



# Classroom



## Become a Certified Nature Explore Classroom

The Nature Explore Classroom Certification Program is a national initiative that recognizes schools and other organizations that have made a commitment to providing outdoor classrooms and comprehensive programming to help children use the natural world as an integral part of learning. Grounded in over a decade of research and field-testing, this widespread initiative is sponsored by the Arbor Day Foundation and Dimensions Foundation in collaboration with environmental, educational, design and health organizations. This program is open to any organization able to meet the following yearly requirements:

1. **Well-designed outdoor space:** Provide evidence that principles from the Learning with Nature Idea Book were used in the design of new spaces, or the redesign of existing spaces. For renewal, provide evidence of annual maintenance.
2. **Staff development:** Provide evidence that staff have attended a full-length Nature Explore Workshop. For renewal, provide evidence of annual professional development relating to nature education.
3. **Family involvement:** Provide evidence that activities or materials designed to increase family awareness and involvement in nature education for young children are provided regularly.

### How to Apply for Certification

For more information on the program, or to request an application, go to [arborday.org/certify](http://arborday.org/certify) or call 1-888-908-8733. Applications can be downloaded and submitted with documentation that the standards have been met.

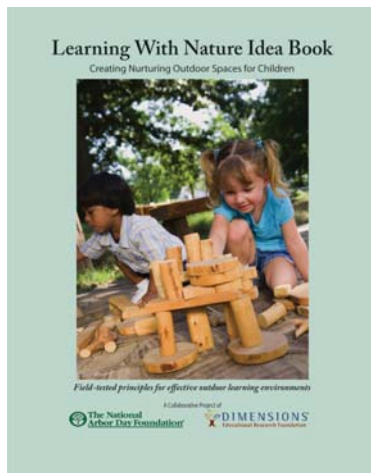
### Why Become a Nature Explore Classroom?

- You become part of a growing network of schools and organizations working to reconnect children with nature. A specially designated Nature Explore Classroom Web site will offer access to the latest news and research on children and nature, and encourage sharing of ideas.
- When your outdoor classroom becomes certified the Dimensions Foundation and Arbor Day Foundation sends a press release to your local media to help you gain additional community recognition and support.
- Once certified, you will receive a Nature Explore Classroom sign, which you can post to publicly recognize your commitment, and to encourage others to create similar spaces in their own programs.

See the back of this flyer for information on consultation services for designing Nature Explore Classroom concept plans.



## CONSULTATION SERVICES TO CREATE CONCEPT PLANS



Providing comprehensive guidance for creating effective outdoor learning environments, the *Learning With Nature Idea Book: Creating Nurturing Outdoor Spaces for Children* shares field-tested principles with educators and builders who are designing or redesigning outdoor classrooms. The *Learning With Nature Idea Book* has practical ideas that

incorporate concepts from Dimensions' research and leading American Society of Landscape Architect designers. Additional support for those creating these outdoor classrooms is available through a Nature Explore Classroom Site Consultation.

On-site design consultations with a specially trained landscape architect-educator team are available to help create Nature Explore Classrooms nationwide. This team will work closely with the school or organization that is constructing the site to develop a concept plan for the space based on field-tested principles while customizing the classroom to meet the school's or organization's needs. In the first day of

the two-day process, the design team meets with the school or organization staff to evaluate the site and discuss in detail the particular needs and interests of those who will be using the site. Following the meeting the landscape architect will create a unique concept plan for the site which will be presented to the organization for review and final revision the following day. This is an efficient way to help everyone in the organization come to consensus. For more information, call 402-467-6112.



## WORKSHOP FOR DESIGNERS

Landscape architects, architects, planners and other design professionals have a unique opportunity to inspire a child's sense of wonder in the natural world by creating nurturing outdoor learning environments for children. The *Designing Outdoor Classrooms for Children Workshop* presents a unique combination of new field-tested design principles coupled with the direct application of educational research on creating developmentally appropriate



outdoor spaces for young children. This two-day workshop gives design professionals the skill set that prepares them to serve a key role in the national effort to design outdoor spaces

that lets nature be an integral part of children's daily learning.

*"This is an important and informative workshop for design professionals in architecture and landscape architecture to become aware of the experiences that are possible for young children in a natural environment."*

*-Dr. Wayne Drummund,  
Dean of the University of Nebraska  
College of Architecture*

To learn about upcoming landscape architect workshops, visit [arborday.org/explore](http://arborday.org/explore).

A Collaborative Project of



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[dimensionsfoundation.org](http://dimensionsfoundation.org)