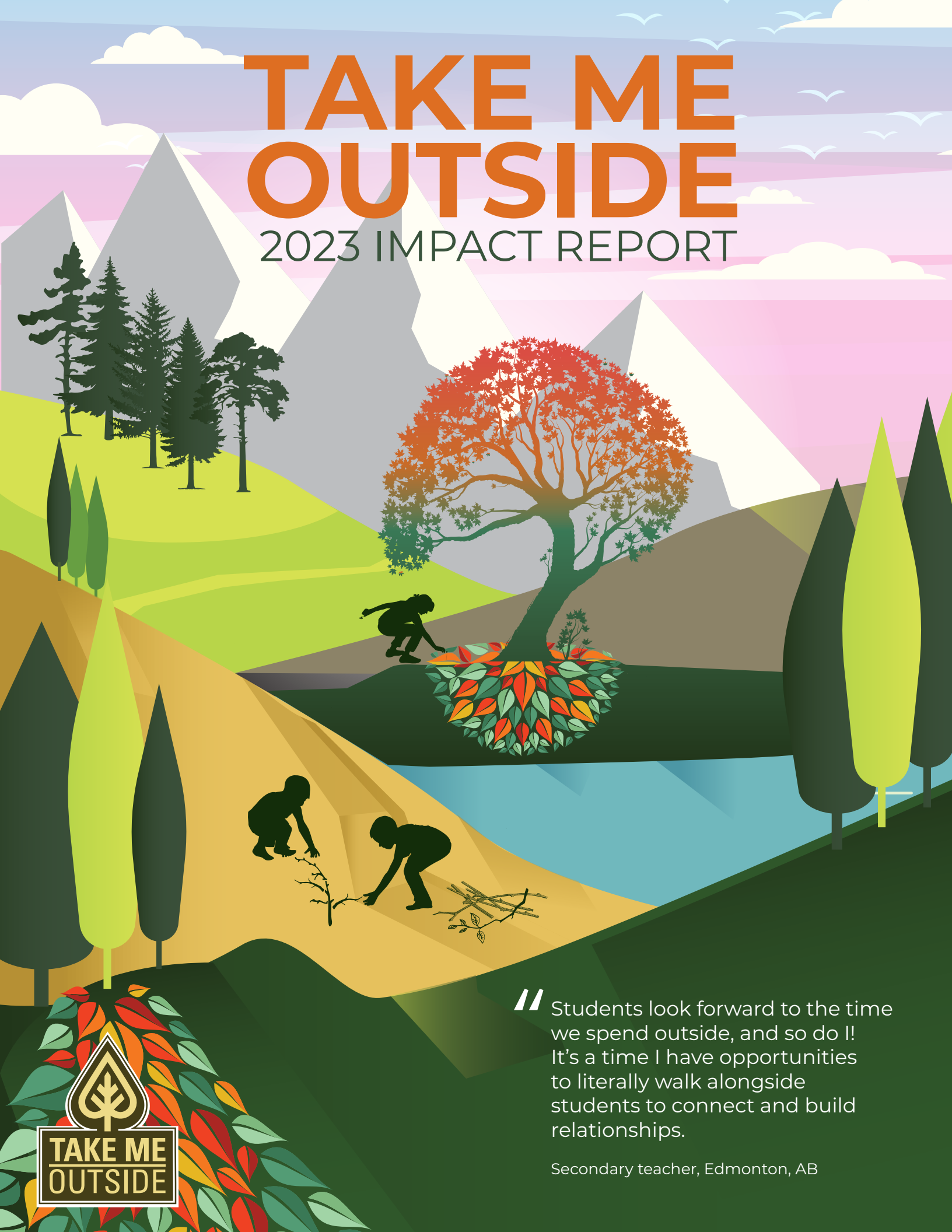


# TAKE ME OUTSIDE

2023 IMPACT REPORT



“ Students look forward to the time we spend outside, and so do I! It’s a time I have opportunities to literally walk alongside students to connect and build relationships.

Secondary teacher, Edmonton, AB





## Our Mission & Vision:

Take Me Outside is a non-profit, charitable organization committed to raising awareness and facilitating action on nature connection and outdoor learning in schools across Canada. **We believe in a future in which spending time outside playing, exploring and learning is a regular and significant part of every learner's day.**

First and foremost, we acknowledge and celebrate the diverse environments and peoples of Canada whose Lands inspire our mission statement here. It is important we begin by acknowledging that outdoor learning would not be possible without access to the natural world that has been stewarded since time immemorial by the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and other Indigenous peoples who continue to walk and steward these places on Turtle Island. We begin with gratitude and the utmost respect for the many Inuit, First Nations, Métis, and other Indigenous peoples whose Lands support such wonderful outdoor learning experiences for the youth of today. We thank the guardians of these spaces as well as the educators fluent in the languages of connection to these places. We also acknowledge that we as an organization have much to learn and grow as we begin our work in support of reconciliation and in supporting educators in rising to the Truth and Reconciliation Committee's calls to action numbers 6, 12, & 62 – 66.

“

*Outdoor learning allows our students to reconnect with the natural world, to learn with and from nature and to move, build, design and play while doing so. Students are engaged, motivated and excited when learning outdoors and we are extremely lucky to have the opportunity to visit our outdoor classrooms for extended periods during the day or for short excursions during a particular lesson.*

*Elementary educator, Elsipogtog, NB.*

# Message from our Executive Director

We're grateful to have seen so much support and interest in outdoor learning as we mark another year of growth within our community and our events. Internally, we made some big steps forward, including officially becoming a charitable organization! As participation increases, we have the great privilege of working alongside many inspiring educators and seeing the work in motion to move learning beyond the classroom, strengthening learners' and educators' relationships with the outdoors. This, more than ever, solidifies a sense of hope. A growing field of research bolsters our mission, but we wouldn't see the real shifts happening without you.



Over the past year, Take Me Outside had numerous projects, initiatives, events, and partnerships worthy of celebrating. This report acts as a year in summary, both ongoing and new, as we look ahead to the upcoming year. If you were able to be a part of any of our initiatives, we thank you for your support and hope this reflection shows just how much collective and ongoing enthusiasm exists for outdoor learning across Canada and beyond. And we hope you find it as inspiring as we do.

“

*Taking children outside helps regulate everyone. They are happy, engaged with the world around them and able to think and play more creatively*

*Early years educator, Kimberly, BC.*

## YEAR IN REVIEW

**64,000+**

Educators participating in a Take Me Outside event or campaign

**931,000+**

Learners that participated in TMO initiatives

**50,000+**

Educators participating in seasonal Outdoor Learning workshops

**390+**

Resources for educators

**80+**

Outdoor Learning Partners



“

*I love this event as it is a reminder to teachers to use the outdoors as another classroom for the students.*

*My students continue to make discoveries and form relationships with other students in outdoor experiential learning spaces... The Take Me Outside Day has been so well done by all the teachers at my school. Amazing to see!*

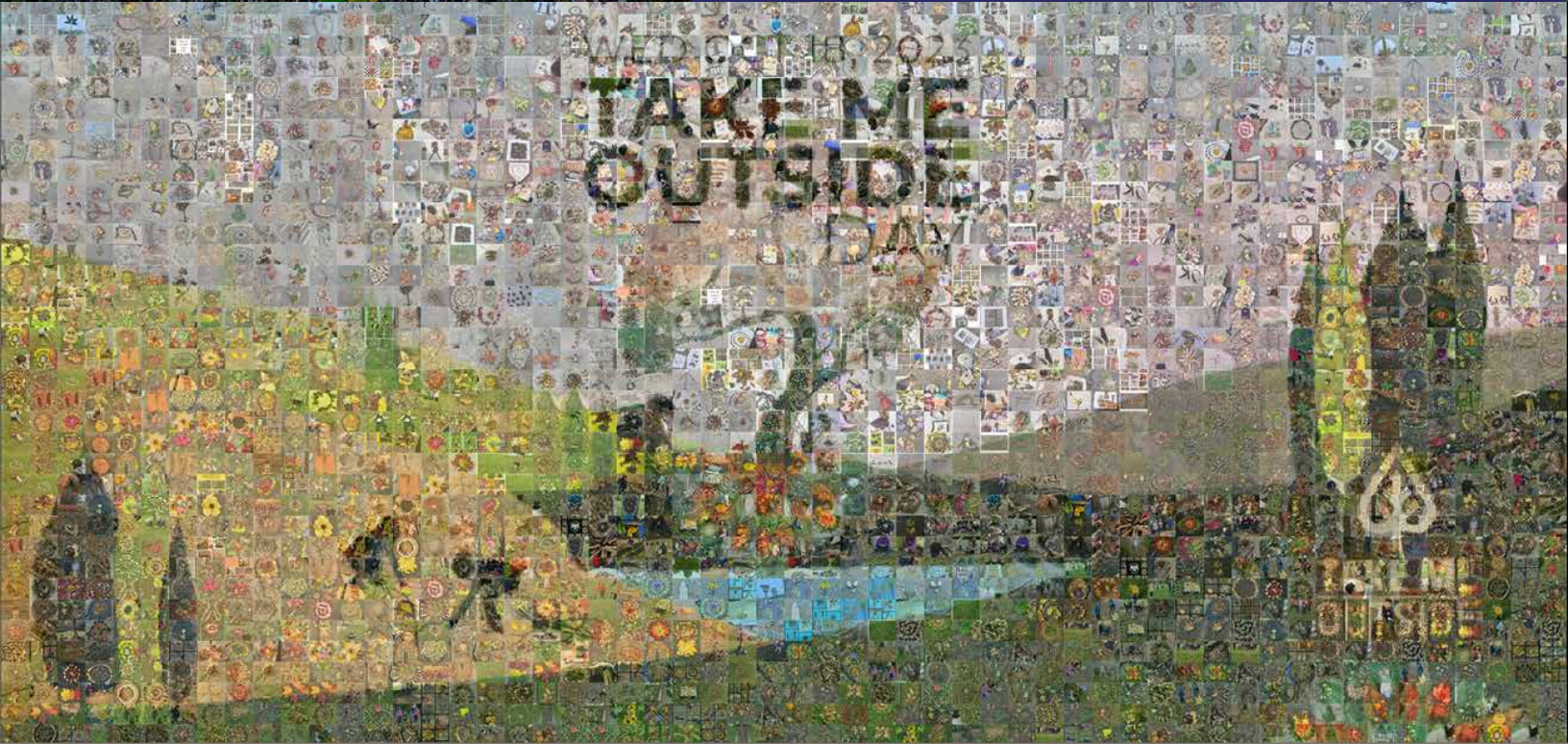
*Elementary educator, Ottawa, ON*

# Take Me Outside Day: Are you IN to get OUT? Oct 16th - 20th, 2023

Take Me Outside Day 2023 saw learners across North America (and beyond!) participate in our largest annual initiative. Three prevailing themes of Indigenous knowledge, health and wellbeing, and environmental and climate change education helped guide the week's activities, speakers, and workshops. Everyone participating is encouraged to take inspiration from the events and spend at least an hour outside, extending learning beyond the traditional classroom.

And this year, we did something special: we created a huge mosaic consisting of nature art from participants from coast to coast to coast! During the week of October 16th – 20th, educators went outside with their learners, and crafted unique creations with found and foraged materials. Then they either emailed us or posted it on social media with the hashtag #TakeMeOutsideDay. After that we created a beautiful collaborative mosaic out of the entries! We were so impressed by the enthusiastic response by participants, and felt it highlighted the true nature of Take Me Outside Day while showcasing the creativity and collaboration we feel working with educators through this work.

Thank you to everyone who shared their experiences in our inbox and on social media! And another big thank you to our partners and all the inspiring speakers! #TakeMeOutsideDay



# TAKE ME OUTSIDE DAY 2023

Participation from every province and  
territory across Canada

**7,500+**

Educators signed up from Coast to Coast to  
Coast

**490,000+**

Learners who went outside for Take Me  
Outside Day

**1,860,000+**

People reached on social media

**115+**

Partnering Organizations



“

*The children benefited from learning while playing and exploring, using tools and creating new ones using what they have in their immediate environment. As a teacher, I also was able to reconnect with my own inner child and having fun with the kids as well. It also gave me a better appreciation of the world around me and how I am a steward for the environment. It also helped me to connect with my Indigenous roots by focusing on teachings in my lesson planning and learning experiences. I have learned so much from the elders and also through mindful research and reading any material I could get my hands on. I wish I had done this 30 years ago when I started in my teaching profession! It's never too late to start!*

*Elementary educator, Dryden, ON*



“

*We hiked, explored and created our own learning space outdoors. Students were more engaged, invested, curious and invested in their learning*

*Early Years Educator, Hornepayne, ON*

# Take Me Outside for Learning Challenge

The Take Me Outside for Learning Challenge is a commitment to ongoing outdoor learning throughout the school year, with a pledge to try taking your learners outside at least once a week. After Take Me Outside Day, the majority of participants sign up to continue the momentum throughout the entire year with a sense of community, inspiration, and fun! The Challenge is designed to be accessible, simple, and low stakes; Whatever outdoor learning looks like to you, we are here to support and celebrate it.

All participants are provided with a monthly mail-out featuring professional development opportunities, resources, and outdoor learning activity ideas to support their journey. For the 2023-24 school year, we also started regularly sharing featured educator stories as an additional piece of community building among participants and to showcase the myriad of ways learning can happen beyond the classroom.

## IMPACT AT A GLANCE

**4,800+**

Educators registered for the year-long Challenge

**278,000+**

Learners engaged in regular outdoor learning

**64%**

First time participants

**77%**

of 2022/23 participants were able to fulfill the learning commitment at least 60% of the time



“

*Incorporating outdoor learning into every school day, I notice that my students are more engaged in their learning, more resilient when problems arise, and more likely to collaborate to solve problems.*

*Elementary educator, Meadow Creek, BC*

# 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

**600+**

Educators participating over 10 days

**36,000+**

Learners outside throughout the challenge

**80%**

First time participants

**178,000+**

Overall reach of #TMOWinterChallenge

## Outdoor Learning Winter Challenge

Take Me Outside's Winter Challenge occurs annually in February and encourages educators to extend learning beyond the four walls of the classroom, all year round. Winter can be a magical time to discover the outdoors in unique ways, and the 5th annual Winter Challenge prompted educators to head outside every single day with themes and activities for two weeks of fun and engagement!

Beyond our Activity Guide and resources provided, there is always a plethora of inspiration on social media throughout the Winter Challenge, with educators using the hashtags #TMOWinterChallenge & #DéfiHivernal to showcase their adventures big and small. It's a great way to stay motivated even when the temperatures drop!

“

*I think outdoor learning is important and it helps students connect with nature. It sparks curiosity and encourages students to slow down. The Winter Challenge pushed me to take them out a few more times in the last 2 weeks and seeing other teacher's posts has been inspiring.*





# National Outdoor Learning Conference

In partnership with the Outdoor Learning Store and the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (EECOM), Take Me Outside hosted hundreds of delegates at the inaugural National Outdoor Learning Conference in Banff, Alberta in May 2023.

Spanning multiple days, the sold-out conference served as a transformative watershed, channeling three streams of learning: Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Health and Wellbeing, and Environmental and Climate Change Education. With 60 captivating outdoor workshops, participants were immersed in a tapestry of diverse styles, ideas, and landscapes, igniting their thoughts, growth, and sharing within their educational practices.

This was a place where pedagogy seamlessly intertwined with the surroundings, whether under the sun or amid shower storms, during invigorating group hikes or tranquil forest bathing field trips. Learning took root in workshops, sessions, on the stage, and in every profound moment of connection.



“

*What an inspiring venue and group of people! I feel motivated, energized and full of ideas. The experience was nothing short of amazing. I highly recommend this conference to any practitioner who wants to learn more about how to connect children to the outdoors. It was well organized, creative and crammed full of positive learning opportunities. I sincerely hope this conference will continue in the coming years!*

*Jacob R.*

*The community of outdoor educators is one of the most welcoming and accepting groups of people I have come across in my professional career. It was truly incredible to be able to connect, network, and dream of the possibilities together in person. Thank you to all who opened their hearts, minds, and souls and the dedicated folks who made the conference a reality.*

*Amy T.*

# 2023 OUTDOOR LEARNING CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

**445**

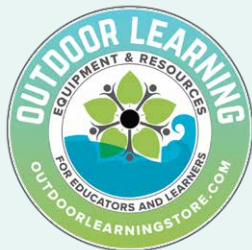
Educators present

**60**

Workshops delivered

**15**

Speakers featured



We are looking forward to another  
sold out year in 2024!



“

*Thank you for creating this incredible conference. I have returned home inspired and motivated. The speakers and workshops were amazing, authentic, soulful and impactful. Everything about this conference (to name a few: the keynote speakers, panel discussions, workshops, round dance, social events, the hike, yoga, location) was engaging and fostered a sense of connection with the delegates. Back home now, I look forward to continuing to build up our program and capacities of indigenous ways of knowing and land-based education with my colleagues and students. Thank you to the hosts, sponsors and partners who supported this impactful and inspiring event.*

*Intermediate teacher, Edmonton, AB*

**TUESDAYS 60 mins Jan - March**  
**FREE!**

## Outdoor Learning Winter Virtual Workshop Series!

- 17 January**  
Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults
- 24 January**  
Dirty Teaching: A Beginners Guide to Learning Outdoors
- 31 January**  
Climate Change & Sustainability Education Resources
- 7 February**  
Taking Math Outdoors: Practical Ideas & Examples
- 21 February**  
Green Ummah & The Great Outdoors
- 28 February**  
A People's Curriculum for the Earth
- 7 March**  
School Gardening: Teaching Tools & Resources

**OUTDOORLEARNINGSTORE.COM**

**TUESDAYS 60 mins April - June**  
**FREE!**

## Outdoor Learning Spring Virtual Workshop Series!

- 11 April**  
Resources for Earth Month
- 18 April**  
Taking a Closer Look: Investigations in Nature
- 25 April**  
Nature Activities for Year-round Learning
- 16 May**  
Resources for World Oceans Day
- 23 May**  
Race and Nature for Educators
- 30 May**  
How to Teach Nature Journaling: Curiosity, Wonder, Attention
- 6 June**  
Walking Together: (Re)Connecting to Nature through Two-Eyed Seeing
- 13 June**  
Animating Outdoor Learning using Finger Puppets

**OUTDOORLEARNINGSTORE.COM**

**TUESDAYS 60 mins Sept - Nov**  
**FREE!**

## Outdoor Learning Fall Virtual Workshop Series!

- September 19**  
Naturally Inclusive: Engaging Children of All Abilities Outdoors
- September 26**  
Wild Learning: Practical Ideas to Bring Teaching Outdoors
- October 3**  
Outdoor Learning through Patterns in Nature
- October 17**  
Connecting Children to Nature through Indigenous Teachings
- November 7**  
L'éducation en plein air: Apprendre et enseigner dehors en tous lieux et en toutes saisons
- November 14**  
BE OUT - A New Outdoor Learning Tool for Teacher Success

**OUTDOORLEARNINGSTORE.COM**

# Outdoor Learning Educator Workshops

Our seasonal virtual workshop series brought 21 workshops to over 50,000 participants throughout 2023. With sessions in the winter, spring, and fall, we hosted experts across a multitude of subjects that held inspiration for all, whether experienced in outdoor learning, or new to the practice.

New topics for 2023 highlighted accessibility in outdoor learning, and included French-speaking workshops to engage Francophone and Francophile educators. Indigenous voices and perspectives are always regularly featured, which continued throughout the year.

**50,000+**

Educators participating in seasonal Outdoor Learning workshops

“

*I have thoroughly enjoyed every session I was able to attend. As a teacher new to outdoor learning (I decided to start a simple container garden here at school last year and it has led me down a new path full of learning and of possibilities), I have gained so much knowledge and confidence moving forward. Thank-you to you and your team for doing what you do and making these opportunities available.*

*2023 workshop attendee, Calgary, AB*



# Student Video Contest

This year, the jurors couldn't decide on just one grand prize winner, so they chose TWO! A huge congrats to **Daniel Tapatai** from Baker Lake, Nunavut as well as students from **Nakoda Elementary** in Mîni Thnî, Alberta for being this year's grand prize winners! And congrats to all the winners in other categories who worked hard to make some great short films about their backyard in Canada and the importance of spending time outside. All of these winners will receive gift cards from MEC to help get them out there even more! Both winning films will be highlighted as part of the internationally acclaimed Banff Mountain Book and Film Festival for 2023!

The Grand Prize is a 3 day trip to Banff National Park and the winning short film will be shared on social media.

A huge thanks to MEC and the Banff Centre for their support in this project. We also want to thank Caribou Properties and Banff Airporter for providing food and transportation to the winning student while in Banff. This community has truly supported this contest and is committed to engaging youth in exploring Canada's amazing backyard.



**BANFF AIRPORTER**  
Leading the way



## Building Capacity

For a grassroots organization like TMO, we strive to increase our capacity each year as our reach and operations grow. We are grateful to both our funders and donors in helping our nonprofit continue to thrive, with some recent highlights from 2023 including:

- After selling out in 2023, the Outdoor Learning Conference in Banff, Alberta, once again reached capacity within 48 hours of registration opening, in anticipation of 2024
- Record numbers of participants attending our free virtual workshop series, with 50,000+ educators participating across four seasons of professional learning opportunities
- Additional staff coming on board to support the planning and execution of Take Me Outside Day
  - The Executive Director will also be transitioning to a full-time position in 2024
- Diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) continue to be embedded within the entirety of the work we do. For example:
  - The DEI committee merged with the TMO Board of Directors to ensure synergy in our work and shared goals together
  - The theme of Indigenous Perspectives & Ways of Knowing are consistent throughout Take Me Outside Day and the Outdoor Learning Conference, centering First Nations, Inuit, and Métis voices in our initiatives from the beginning
  - Subsidized registrations for the conference create pathways for attendance from historically marginalized and underrepresented communities
  - We increased the rates offered to speakers during the week of Take Me Outside Day, and created a diverse feature of experts, educators, and advocates to share their stories and further the cause
- The Teacher Advisory Committee also continued to grow, with increased geographical representation across Canada creating a strong network of educators guiding our work

Each of our events hosted in 2023 broke records in participation, and we are continuously heartened by the support and enthusiasm of our community.



# Teacher Advisory Committee

The Teacher Advisory Committee (TAC) works collaboratively with TMO to increase the shared understanding of outdoor learning and education in Canada, thereby supporting TMO to make decisions that best allow it to accomplish its mission. Formed in fall 2021, the Committee meets online every month during the school year to assist the direction and work of Take Me Outside. The TAC has 25 teacher representatives from a diversity of geographical, teaching grade levels, and cultural groups in British Columbia, Alberta, Northwest Territories, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and PEI. The advisory members are helping connect TMO to a wider audience while increasing their reach throughout the country and coming up with effective ways to empower educators in getting their learners outside on a regular basis. In 2023, the TAC helped promote TMO events regionally, provided input on TMO initiatives, and were actively involved in the review process of presentation proposals for the annual Outdoor Learning Conference.

# Outdoor Learning Resource Library

Part of what we offer at Take Me Outside includes a searchable, online resource directory, with numerous subjects and lessons to support educators in their outdoor learning practice. With over 34,000 page views, we are providing an important source of information representing many diverse views, subjects, and topics.

We now have over 80 partners in this work across North America, and will continue to feature their important contributions to the field, while updating and refining the Take Me Outside website. Throughout 2023 we added dozens of new resources!

## HIGHLIGHTS

**341,000+**  
Page views

**120,000+**  
Unique visitors

**390+**  
Resources for educators

Looking for something specific? Refine your search by clicking on one or more category!

Art	Climate Change and Sustainability	Community Science	Diversity	Diversity Equity Inclusion	Early Learning	
Early Years	Elementary	Environmental Education	Equity	French	Geography	Habitats and Ecosystems
Health and Wellbeing	History	Inclusion	Indigenous Resources	Inquiry-Based Learning	Language	Lesson Plan
Loose Parts Play	Math	Middle	National Organization	Nature Based Education	Outdoor Education	
Outdoor Learning	Physical Education	Place-Based Education	Pre-School	Professional Development	Regional Resources	
Risky Play	Science	Secondary	Social Studies	Unit Plan		

Clear Selection

Showing 274 Resources



**RUPERTSLAND CENTRE FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Rupertsland Centre for Teaching and Learning (RCTL) proudly offers a large selection of Métis Education Resources for lifelong learning. "Visiting with the Land" is a series of videos with guiding questions to support learning about Métis' relationships with the land. "Visiting with the Land" can teach learners how to live in respectful connection with the land, including waters, animals, plants, and all our relations.



**PLANT HEROES**

We're here to help kids explore plants and forest systems by providing parents and educators free, plant-teaching ideas and other nature learning resources. By teaching kids about plants, insects and ecosystems, we can empower youth to be agents of positive environmental change. Most of our materials are available in three languages: English, Spanish, and Simplified Chinese.



**PLAY EVERYWHERE PLAYBOOK**

Leveraging both our own play infrastructure expertise and our successful collaborations with cities and partners, we've explored, encouraged and developed a number of successful approaches to creating kid-friendly cities with equitable access to safe, quality play



**OUTDOOR OPPORTUNITY LEGISLATIVE TOOLKIT**

The goal of this toolkit is to provide state legislators, agency staff, and partners with a framework and resources for establishing state-level outdoor opportunity funds and grant programs. It aims to offer ideas for place-based flexibility

# Outdoor Learning Resources

We continue to look for ways to support educators in accessing outdoor learning, and 2023 saw the creation of video content to inform and inspire those watching, generously supported by the Pauw Foundation.

In winter 2023, we created two short films that highlighted the excitement of being outdoors in the winter. Seasoned outdoor educator Lynx, alongside her class from Banff Elementary School's Nature Explorer's Program, showcased what they bring, how they prepare, and what's important to know when outside during the coldest part of the year.

Another film centered on Nakoda Elementary's Wild Program, an outdoor and land-based approach to learning. This short video helps explain how the program started, the benefits and impacts of outdoor and land-based learning, and some of the logistics of how this can be implemented in other schools.





# Outdoor Learning RESOURCE HUB

A comprehensive guide  
to outdoor learning  
organizations and resources  
across Canada

## Outdoor Learning Resource Hub

Over the past several years, outdoor learning has gained momentum and support as an important pedagogical approach within school systems. Evidence-based research is showing the positive impacts that can happen when the learning environment includes time spent outside for students. We created the Outdoor Learning Resource Hub alongside many of our partners in outdoor learning to highlight organizations across the country that are dedicated to land-based learning, ecological learning, and outdoor learning. It is both a comprehensive guide and a living document, and is the perfect resource to learn about what each organization is up to and how they're extending learning beyond the traditional classroom walls.

### SUBSCRIPTIONS IN REVIEW

**6**

Enhanced School Board Subscribers  
for the 2023-24 school year

**2**

Standard School Board Subscribers  
for the 2023-24 school year

### School Board Subscription Package

This new subscription service, launched in 2023 and offered in partnership with Take Me Outside, the Outdoor Learning Store, and Green Teacher, is a comprehensive package that provides school boards and districts with the newest resources, ongoing support, professional development opportunities for administrators and staff, swag, and more. Both Enhanced and Standard Subscription options were offered to those wanting to take the next step to place-based learning outside!

# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS:



**Take Me Outside works collaboratively with other organizations, school boards, and individuals to encourage children and youth to spend more time outside through various projects and initiatives. This year, we were thrilled to welcome even more partners on board to join together through our shared vision of learning beyond the four walls of a classroom.**

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| Accelerating Climate Change Education in Teacher Education     | Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network              | Inside Education   | Ocean Wise   |
| Active for Life  | Columbia Mountains Institute of Applied Ecology             | Interpretation Canada  | Ontario Parks  |
| Alaska Natural Resource & Outdoor Education Association        | Columbia Outdoor School                                     | Interpretive Guides Association                              | Ontario Society for Environmental Education                |
| Alberta Council for Environmental Education                    | Connecticut Outdoor and Environmental Education Association | Invasive Species Council of BC                               | Outdoor Council of Canada                                  |
| Arizona Association for Environmental Education                | Council of Outdoor Educators of Ontario                     | Jane Goodall Institute of Canada                             | Outdoor Play Canada  |
| Arkansas Environmental Education Association                   | Door Number One   | Kentucky Association for Environmental Education             | Pacific Foundation for the Understanding of Nature Society |
| Banff Airporter  | Earth Rangers   | KidsGardening  | ParticipACTION   |
| Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity                           | EcoSchools Canada   | Kootenay Boundary Environmental Education                    | Physical Health Education Canada                           |
| Banff Centre Mountain Film and Book Festival                   | Empathy in Nature   | Learning for a Sustainable Future                            | Pine Project   |
| BC AdventureSmart  | Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia                 | Leave No Trace Canada  | Playful Mindset  |
| BC Classrooms to Communities Network Society                   | Environmental Education Association of Alabama              | Maine Environmental Education Association                    | Project Learning Tree Canada                               |
| BC Environmental Educators Provincial Specialist Association   | Environmental Education Association of Illinois             | Manitoba Nature Summit                                       | Project WET  |
| BC Parks   | Environmental Education Association of Indiana              | Massachusetts Environmental Education Society                | Protect Our Winters Canada                                 |
| Be the Change Earth Alliance                                   | Environmental Education of New Mexico                       | Michigan Alliance for Environmental and Outdoor Education    | River Institute  |
| Biosphere Institute of the Bow Valley                          | Environmental Educators of North Carolina                   | Mind Your Plastic  | Room to Play   |
| California Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education | Ever Active Schools   | Minnesota Association for Environmental Education            | SaskOutdoors   |
| Camp Kawartha  | Evergreen   | Mississippi Environmental Education Alliance                 | Science World  |
| Canada's Forest Trust  | Exploring by the Seat of Your Pants                         | Natural Curiosity  | Strong Nations   |
| Canadian Network for Environmental Education & Communication   | Get Outside & Play  | Nature Action Québec   | Tennessee Environmental Education Association              |
| Canadian Parks & Recreation Association                        | Global, Environmental & Outdoor Education Council           | Nature Canada  | Total NM   |
| Canadian Parks & Wilderness Society                            | Great Minds Think Outside                                   | NatureForAll   | Virginia Association for Environmental Education           |
| Caribou Properties   | GreenLearning   | NatureKidsBC   | Washington Environmental Education                         |
| Child & Nature Alliance of Canada                              | Green Teacher   | Nature New Brunswick   | Water Rangers  |
| Clearing Magazine  | Green Ummah   | New Brunswick Environmental Network                          | Wild About Outdoor Learning Society                        |
|  | Idaho Environmental Education Association                   | Nebraska Alliance for Conservation and Environment Education | Wild Child Forest School - NS                              |
|  | ImaginED  | New Hampshire Environmental Educators                        | Wildsight  |
|  |   | Ocean Networks Canada  | Wisconsin Association for Environmental Education          |
|  |   |  | World Fish Migration Foundation                            |
|  |   |  | Wyoming Alliance for Environmental Education               |

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

“

*I simply love your organization! As a French kinder phys ed./health teacher for students with complex physical disabilities I preach your message of TMO daily and I have seen more and more acceptance of this as a need and a right for all! Thank you.*

*Elementary educator, Ottawa, ON*

