

Fall 2016

Greetings PLT Educators

There are some great opportunities available through PLT this year. National PLT has a new website at www.plt.org/ and is now offering on-line training for Early Childhood, preK-8, and GreenSchools. We have several scheduled workshops for educators as well as a refresher course for Facilitators.. There are several PLT trunks available for use stored in various locations around the state. The contents are a great supplement for the preK-8 guide activities.

PLT has no GreenSchools in MT at this time and would love to add one in Montana to their group. Five PLT GreenSchools Investigations provide a blueprint for student Green Teams to examine their school's energy use, waste and recycling, water consumption, school site, and environmental quality (such as indoor air quality, school transportation, and use of chemicals) and establish benchmarks. Using the results of their investigations, students select, design, and implement one or more action projects, and measure their impacts. PLT's GreenWorks! grants can provide funding for your school improvement projects.

There are several opportunities for PLT training through workshops offered in several locations throughout the state.

I would like to thank the sponsors who make the MT PLT program possible: Flathead Conservation District, MT Women in Timber, USFS, MT DNRC, MT Natural History Center, and all those who serve as Facilitators and Steering Committee members.
-Cindy Peterson, MT PLT Coordinator

Access to PLT's Student Pages

We hope you have had a chance to explore Project Learning Tree's new website, www.plt.org. Please note, you now need to login to access the Student Pages and other resources for PLT's activities. See <https://www.plt.org/resources/resources-for-plt-lessons>.

If you had previously signed up to access GreenSchools content on PLT's old website, you are already registered on the new site and you do not therefore need to create a new user name and password. For all others, please go to www.plt.org/login to register.

Your email address will be added to National PLT's Branch e-newsletter distribution list. You can expect to receive nine issues a year. If you do not wish to receive emails from National PLT, simply unsubscribe to stop receiving these emails.



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MUSIC IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

Submitted by Francis Erler

As a music teacher, I have been delighted to see the emphasis on music in the new Project Learning Tree Early Childhood Curriculum. The CD included with the guide has a great variety of both songs and movement activities. Billy B's songs about trees are a lot of fun and have catchy tunes that stick with you. I greatly enjoyed sharing these with the participants at our October 1 workshop for early childhood educators in Kalispell. They were very well received.

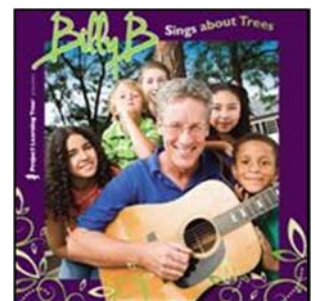
I also am very happy that there are 'piggy-back' songs included in the guide. These are words that apply to the various lessons, which are set to well-known tunes that most anyone can sing. One example we used was, "Autumn leaves are falling down, falling down, falling down. Autumn leaves are falling down, red, yellow, brown," which is sung to the tune of *London Bridge is Falling Down*.

Throughout my years of teaching music to infants through adults, I have found that music speaks to people of all ages in ways that mere words can't. Young children, especially, respond almost instinctively to music by moving along with it. Music is a great way to access various learning styles, and I am excited to see it as part of the PLT curriculum. I've always known there was a reason I am both a music teacher and an environmental educator.

"I loved it. It was fun and interactive, I cant wait to share what I've learned"

- Fosters Brain Development
- Develops Gross and Fine Motor Skills
- Benefits Children with Special Needs

- Supports EC Experiences
- Sounds of Nature
- Billy B Songs



GREENSCHOOLS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD

New this year PLT's GreenSchools for Early Childhood is an excellent set of investigations designed to teach about the environment and how children can make a difference in their own community. With an educator guide and five investigations that include energy, environment quality, school site, waste & recycling, and water.

The investigations include background information with a checklist of supplies needed, engagement activities to complete investigations, worksheets, action project ideas and plan, and a green your home handout to engage students in continue learning at home with their families.

Online training is offered for the GreenSchools program as well as the preK-8 and Early Childhood guides. The online training is designed for educators who are comfortable with self-directed learning at their own pace. The course is composed of 20-30 minutes of learning experiences, called counsels. For more information about the online course go to: <http://shop.plt.org/early-childhood/>



A face-to-face workshop will be offered March 4, 2017 in Missoula. For more information and registration please go to <http://www.msuextension.org/forestry/calendar.htm#mfsp>.

Did you know...

- ◆ Commingled and single stream recycling mean the same thing.
- ◆ Plastic bags should be taken to retail establishments for recycling. That includes your bread bag, dry cleaning bag, and grocery bags.
- ◆ The cap of a plastic bottle is just as recyclable as the bottle
- ◆ Rechargeable batteries contain more chemicals than the traditional alkaline batteries. But, they are considered better for the environment because they last longer and are recyclable.



Take Action, and Recycle!

GREENWORKS GRANTS

Project Learning Tree offers GreenWorks grants up to \$1,000 to schools and youth organizations for environmental service-learning projects that link classroom learning to the real world. Students implement an action project they help design to green their school or to improve an aspect of their neighborhood's environment.

To be eligible, applicants must have attended a PLT workshop, either in-person or online, that provides training, lesson plans, and other resources to help integrate these projects and environmental education into your curriculum or youth programs.

The annual deadline to apply is September 30. Funding will be distributed in December.

Grant Requirements

Applicants must have attended a Project Learning Tree training either online or in person.

*Only PLT's PreK-8 and Early Childhood online courses meet the online training eligibility requirements.

How to Apply

The deadline to apply for a grant in 2016 has passed. Check back in Spring 2017 to download an application form.

Submit your completed application and W-9 online.

Please login to your account to submit a grant. If you do not yet have an account, you can register for one here.

Please note: Applications will NOT be accepted via email.

For additional information contact:

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202-765-3531



PROJECT LEARNING TREE TURNS 40!

This year, Project Learning Tree is celebrating its 40th anniversary! Back in 1976, the United States celebrated its Bicentennial and the first Earth Day had taken place a few years earlier. Many of the environmental laws and educational reforms now part of everyday life were new on the books or barely imagined. And who knew you would be reading this on a computer screen, let alone on a small handheld device?

Back in 1976, natural resource managers and educators from the then-American Forest Institute (now Foundation) and then-Western Regional Environmental Education Council (now Council for Environmental Education) developed and launched the first PLT workshops in ten states. Forty years later, educators in every U.S. state and many countries around the world are using PLT elementary and secondary materials with their students. Over 40 years, PLT has trained more than 675,000 educators through in-person workshops.

For the full story; <https://www.plt.org/news/project-learning-tree-turns-40/>



Web of Life Activity, Missoula Workshop on October 1, 2016



Table Activity, Kalispell Workshop on October 1, 2016

K-8 PROJECT LEARNING TRUNKS

Over the years our K-8 PLT trunks have been borrowed by various educators around the state. The trunks contains materials to conduct several of the PLT preK-8 activities.

The K-8 PLT trunks are still available for check out at the following locations. Don't miss out on this opportunity to check out these incredibly useful resources.

Missoula

MSU Extension Forestry, Cindy Peterson
406-243-4706, cindy.peterson@cfc.umt.edu

Kalispell

USFS Flathead, Teresa Wenum
406-758-5218, twenum@fs.fed.us

Conrad

MSU Extension, Wendy Wedum
406-271-4052, wwedum@montana.edu

Billings

Montana Audubon, Carolyn Sevier
406-294-5099, education@mtaudubon.org

Helena

USFS, Liz Burke
406-495-3713, lizburke@fs.edu.us



Stephanie Laporte Potts explaining the area of the nature garden, Missoula Workshop on October 1, 2016



Outdoor Activity, Kalispell Workshop on October 1, 2016

EXPERIENCING THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Submitted by Christina Oppegard, PLT EC Facilitator



There is a growing concern of how many children are consistently inside on any given day. Not to mention the high rate of obesity. The Kaiser Family Foundation reported that children ranging from 8 to 18 years of age devote on average 7 hours and 38 minutes using some type of entrainment media on a typical day, more than 53 hours a week. When only about 6% of children 9 to 13 years of age play outside on their own. (Children & Nature

Network, 2008) No wonder there is a concern for our children's health and well being.

Studies show that outdoor time helps build strong muscles, increase large and fine motor skills, enhances imaginations, increases attention span, and decrease aggression. The CDC recommends children and adolescents should do 60 minutes of physical activity each day, that include aerobic activity, muscle strengthening, or bone strengthening. Only one hour a day of physical activity and if a child averages 7.38 hours on a entertainment media a day. Certainly they can fit in one hour of physical activity or can they? How can we as educators help decrease this 7.38 hour gap? Well, the number one complaint I hear from children and even parents is access and interest. Some families would love to take their children on a hike or to the river, but don't have access or the interest simply isn't there.

Children and nature go together, their development are closely tied to their exposure to nature. In some communities children lack the freedom or exposure to nature even in a urban setting. So for those children, how can they play, experience , and care about nature? Well, without the opportunity they simply can't. It is up to us as educator to seek out and create ways for children to get outside and experience the vast great outdoors. If we can create access or interest in the classroom or at home today's children will have a better chance to experience something great. PLT has a excellent activities for families booklet that can be downloaded or purchased at <https://www.plt.org/activities-for-families/>

Be a guide and let nature be the teacher.

2017 WORKSHOPS

PLT Early Childhood Green Schools

Date: March 4
Location: Missoula
Time: 9:00am to 3:00pm
Who: open to all

MEEA

Workshop focus TBD

Date: March 9
Time: TBD, 6 hours
Location: Helena
Who: Open to conference attendees

PLT preK-8 & Project WILD (focus on grades 3-5)

Date: March 14 and 15
Time: 4:00 to 7:00 pm
Location: Helena
Who: open to all

PLT Early Childhood & preK-8 & GreenWorks

Date: April 8
Location: Kalispell
Time: 9:00am to 3:00pm
Who: open to all

To register or find other workshops that may be planned through the year, please check the calendar at: <http://www.msuextension.org/forestry/calendar.htm>

If you have at least 10 who would like to attend a workshop you may request one be conducted for your group. Call Cindy Peterson 406-243-4706.



Tools and resources, new lesson plans, and professional development. Grant opportunities and tips from educators for teaching about the environment. <https://www.plt.org/newsletter/>

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