

Gift of Good Health -- Outdoors

The Department of the Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service are joining 40 other national partners in support of We Can!, a national education program of the National Institutes of Health to help children maintain a healthy weight and encourage people to get outside as part of a move for better health.

Increasing physical activity is a primary goal of We Can! (Ways to Enhance Children's Activity and Nutrition), a science-based program to help children ages 8-13. We Can! provides tips and resources for parents, caregivers and community organizations to help people make better food choices, increase physical activity and reduce screen time. The program is underway in more than 800 community sites in all 50 states and 10 countries.

“We’re very pleased to partner with NIH and help make the nation’s fisheries and wildlife refuges and national parks a welcome and exciting resource for youth, parents and caregivers to promote a love of nature and the great outdoors,” said Secretary of Interior Dirk Kempthorne. “With more than 181 million acres of public land in the National Wildlife Refuge System and National Park System, we can provide numerous opportunities for families. We need to get children and their families out of cyberspace and into open spaces.”

More than 12.5 million American children and adolescents are overweight and at increased risk for chronic conditions such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, type 2 diabetes and asthma.

Four of the National Institutes of Health have combined resources to create We Can!: the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases; the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development; and the National Cancer Institute. For more information, visit <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov> or call toll-free 866-35-WE CAN (866-359-3226).