

**2008 California Trails & Greenways Conference
Keynote Speaker**



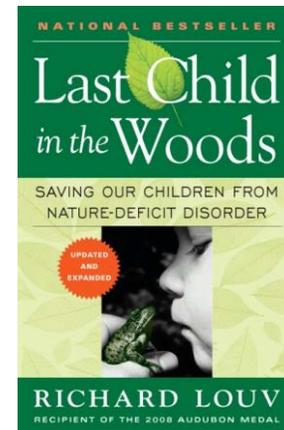
Richard Louv



Richard Louv is a futurist and journalist focused on family, nature and community. He is chairman of the Children & Nature Network and the author of seven books. His most recent, "Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder" (Algonquin), has stimulated a national conversation about the future relationship between children and nature. Louv is the chairman of the Children & Nature Network (www.cnaturenet.org), an organization helping build the movement to connect children with nature. He is also honorary co-chair of The National Forum on Children and Nature, co-chaired by four state governors; the Forum, sponsored by the Conservation Fund, will distribute \$20 million to programs around the country designed to get kids outside.

In January, the National Audubon Society will present Richard Louv the Audubon Medal. Past recipients have been Rachel Carson, E.O. Wilson, Robert Redford, Jimmy Carter, and the Rockefeller Family. The medal will be awarded for Louv's "exceptional contributions promoting the importance of connecting people to nature, especially children." He is the 2008 recipient of the Cox Award, Clemson University's highest honor, awarding "sustained achievement in public service." The National School Board Journal chose "Last Child in the Woods" as a notable book in education for 2006. In 2005, Discover Magazine named "Last Child in the Woods" one of the top science books of the year. And Spirituality & Health magazine named it one of 50 Best Spiritual Books of 2005. The book has spawned a national movement that is now moving into the international sphere. "Last Child in the Woods" has been translated into six languages.

He has written for The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Christian Science Monitor and other newspapers and magazines. Richard has appeared on the CBS Morning Show, Good Morning America, the Today Show, CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, NPR's Morning Edition, Fresh Air, Talk of the Nation, and many other programs. Between 1984 and 2007, he was a columnist for The San Diego Union-Tribune; he was also a columnist and member of the editorial advisory board for Parents magazine, and served as an adviser to the Ford Foundation's Leadership for a Changing World award program and the National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. He is on the board of directors of ecoAmerica and a member of the Citistates Group.



He speaks frequently nationally and internationally, having appeared before the Domestic Policy Council in the White House and at major governmental and professional conferences internationally. Richard Louv is married to Kathy Frederick Louv and the father of two young men, Jason, 25 and Matthew, 19. He is working on his eighth book. He would rather fish than write.

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**2008 California Trails & Greenways Conference
Keynote Speaker**

A Brief History of the Children & Nature Movement

“A back-to-nature movement to reconnect children with the outdoors is burgeoning nationwide.”

— USA Today, Nov. 2006

*“The movement to reconnect children to the natural world has arisen quickly, spontaneously,
and across the usual social, political, and economic dividing lines.”*

— ORION magazine, March/April 2007

“Concerns about long-term consequences — affecting emotional well-being, physical health, learning abilities, environmental consciousness — have spawned a national movement to ‘leave no child inside.’ In recent months, it has been the focus of Capitol Hill hearings, state legislative action, grassroots projects, a U.S. Forest Service initiative to get more children into the woods and a national effort to promote a ‘green hour’ in each day.”

— Washington Post, June, 2007

On April 24, 2006, at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C., Richard Louv called for a nationwide campaign to “Leave No Child Inside” and a movement to reconnect children and nature. The event, moderated by Children & Nature Network (C&NN) President and CEO Cheryl Charles, and sponsored by the Paul F-Brandwein Institute, had assembled more than 100 conservation, education and government organizations with a continuing commitment to reducing the nature deficit. Today, a little more than a year after the Press Club event, public awareness may have reached a tipping point. . At this writing, C&NN has identified 37 state and regional campaigns, community-based, multi-sector collaboratives sometimes called Leave No Child Inside, that have formed or are being assembled – in Cincinnati, Cleveland, Chicago, the San Francisco Bay Area, Connecticut, Florida, Colorado, Texas, British Columbia, the Netherlands and elsewhere. For the most part, these campaigns, each with its own distinctive, regional characteristics, have emerged independently, with support from civil society and the business community, from political and religious leaders, liberal and conservative.

Leadership has emerged in nearly every sector. In September 2006, the National Conservation Training Center and The Conservation Fund hosted the National Dialogue on Children and Nature in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. The conference drew more than 350 leaders from around the country, including educators, health care professionals, recreation companies, residential developers, urban planners, conservation agencies, and academics. Witnessing a precipitous drop in attendance at national parks, the superintendent of Yellowstone National Park recently joined in the Leave No Child Inside campaign. In 2007, the U.S. Forest Service launched More Kids in the Woods, funding local efforts to bring children outdoors. That same year, the new Secretary of the Interior, Dirk Kempthorne, challenged Interior’s 300 top managers to determine what their departments could do to turn the nature-deficit trend around. At least ten governors have launched statewide conferences or campaigns, including Connecticut’s pioneering program to encourage families to visit the underused state parks. Replicable in every state, the effort was the first formal program to call itself No Child Left Inside.

2008 California Trails & Greenways Conference

Keynote Speaker

On the policymaking front, bills are being passed: In 2007, the New Mexico Legislature approved the Outdoor Classrooms Initiative, an effort to increase outdoor education in the state. That same year, on April 21, John Muir's birthday, Washington Gov. Christine Gregoire signed into law the Leave No Child Inside Initiative. The legislation allocates \$1.5 million a year to outdoor programs working with underserved children. In California, similar legislation has been introduced to create long-term funding outdoor education and recreation programs serving at-risk youth. And at the national level, two bills, each called the No Child Left Inside Act, have been introduced in the House and Senate, designed to bring environmental education back to the classroom, and, indirectly, get more young people outside. More legislation is on the way. In the United States, nonprofit conservation leaders, witnessing the graying of their membership and recognizing the importance of creating a young constituency for the future, have increased their commitment. In 2007, the Sierra Club's Building Bridges to the Outdoors project took 11,500 young people, many from inner-city neighborhoods, into the natural world. Other conservation groups have moved quickly, too. The National Wildlife Federation rolled out the Green Hour, a national campaign to persuade parents to encourage their children to spend one hour a day in nature. John Flicker, president of the National Audubon Society, is campaigning for the creation of a family-focused nature center in every congressional district in the nation. Some nature conservancy organizations are going beyond their traditional definition of conservation. The Trust for Public Land is now placing increased emphasis on engaging children with nature, to ensure that natural areas preserved today will continue to be protected by future generations.

Support has come from the Sierra Club to the 700 Club — including religious leaders, liberal and conservative, who understand that all spiritual life begins with a sense of wonder, and that one of the first windows to wonder is the natural world. "Christians should take the lead in re-connecting with nature and disconnecting from machines," writes R. Albert Mohler Jr., president of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, the flagship school of the Southern Baptist Convention. The private sector is increasingly involved. In June, 2007, Clint Eastwood hosted an assembly of California's largest developers to consider ways to build residential developments — and to redevelop aging suburbs into places that will connect children and adults to nature. In October, 2007, *The Nation's Health*, the official newspaper of the American Public Health Association, made that clear:

"The retreat indoors for many American children has environmental advocates worried that children ... might become adults for whom conserving the environment isn't a priority. For public health workers, the effects of sedentary indoor lifestyles are already evident among children: startling rates of obesity, the onset of one-time adult conditions such as diabetes and a shortened life expectancy. Thankfully, though, the movement to reconnect kids with nature has seen a rejuvenation in the last few years, and experts predict that good health will be a major motivator in bringing families back to nature."

The disconnect between children and nature is also gaining greater attention in other countries. Among them, the Netherlands, where the Dutch government sponsored the translation of *Last Child in the Woods*, and conservation and environmental education leaders — in cooperation with the Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Safety — have launched a petition drive to ask Parliament to support major efforts to reduce the nature deficit. *Last Child in the Woods* has been translated into six languages, to date. Cheryl Charles, president of the Children & Nature Network, will speak about the importance of this issue at several international conferences in 2007 and 2008, including the World Conservation Union's World Congress in Barcelona in October of 2008.

2008 California Trails & Greenways Conference

Keynote Speaker

The international media coverage to *Last Child in the Woods* and to this issue is substantial and growing. This is a worldwide phenomenon, on a planet where more than 60 percent of the population now lives in urban areas. Children everywhere are hooked into the electronic umbilica and separated from regular, daily connections with natural environments where free play is an opportunity and a healthy lifestyle. People everywhere recognize that this trend toward disconnection—this nature-deficit disorder—must be addressed and reversed.

Around the world, the window of opportunity available to confront both climate change and the nature deficit is approximately the same. Unless we act quickly, one issue will be determined by the chemical imbalance in our atmosphere, the other by an imbalance in the human heart.

Books and other Publications

LAST CHILD IN THE WOODS: SAVING OUR CHILDREN FROM NATURE-DEFICIT DISORDER (Algonquin Books, Spring, 2005) explores the increasing divide between young people and the natural world and explains the social, psychological, spiritual and environmental implications of that transformation. This book describes the origins of the gap and its destructive implications, but it also details studies indicating that nature can be powerful therapy for such maladies as depression and attention-deficit disorder – often more accurately described, the author suggests, as “nature-deficit disorder.” As the book describes, new research also shows that environment-based education dramatically improves standardized test scores and grade-point averages, and develops skills in problem-solving, critical thinking and decision-making. In addition, anecdotal evidence strongly suggests that creativity is stimulated by childhood experiences in nature. Yet, the nature-child gap widens. **LAST CHILD IN THE WOODS** paints an alternative future in which the natural world is more deeply experienced and protected — a nature-child reunion.

AMERICA II (Penguin, 1983). A national tour of the new American urban, suburban and rural community forms, and the changing American landscape. Following the 1980 Census, the research focused on the cities and towns to which people and businesses were moving. **America II** was defined as: “a second America rising from the body of the first. This second nation – **America II** – can best be seen in the South and West, but it exists, in varying degrees, in every state of the Union. It has a physical form: a very different kind of city; a radically changed rural and small-town life; a revolution in shelter; a new workplace. But the second America is also a state of mind: a powerful yearning for opportunity, for old values and new technologies, for refuge and escape.” This was among the first descriptions of what later came to be called Edge Cities, and the first book to recognize and describe the rise of private governments, in the form of community associations, which as early as 1980 outnumbered all other forms of traditional public government.

CHILDHOOD'S FUTURE (Anchor Books, 1993) The result of two years of national travel through the new landscape of childhood, listening to more than 3,000 parents and children, usually around kitchen tables or in classrooms – as well as educators and other experts. “This is the first day care generation; the first computer generation; the first truly multi-cultural generation; the first to grow up in new kinds of dispersed, deconcentrated cities not quite urban, rural or suburban; the first post-sexual revolution generation...The combined forces of these changes produce a seemingly unstoppable dynamic process: Childhood today is defined by the *expansion of experience* and the *contraction of positive adult contact*.” The book described the dissolution of the social web of family and child support, and prescribed a new web, more appropriate for the times and the economy, including transformed public schools, family-friendly work places, new community designs, new ways of structuring family time, a new synthesis of

2008 California Trails & Greenways Conference

Keynote Speaker

traditionalist and modernist family values. CHILDHOOD'S FUTURE was excerpted as a cover story in *The New York Times* magazine and was the focus of a Bill Moyers PBS program. It also influenced White House policy on children.

THE WEB OF LIFE: WEAVING THE VALUES THAT SUSTAIN US, (Conari Press, April 1996). This compilation of columns and other writing explores the connections of family, community, friendship, nature, time and spirit. The book was released as an audio book by Dove Audio, and was also published in a Chinese edition. It was chosen by the American Booksellers Association as top choice for reading groups for 1997.

FLY-FISHING FOR SHARKS: AN AMERICAN JOURNEY (Simon & Schuster, 460 pages, 2000) Looking for America while exploring the cultures of fishing. Tournament fishing with Bass'n Gals in Texas; mall fishing in Missouri; fly-fishing with CEOs in Montana; baitcasting in Spanish Harlem; cruising the Everglades; ice-fishing up in Michigan, fly-fishing for sharks in California - and more. "The Minneapolis Star Tribune called it "an entertaining sociological discourse that tells as much about modern life as it does about angling." PBS' Jim Lehrer described it as "a book about fishing for people who do not fish; that's because its real subject is people, not fish."

FATHERLOVE (Pocket Books, 1994) The result of interviews with hundreds of fathers, mothers and children across the country, who described the struggle to define their roles as fathers in a changing social environment. The book focused on the rise of fatherlessness in America, one of the most pressing social issues the country faces, and proposed ways that institutions, families and individual men can redefine fatherhood – including their role as community builders. Vice President Al Gore used this book as inspiration for Family Re-Union III, a national conference that focused on fatherhood. The Vice President also requested that the author present his proposals to the Domestic Policy Council in the White House, to representatives of every department of the federal government, including the military branches, and in a satellite-transmitted television presentation to all employees of the Social Security Department. In part because of this book, President Clinton issued an executive order to federal departments to create pro-fatherhood policies.

101 THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE (Trade paperback, Anchor, 1994) Described as "a guidebook for building a supportive, family-friendly community, one neighborhood at a time," this book became a handbook for child advocates at the national and grassroots level, and was selected by the Coalition for America's Children and ABC-TV as a centerpiece in the network's 1994-95 national Children First campaign. It was also the original anchor for Connect for Kids (formerly Kidscampaigns) Web site, promoted by the national Ad Council, and offered free, in digital form.*

Monographs

THE CULTURE OF RENEWAL: TEN CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COMMUNITY RENEWAL MOVEMENT (National Civic League Press, 1996) The central idea of the culture of renewal – a movement to create a new civil society -- is that the path toward individual, neighborhood, and corporate renewal is indivisible from, or at the very least dependent on, efforts to rebuild a sense of community.. Ultimately, the culture of renewal represents the individual American's revived search for meaning--but within the context of community." Among other themes, the monograph describes community "renewal career tracks" that can be found in many professions, but two in particular stand out: law and journalism – through the community journalism movement. "If the culture of renewal continues to spread in these professions,

2008 California Trails & Greenways Conference

Keynote Speaker

traditionally among the most traditional and cynical, our communities and civil society will be transformed more quickly than any of us might now suppose.”*

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA COMMUNITY BUILDERS SCAN (National Civic League Press, 1996) A review of non-profit agencies in the Bay Area and how they collaborate, for the S. E. Cowell Foundation. The scan reviews how community collaboration actually works at the agency, neighborhood, and regional levels. It describes: “large, well-funded organizations spanning counties, counting CEOs and legislators among their volunteers; struggling neighborhood centers working together to make the most out of second-hand furniture and poorly paid, under-trained, but often highly-focused staffs. While some organizations build community through expensive ad campaigns and public-relations efforts, others struggle to start a small teen program in an under-used school, induce a business to occupy a vacant lot, or energize residents to plant sidewalk trees.”*

REINVENTING FATHERHOOD (United Nations, 1994) The International Year of the Child White Paper on Fatherhood, commissioned by the United Nations. Occasional Papers Series, No. 14, 1994. The monograph, distributed internationally by the United Nations, placed the issues affecting fatherhood – including how communities view or support fatherhood – in an international context.

THE NATURE OF CHILDHOOD (United States Information Agency, China, 1999) How sprawl and fear disconnect children from the outdoors, and methods to reconnect them. The monograph describes the reversed polarity of the relationship between children and nature, and how that transformation affects children’s creativity, emotional health, and sense of community.*

Recent awards received

- 2005 Discover Magazine: Top Science Books of the Year
- 2005 EARTH Award
- 2004 Odin Award for Lifetime Body of Work, San Diego Writers and Editors Guild
- 2004 Journalist of the Year, San Diego League of Women Voters
- 2004 NewSchool of Architecture and Design Community Planning Award
- 2004 San Diego Writers and Editors Guild
- 2000 Ghandi Non-Violence Award for Media
- 1999 C. Everett Koop, M.D. Media Award, Best Column

In January, the National Audubon Society will present Richard Louv the Audubon Medal from Past recipients have been Rachael Carson, E.O. Wilson, Robert Redford, Jimmy Carter, and the Rockefeller Family.

The National Forum on Children and Nature

In September of 2006, The Conservation Fund, best-selling author Richard Louv (*Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*), and the Secretary of the Interior hosted a breakthrough dialogue on how to reconnect children with nature. Leaders from public agencies, corporations, the media, and health and environmental organizations convened to explore opportunities for action.

The major outcome of the meeting was a commitment to elevate this issue to the national agenda through a National Forum on Children and Nature. This initiative was launched on June 21, 2007 and is chaired by Governors Schweitzer of Montana, Rendell of Pennsylvania, Rell of

2008 California Trails & Greenways Conference Keynote Speaker

Connecticut, and Sanford of South Carolina.

The National Forum on Children and Nature will involve governors, mayors, corporate CEOs, heads of environmental organizations, and leaders from health and education institutions, and will invest several million dollars in projects with on-the-ground tangible results that address the issue of children's isolation from nature.

The Forum will identify 20 nationally significant demonstration projects in four key areas of health, education, the built environment, and media/culture that, individually and collectively, will provide substantial steps toward improved children's health and environmental stewardship and models for future action.

Selection Process

The Forum will use a two-phased project endorsement process. In Phase I, applicants will provide a general outline of their project, including how the project will connect children with nature and what partnerships and financial support the applicant has attracted or plans to attract.

Phase I applications are due October 31, 2007. Project leaders will be notified in early 2008 if their project has been selected to provide a more detailed Phase II application. Groups chosen from this Phase II pool for Forum endorsement will receive national recognition by the National Forum on Children and Nature, along with marketing and fundraising support for their projects.