

NATURE CONNECTIONS invites you to attend:

YOUNG INVESTIGATORS: *Connecting Children with Nature through Project Work*

Cohort IV, Year 1:

Introduction to Nature-Based Project Approach

Save the Dates!

**Sept. 14 & 15
Oct. 13 and
Nov. 10,
2015**

Location: Iowa Lakeside Laboratory and Regent's Resource Center
1838 Iowa Highway 86, Milford, IA

Trainer: Dr. Judy Harris Helm, author of Young Investigators: The Project Approach in the Early Years

GOALS OF THE SESSIONS:

Session One: *Participants will learn how to:*

- define project approach and the benefits of project work for mind/brain learning
- describe the phases of a project
- identify worthwhile topics, especially those with potential for STEM experiences
- survey the outdoor environment and generate a list of possible nature topics

Session Two: *Participants will learn how to:*

- do anticipatory planning which enables integration of goals and standards into project work while supporting children's initiation and decision-making
- web with children (introduce children to the use of graphic organizer)
- focus attention on a topic, especially in the out-of-doors
- teach important project skills

Session Three: *Participants will learn how to:*

- plan field site visits
- plan interviews of experts
- help children represent their learning including observational sketching outdoors
- determine what to save and how to organize a collection of children's work in the project
- guide child self-reflections and bring a project to close

Session Four: *Participants will learn how to:*

- evaluate and expand their project work
- extend questions and investigation
- create meaningful displays and share their project
- enrich reading and writing experiences in project work
- involve second language learners in project work

Nature Connections of Northwest Iowa Partners:

UDMO Head Start/Early Head Start, Iowa Lakeside Laboratory and Regent's Resource Center, Regent's Center for Early Developmental Education, Prairie Lakes AEA 8, Early Childhood Iowa: Lakes Region, Creative Ventures, Northwest AEA, Friends of Lakeside Lab, Patrice and Rita Leary Foundation, Area Naturalists & Educators, and the Iowa DNR

Apply to be part of Cohort IV, Year 1

Team: 3-7 Members Required

1. Early Childhood Administrative Personnel
2. SWVPP Teacher
3. SWVPP Associate Teacher
4. SWVPP Partner (may be optional)
 - Head Start Coordinator
 - Head Start Teacher
 - Head Start Assistant Teacher
 - ECSE Teacher, Associates
 - Private Preschool Teacher, Associates
 - T-K, Associates
 - Kindergarten Teacher, Associates



Team Expectations:

- Attend four days of training: 9/14, 9/15, 10/13, and 11/10
- Complete two nature-based projects
- Administrator attendance 9/14 and 11/10
- *Professional development credit will require attendance and preparation/display of documentation panels on April 20, 2016, at the Project Sharing Afternoon*

For further information, contact: Denise Wasko at 712.335-3588 Ext. 2040 or by e-mail at dwasko@plaea.org