

Trips for Kids Marin

Trail Rides Project Resource Guide

ALIGN - California Education Standards
INNOVATE - Updated Programming
EVALUATE - New Feedback Tools



Connecting kids to bikes and nature since 1988

Learn more at www.tripsforkidsmarin.org





TRIPS FOR KIDS MARIN

Our Mission

To provide educational biking programs for youth from under-resourced communities in the Bay Area that encourage healthy lifestyles, self-discovery, and connection with nature.



TRIPSFORKIDSMARIN.ORG

Helping kids shift gears since 1988

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Trips for Kids Marin / Re-Cyclery
610 4th Street, San Rafael, CA 94901
(415) 458-2986

Re-Cyclery Hours

Tues - Sun | 10:00 - 5:00 PM
Mon | Out Riding

Our Programs

TRAIL RIDES

Our trained ride leaders take youth on scenic off-road biking adventures to gain riding and safety skills, self-confidence, environmental awareness, and connection to the natural world. We provide all necessary equipment and offer single-day and recurring rides that introduce many of our participants to nearby parks and open spaces for the first time. Our Trail Rides curriculum aligns with California Education Standards in next-generation science, social-emotional learning, and physical education.

EARN-A-BIKE

We offer a virtual Earn-a-Bike program for youth who've participated in our Trail Rides, to create a pathway to bike ownership in four weeks over Zoom. Students learn about bike systems, maintenance, and safe riding techniques and while earning a valuable tool - the bike - for transportation and creating healthy, active lifestyles for their well-being and happiness!

MOBILE BIKE WORKSHOPS

Over 10-weeks, we teach safe biking skills to youth at their school or community after-school sites. Bicycles, helmets, and tools are provided so that all youth can participate.

RE-CYCLERY BIKE SHOP

Our San Rafael-based social enterprise sells refurbished bikes at discounted rates and new and gently used bike parts, accessories, helmets, shoes, and clothing.

You can support our programs by shopping for your bikes and bike gear here and donating your gently used products, preventing them from entering landfills while increasing accessibility.



Trail Rides Project

Under the direction of our new Executive Director, Dr. Louise Malandra, we have undertaken an important revamp of our youth programming. While we have always focused on three pillars of success defined in our mission - encouraging healthy lifestyles, self-discovery and connection to nature - we have now added an important dimension to our objectives; we've aligned our programming with California Department of Education standards in social-emotional learning (SEL), next generation science (NGS) and physical education (PE). We believe this is a vital addition to our programming by ensuring our activities are in line with state-wide best practices and are helpful to teachers.

In this guide you will find a list of nine activities that correlate directly to CA standards in SEL, PE, and NGS, as well as some fun activities for teachers to conduct back in their classrooms- to help bring the trail experience indoors.

Happy Trails!



Social Emotional Learning Activities

- **Challenge, Success, Appreciation**

At the end of each ride, we ask youth to share one challenge they faced, a success they had, and give an appreciation to another group member. This activity weaves a web of appreciation around the group, while we reflect on challenges we faced and successes we achieved.

- **Nature Moment**

During a break in the ride, kids are guided through two minutes of silent time where they are asked to focus on the sounds of the natural world around them. They can count on their hands the number of sounds they hear, then they share what they heard with the group. Ride Leaders speak about the importance of taking silent moments in nature to center yourself, breathe, and live in the now.

- **Mt. Champion Challenge Team Building**

At an appropriate and safe location, Ride Leaders facilitate a challenge to ride up a steep hill or over a small obstacle. Skills necessary to completing the challenge are practiced beforehand and adequate supervision is given. As youth attempt to conquer “Mt. Champion”, everyone cheers for the person riding up the hill.



Social Emotional Learning Follow-up Activity

10 Deep Breaths

This activity can be done before and/or after a ride. It provides a great opportunity to quiet the mind and relax the body. Classroom teachers can also use this activity as a connection to, and reinforcement for, those students who have participated in a Trips for Kids trail ride.

Deep breathing can help lessen stress and anxiety. By breathing slowly, you can better assess your body's responses to external stimulation. Practice taking 10 deep breaths; notice how long it takes and how your body feels before and after. This is a good activity to do when you become bothered by something or if you want to relax before or after physical activity. For example, following the ride, participants could be asked to focus their breathing on the most pleasurable aspect of their riding experience and relax into that moment.

These YouTube videos are good tools demonstrating how to do this activity and for timing your breathing. The first is the timer, the second is a guided explanation of how to do this activity.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=92xTPH70tLs>

https://youtu.be/YF_P1ZzYgjA



Physical Education Activities

- **Trail Ride**

Ride Leaders facilitate a fun, appropriately challenging mountain bike ride that lasts between 2 and 4 hours and is 4 to 10 miles long. The entire ride is a PE activity where youth get their heart and breathing rates up for an extended period of time while navigating terrain on a mountain bike in the great outdoors.

- **Safety Orientation**

Prior to riding, we perform a personal safety check, bike safety check and trail safety check as a group. This includes an introduction and fitting equipment, practicing braking and shifting and discussing trail etiquette.

- **Skills Practice**

- Cone Zone Practice

- Cones are set up and youth ride in an oval as Ride Leaders offer coaching in braking, shifting and balance.

- Riding over obstacles and challenges

- Ride Leaders teach youth the "ready" position and how to ride safely over small roots and rocks and up and down hills.



Physical Education Follow-up Activities

By developing proficiency at mountain biking, Trips for Kids participants will successfully enhance their movement skills, increase muscular strength, and develop cardio endurance. Our goal is that this experience will lead to choices that result in the development of a healthy and active lifestyle. To ensure that the spark for physical outdoor activity remains kindled after completing a Trail Ride, here are a few activities to stoke the flame.

- Join us on another Trail Ride - Did you know we offer Adventure Bike Clubs, where students ride with us on a recurring weekly, monthly or seasonal basis? The best way to keep their interest in biking alive is to get them out riding again. We'd love to see you more than once!
- Sign up for our Earn-A-Bike (EAB) program - Once students have completed a Trail Ride, they are eligible to enroll in our virtual EAB class where they will earn a bike of their own to continue their new-found passion.
- Encourage students to go back to the park where we rode, or find one close to home. Open spaces belong to them, and they can go back with their family and friends anytime they'd like.
- Talk to your school to make PE a valued part of their education, if not already. When possible, get your students outside and active.
- Motivate them to participate in a school sport. Many middle and high schools even have mountain bike teams or clubs they could join.
- Hold a discussion or have them journal about their experience on the trail. Topics could include:
 - Describing the effects of activity and inactivity on mind and body.
 - e.g., healthy physical self-image, ability to reduce stress, strong mental function, and emotional health.
 - Examples of healthy lifestyle choices and physical activities they would like to pursue.
 - How physical activity can lead to the development of personal/social character traits like sportsmanship, leadership, compassion, confidence, fairness, honesty, perseverance, respect, responsibility, and self-discipline.



Next Generation Science Activities

- **I notice, I wonder, It reminds me of**

Youth are asked to find a small natural object of interest and return to the group. Ride Leaders then ask students to observe the object in greater detail, closer than they've ever looked at anything before. Students are asked to tell the group what they notice about the object, one by one in a circle. They then share something that they wonder about the object, one by one. Finally they share what the object reminds them of. The Ride Leader wraps up activity by asking them to notice things through new eyes for the rest of the trip in greater detail than they have before. This leads to a fruitful discussion about nature and observation.

- **Using our Nature Senses**

During a break in the ride, students are asked to develop and use their “nature senses” to observe the natural world around them. Students are guided through each sense - they use ‘deer ears’ to hear more than they thought possible, focus on the smell of the forest, bay or ocean, touch the ground and describe the texture, look at the landscape noticing only the movement or color. It's a different way to be mindful and use our senses to engage and observe the natural world.

- **Ranger/Naturalist Led Interpretation**

At least once a month and as part of every Adventure Bike Club program, we will be joined by a professional park ranger or naturalist to provide discussion and interpretation of natural and historical points of interest including: ocean & bay ecology, flora and fauna, and first nations history.



Next Generation Science Follow-up Activity

Observational Journaling

Nature observation is the practice of using our basic human senses to watch, listen, learn and appreciate our local environment while observing patterns in the life of plants, birds, trees and animals.

In many cases the only reason we don't notice things in nature is because we're moving too fast. One of the best ways to instantly magnify your observational capacity is simply to sit down somewhere and focus your awareness to the world around you.

When you move quickly in your body and mind, then your awareness is diminished... but when we become still on the outside, then we become still on the inside, and we can take in the world through our senses. This short, animated video give a compelling overview of why our world needs to reconnect with nature as well as alerting us to certain things to which we should pay attention.

<https://youtu.be/NL6DWgHd8V0>

At some point along the ride (half-way point may be good) stop and allow riders to ask themselves the following:

What's happening right now?

What can I observe?

Why is that happening?

How does this all fit together?

These questions can be applied to things like the weather, clouds, soil, flowers, trees, birds, animals, etc. Responses can then be entered in a journal as text or drawings. If journaling is not an option, perhaps some group sharing of observations would be appropriate.



Evaluation Tools

Evaluation is the key to ensuring programs are reaching their proposed outcomes and goals. In 2022 we've developed three new tools to gain valuable feedback from our youth participants and teachers to ensure our programs are meeting their goals.

1. Discovery Ride Survey

The survey has 20 questions designed to gauge overall program effectiveness related to our alignment with California Department of Education Standards, this survey can be accessed virtually via a QR code from any smartphone.

2. Adventure Bike Club Survey

Designed to track changes in our participants over time we will be conducting a pre and post survey, this tool can also be accessed in the field from any smartphone.

3. Teacher Observation Tool

To gain the valuable feedback from teachers and agency leaders, we've developed a new virtual teacher/leader survey that is also able to be completed from any smartphone in the field.

We are currently piloting all of these new tools in our programs with a special case study underway with one of our agency partners from Oakland.