Nature and Childhood: From Research and Activism to Policies for Global Change

Join in online!

If you're interested in writing either an op-ed style article for our website or the session report, or a personal reflection blog post while you're here this week, please let the Salzburg Global Communications Team know or email your submission directly to Oscar Tollast: otollast@salzburgglobal.org

If you intend to write for your own organization either while you're here or after the session, please make sure to observe the Chatham House Rule (information on which is in your Welcome Pack).

We'll be updating our website with summaries from the panels, features and interviews with our Fellows, all of which you can find on the session page: www.SalzburgGlobal.org/go/608

You can also join in the conversation on Twitter with the hashtag #SGSparks and see all your fellow Fellows and their organizations on Twitter via the list www.twitter.com/salzburgglobal/lists/SGS-608

We're updating our Facebook page www.facebook.com/SalzburgGlobal and our Flickr stream www.flickr.com/SalzburgGlobal with photos from the session during this week and also after the session.

We will also be posting photos to Instagram www.instagram.com/SalzburgGlobal.

From @neil_play: Missing @Blue_Coat_Play @OPALOutdoorplay at Eastbourne but not too much! I'm at @SalzburgGlobal with @CathPrisk @OutdoorClassDay and people from all over the world.

Designing Policies for Change

Change-makers from different sectors and regions have convened at Salzburg Global Seminar to help more children around the world grow up with nature and outdoor play.

Participants of *Nature and Childhood: From Research and Activism to Policies for Global Change* (March 6 to 10, 2018) are taking part in an interactive program featuring presentations, cross-sector panel discussions, curated conversations, and small group work which will lead to the creation of a Salzburg Statement.

This document, to be collectively drafted by the Salzburg Global Fellows of the session, will contain a list of recommendations to help governments, businesses, and community stakeholders put words into action and put forward policies that promote nature access for urban children.

What do good policies look like, however? This was the first question participants were asked to consider after introducing themselves to one another at Schloss Leopoldskron, Salzburg. To help broaden their thinking, three panelists spoke from their experience.

Speakers included Andrew Moore, director, Youth & Young Adult Connections, at the National League of Cities; Alexander Plum, director, Development and Innovation, at the Global Health Initiative; and Trinnawat Suwanprik, a local coordinator in Chiang Mai, Thailand, for achieving low carbon growth in cities through sustainable urban system management.

Moore suggested cities had the opportunity to connect children to nature equitably through policy infrastructure, programs, and experiences. One way of connecting people from disadvantaged communities to nature is through the creation of green career pathways.

When discussing policy, Suwanprik reminded participants it was important to consider the bottom-up approach as well as the top-down model. The group heard the bottom-up approach was gaining popularity and that leadership, communities, and stakeholders can enact policy change together.

In 2012, the Welsh Government introduced the Play Sufficiency Duty, which requires local authorities to ensure children have sufficient play opportunities. One participant remarked that the word "sufficiency" was used because the concept is difficult to measure.

Linking to this, Plum remarked on the lack of sufficiency in the United States when it came to collecting data surrounding the social determinants of health, suggesting there wasn't a centralized way to talk about these issues.

Discussions will continue over the next four days, exploring the role of local governments, grassroots movements, urban planning and design, and policymakers. A "webinar" will be publicly broadcast on Facebook Live on Thursday, March 8 on "Policies that Promote Equitable Nature Access for All."

#FacesofLeadership

"I feel like this knowledge and experience as a child back in my country, but also the platform that I've gained, the skills and the expertise that I've gained give me a good combination to be able to believe that I can do something. But also I think it branches from seeing other young people take on the leadership role, seeing other young people being able to make so many changes in so many sectors in my country and realizing that as young people, we are the ones that can change our fates and as young people we are the ones who need to create a space for us to discuss issues that affect us. We are the ones that need to influence the decisions that have been made about our future because if we do not do that then nobody else will."

Heather Maseko
Response Coordinator, Peace Corps, Malawi

HOT TOPIC: "What do good policies surrounding children, play and nature in urban contexts look like?"

"When working with a school, one of the first things we ask that school to do is to create their own policy for play. Play is one fifth of the school day – it's a major part – there's no reason why that part of the school day shouldn't be valued and resourced as much as the rest of the curriculum. I think that needs to go out beyond the school now, I think society at the town level, at the village level, at the city level, or wherever, needs to think about their policy, as a community. I think that having a policy for nature... must start with play, with the very young. With that love of nature that's developed through play, you've then got enough for life."

Neil Coleman
Mentor OPAL Midlands, Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL), UK

"I think one thing that's critical for strong policies on this topic is that the policies have to have a focus on equity. This is a particular topic that we see a lot of variation and impact... [there's] not always a clear understanding or use of data to determine impact. In the United States, there is historically a lot of disparity around access to nature, feeling welcome in nature in the way that people's neighborhoods are designed, the amenities they have access to, the cultural baggage that is either enjoyed or prevents people from being in nature, valuing nature. And so, policies that look specifically at impacts on people with different income levels, different ethnic and racial backgrounds, different geographic communities, holistically [are] really important."

Priya Cook
Principal Associate, Connecting Children to Nature, National League of Cities, USA

"I think music [and] the entertainment industry in an urban environment can really, really play a vital role... most of our kids are in urban places, [and] spend most of their time watching television, listening to the radio and you know, with technology these days, there are gadgets everywhere. So the best way to communicate is through the entertainment industry. [The kids can] maybe compose songs [or] a message and you [have to] make sure that you use them, the kids, to pass it on...The more you encourage it, they are encouraged too so they just keep doing it [and] keep doing it. At the end of the day, you [can] find someone actually earning a living through talent and they become successful."

Charlotte Kalanzi
Environmental Education Officer, C&L Fumigation and Cleaning Co. Ltd., Uganda

"Good policies are policies that preserve the nature we already have in cities and make nature in cities accessible to children in a different way than right now. Right now, children have access to use nature on the terms dictated by the city, so there's a lawn or there's a tree. But we need trees for climbing and we need big holes for digging and we need lawns that can be completely uprooted and changed so that children actually can have the experience of having an influence on their natural environment."

Karen MacLean
Co-Founder, The Green Free School (Den Grønne Friskole), Denmark

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