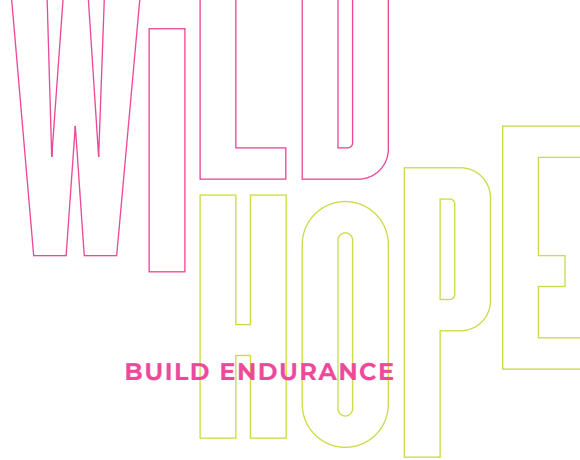


GINNY YURICH

GET OUTSIDE

1000hoursoutside.com



BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The average American child spends around four to seven minutes a day in free play, but four to seven hours on a screen. When kids play outside, it helps them in every facet of their development: cognitive, physical, emotional and social. And it helps us too, what a thing! Ginny Yurich, founder of a global movement called 1000 Hours Outside, shows us how to bring back balance between virtual life and real life in childhood and beyond.

LEADER TIP

Don't overthink about the perfect place or time to get your moms outside. Wherever you meet, just take it outside for a while! If it's hot, have water for everyone to take with them. If it's cold, warn everyone to bring layers. You could additionally schedule a follow-up outdoor playdate or hike to help moms and kids experience the goodness of the outdoors.

WELCOME ACTIVITY: FOUR CORNERS

Play four corners: Read the following options and assign each one a corner. Moms will move to the corner that matches their answer.

- ***Favorite playground activity as a child:*** Monkey bars, swings, tag or sports
- ***Your ideal vacation:*** Mountains, beach, theme park or staycation
- ***Favorite outdoor playdate:*** Park, the backyard, riding bikes or the zoo
- ***Your ideal outdoor date:*** Hiking, picnic at the park, golf or pool time

MEETING ACTIVITY: NATURE CENTERPIECES

Take your meeting outside after watching Ginny's video. Walk around and collect items to make nature centerpieces. (You could optionally have moms bring in items they previously collected, or you could buy items to use.) Have everyone bring a picnic blanket or lawn chair and enjoy community and conversation in the fresh air.

SUPPLIES:

- Glass vases or mason jars
- Collect items from outside (like flowers, decorative grass blades, rocks, branches and leaves) to arrange in the vase or jar as a centerpiece.

CONNECT QUESTIONS

- Which outdoor place holds happy memories for you or makes you feel peaceful?
- How can you incorporate outside time into your regular schedule?
- Which local outdoor spaces have you been wanting to visit?
 - o When will you go?
 - o Who can you invite to go with you?

EXTRAS

- *Your First 50 Hours Tracking Sheet*
- Visit [1000hoursoutside.com/trackers](https://www.1000hoursoutside.com/trackers) for more fun ways to visually track your outside hours

BACKYARD CAMPING

Shadows danced on the side of the tent as the lantern gently swayed back and forth from the tent top.

“One more chapter.... Pleasseeeee!” my kids begged as I tried closing the *Hank the Cow Dog* book for the second time.

Tucker, our giant St. Bernard, laid next to the sleeping bags snoring. Hank had nothing on his luxurious camping life.

“Hold on,” I said as I stood up, unzipped the tent, and walked to get a flashlight ... from the garage. We weren’t in the woods; we were in our backyard.

I had a baby who needed to be nursed and was awake all night with reflux, and three other children who wanted to put on Daniel Boone hats at a campsite and fight wild animals in the woods. So, backyard camping seemed the perfect compromise.

Sure, it wasn’t quite the rugged, authentic experience of a wild outdoor adventure, but it was still good, and I was amazed at how quickly we all started acting like we were camping.

I put down dishes and laundry, we snuggled under candlelight with no technology, and we slept in the great outdoors.

This became a summer tradition - backyard camping. And it’s now a core memory for my children of their childhood.

I once read in an article that families who camp together have stronger bonds, and children who camp have more confidence, self-reliance in the outdoors, and a greater sense of adaptability.

My guess is this applies to other outdoor activities as well. I see it as my kids race down a ski slope, jump into a lake, and dig their hands deep into garden soil. There is something that comes alive in them, and in me, that is different from indoor activities.

I think God designed it this way. In Genesis, 1 God speaks all life into existence - light, air, water, earth, plants and animals. Every time God made something, he said it was “very good.” He wove into creation the very reflection and display of his goodness, character, power and nature. So, when we are in the outdoors, enjoying all that God created, we experience the Creator Himself.

Life can feel hard and heavy sometimes. But when we step outside and move our bodies, smell the fresh air, and witness the beauty of God’s world, our mood shifts and our spirits are revived—no matter what age.

Let’s open the door, pitch the tent in the backyard, and call that a win.

Psalm 19:1: *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.*

QUESTIONS:

- *What is your favorite way to get outside and play?*
- *How could you think creatively about building memories and experiences outside to make it work for this season of your life?*