



American Recreation Coalition

Dedicated to the protection and enhancement of everyone's right to health and happiness through recreation.

NEWS

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A Great Start for National Get Outdoors Day



Washington, D.C. (June 2, 2008) The National Get Outdoors Day (NGOD) preview event treated children and their families from the Washington, D.C. metro area to a day of free, healthy outdoors fun. The Boy Scouts of America's Camp Snyder hosted the Saturday, May 31st event and more than a dozen national and regional organizations partnered to provide diverse outdoor activities and information on where to get outdoors and how to take care of public lands and waters. It also served as a pilot for more than forty-five sites across the nation where official National Get Outdoors Day events will occur on June 14th helping America's kids get off the couch, away from computers and involved in healthy and active outdoor adventures.

The National Get Outdoors Day preview event was open to all but specially invited those rarely engaged in outdoors fun. Active, hands-on opportunities were highlighted. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries provided rods, reels and casting lessons. The National Park Service offered an orienteering course, teaching youth about adventure with a compass and map. Kids put up and took down tents and tested sleeping bags furnished by the WOW-Wonderful Outdoor World, the Bureau of Land Management's Eastern States Office, local REI stores and The Coleman Company. The children and their families could readily imagine themselves at a campsite enjoying s'mores by the fire. The Recreation Vehicle Industry Association and Reines RVs offered tours of RVs, including a unit with kid-friendly bunkbeds and a new, diesel powered unit with car-like fuel efficiency. The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) handed out free coloring books, chalk and balsa wood airplanes and urged participation in the Great American Backyard Campout on June 28 and in other fun family outdoor activities. USA Freedom Corps told of volunteer and community service opportunities that connect us to our nation's public lands and waters.

Crowd favorites were the U.S. Forest Service's Smokey Bear and Woodsy Owl and the NWF's Ranger Rick, all of whom posed for pictures, strolled through the campsite and used companions to talk about key issues ranging from fire to outdoor ethics. An appearance by the local volunteer fire department gave an extra dimension to the special event. While a deluge of rain, high winds and a tornado watch closed down the event a bit earlier than planned, the preview event generated a mountain of smiles counted and many plans for more outdoor fun.

Details on National Get Outdoors Day are available at: www.nationalgetoutdoorsday.org