behavior to communicate, discuss how nature-based programs can support all children, and emphasize the importance of developing a support network for providers.

The Natural Nature of Mime

Antonio Rocha, *Storyteller and Mime, Stories in Motion and TEDx Speaker, Portland, ME*

Children are natural imitators and they love to make believe. The art of mime is to surrender one's body to a character, thing, or environment. This workshop will focus on how to teach children to observe what surrounds them in order to create authentic movement in nature. With specific mime and movement techniques, we will show participants how to build strong movement vocabulary and develop kinesthetic memory. Participants of this workshop will learn specific mime techniques and storytelling activities by imitating nature. These techniques are easily applicable for teachers to use with students of all ages.



Afternoon Workshops *(continued)*

School Days to Forest Days: Routines in the Wild

*Eliza Minnucci, Founder, ForestKinder, Tunbridge, VT
Adjunct Faculty, Nature-based Early Childhood Program,
Antioch University New England, Keene, NH*

Meg Teachout, ForestKinder, Tunbridge, VT

In 2013, Eliza Minnucci and Meg Teachout founded a *Kindergarten Forest Day* in Quechee, Vermont. Since then they have collaborated with teachers in dozens of classrooms to develop similar programs. In this workshop you'll experience an abbreviated version of some tried and true outdoor rhythms. From the morning bell to the tick check, learn routines that balance play and learning. This workshop is an especially good fit for educators looking to start frequent and extended outdoor time with students.



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Registration Fees:

Working Professional	\$125
Antioch University Alumni	\$75
AUNE/College Ed or ES students:	\$50

REGISTER HERE:

<https://tinyurl.com/inbloommaine21>

For more information, contact Peg Smeltz at
Antioch University New England, m-smeltz@antioch.edu
603-283-2301.

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