

Impact Report

2023-2024



Connection • Wellbeing • Belonging

Nature Play SA is proud to present our Impact Report for 2023–2024

At the heart of our mission is connecting South Australians with the wellbeing benefits of nature. Grounded in research that highlights nature's profound impact on mental and physical health, our diverse programs and experiences empower communities to spend more time in nature, fostering healthier, happier lives and nurturing a deeper connection to the natural world.

This work is only possible thanks to the collective effort of our dedicated team, the invaluable expertise of our Board, our core funding partners, and the many organisations who support us year after year. Together, we have cultivated a thriving community that champions the values of nature connection and care, achieving positive outcomes for people and the environment alike.

Wherever our adventures take us at Nature Play SA, we acknowledge that we are on sacred Aboriginal Country. We extend our gratitude to all Aboriginal Elders, artists and leaders who have generously shared their knowledge, wisdom, and stories with us over recent years. These relationships help guide our work and deepen our connections to Country.

Our impact and reach this year has been vast. We know there is much more to do, and we look forward to building on the success of our vital programs in the year ahead. Thank you for your continued support.

Ngaitalya

Jason Tyndall
Chief Executive



Nature experiences

Nature Play SA's unique nature experiences empower parents and carers to confidently prioritise and support outdoor play. Our events highlight the wellbeing benefits of free play, offering children and young people the chance to explore and connect with their natural surroundings in meaningful ways. Our events also foster a strong sense of community, providing families and carers with guidance and encouragement to spend more time in nature as part of an ongoing habit. We work intentionally with vulnerable community groups to create nature connection events, supporting physical and mental health, fostering relationships, and nurturing a sense of belonging. All our experiences are underpinned by nature education, Aboriginal culture and wellbeing.

A year of nature experience highlights

20,000+
people engaged

60
diverse events

40
key partners

3
regional events

*“One of the highlights of our school holidays.
My kids love to attend the Forest Festival,
connect with nature, disconnect from technology,
and make lifelong memories.”*

Feedback from Forest Festival attendee



Outdoor learning and professional development

Nature Play SA's outdoor learning programs, offered as incursions and excursions, inspire curiosity, resilience, and critical thinking through nature-based experiences that nurture learner wellbeing and agency. Designed to align with the Australian Curriculum and Early Years Framework, these programs go further, equipping learners with real-world skills to thrive beyond school. They also provide educators with practical, innovative approaches to enrich teaching and achieve meaningful outcomes for all young people.

Our professional development is offered in three formats: conferences, themed PD days, and tailored team sessions. Each is designed to build educators' knowledge and confidence in supporting learners to engage meaningfully with nature-based play.

A year of outdoor learning highlights

13,500
learners engaged

140
sites engaged

1,350
educators engaged

8
regional programs

“This workshop not only supported my understanding of the importance of nature in education but has inspired me to want to make a change in early childhood education.”

Feedback from an educator at Bush Kindy PD



Aboriginal Engagement

Nature Play SA is proud to have developed our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in the past year, helping us to reflect deeply on how we can support reconciliation through our work with communities, schools, and partners.

Inspired by the natural world and the knowledge of Traditional Custodians, we often walk Country with Elders and Aboriginal leaders, listening and learning so that we deepen our respect for the land, its stories, and its people. Through our relationships and experiences, we aim to foster stronger connections between people, nature, and the rich cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

A year of Aboriginal engagement highlights

15

nature walks with Kurna Elders & Aboriginal leaders

3

Education Reconciliation Industry Network Group events

5

Aboriginal facilitators at our conferences

9

Kurna Elders & Aboriginal leaders engaged

“It was a fabulous session, full of rich learning, engagement and connection to culture and Country as well as Uncle Tamaru’s sense of humor.”

Feedback from Forest Festival attendee



Social media summary

Over the past decade, we have cultivated an online community that feels inspired, supported, and motivated to connect with nature. Through distinctive storytelling, impactful resources, and meaningful interactions on our social platforms, we engage directly with our audience by responding to messages, providing advice, and fostering conversations. These efforts continue to grow our reach, connecting people with the joy, wonder, and curiosity of nature. A snapshot of our reach is below.

A year of growth

Instagram

18,200+

7.3% increase

Facebook

36,300+

5.5% increase

LinkedIn

1,000+

127% increase

Email subscribers

20,000+

4.2% increase

“Such an important message. I’m a teacher and work in a school where we let kids climb trees, make mud pies and play in the bush. The difference it makes every day is incredible. Thanks for your awesome work!”

Social media follower



With gratitude

We extend a special thank you to the following people and key organisations for helping us grow over the past year. We also say ngaitalya/respect to Kauwanu Tamaru, Kaurna/Narungga Elder for his friendship and cultural guidance.

Board members

Phil Kwan, Chair

Leanne Muffet, Deputy Chair

Adrian Honan, Member

Lucy Keller, Member

Luke Ritchie, Member

Tim Crowley, Member

Funding partners

Green Adelaide

Department for Education



Collaborators

Adelaide National Park City

Anglicare SA

Association of Independent Schools of South Australia

Bedford

Beyond Blindness

Blind Sports SA

Carers SA

Catholic Education South Australia

Climbing Tree

Connected Self

Create Foundation

Credit Union SA

Deadly Mob

Department for Child Protection

Department for Environment and Water

Department for Human Services

Early Childhood Australia

Educators SA

ElectraNet

Flinders University

Forestry SA

ForkTree Project

Foster and Kinship Carers SA

Friends of Parks and Nature

Gowrie SA

Healthy Development Adelaide

Hourglass Time Education

Landscape Boards

LIV Golf

Local Councils across the state

National Parks and Wildlife Service SA

Nature Festival

Nature Play WA

New Day Leadership

Nippy's

Novita, HIPPY Program

Office for Early Childhood Development

Orana

Preventive Health SA

Raising Literacy Australia

Reservoirs SA

SA Ultimate

SA Water

TreeClimb Kuitpo

University of Adelaide

University of South Australia

Wellbeing Hubs

WOMADelaide

Looking ahead

In the coming year, we are excited to launch several key initiatives, including our new Strategic and Reconciliation Action Plans, disability and inclusion projects, fresh case studies and resources, stories of impact from our Thriving Learners program, strengthened partnerships across sectors, increased sponsorship support and the appointment of new Board members.

The demand for our work continues to grow as governments and organisations look for innovative ways to enhance early childhood development, improve mental health and wellbeing, reduce screen time, and provide nature-rich experiences for those who need them most. We believe that nature is an essential and powerful tool in addressing these complex societal challenges.

As a small not-for-profit, financial sustainability is essential for us to continue having impact across the state. The support of our major funding partners, collaborators and sponsors, ensures we can continue empowering communities, creating opportunities for connection, and championing the wellbeing benefits of nature.

Photographs on the cover and pages 5, 7, 9 by Bianca Buliga Photography.





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