



Project One Health

Less Screen + More Green = Children Flourishing

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Project One Health JAX Launches with \$6 Million Investment Over Three Years in Jacksonville

KEY POINTS:

- *Four Jacksonville nonprofits have been awarded grants to develop neighborhood initiatives that reduce screen time and create nature-based programs for youth.*
- *Each organization will launch initiatives this fall in one of four neighborhoods: Brentwood, Eastside, New Town and Springfield.*
- *These initiatives are designed to activate existing green spaces in the Urban Core, including the Emerald Trail and underutilized city parks.*

JACKSONVILLE, FL – Children and teens in the U.S. spend 90% of their time indoors and on screens, averaging 7 hours of screen time a day and only 10 minutes outside. Studies show this is contributing to a physical and mental health crisis among today's youth.

Winston Family Foundation is working to reverse this trend with the launch of [Project One Health JAX](#), a new initiative that will invest \$6 million over three years in Jacksonville to improve youth well-being by reducing screen time and connecting kids to the [proven therapeutic benefits of nature](#).

“The ‘Indoor Childhood’ is taking a toll on the physical, emotional, and developmental health of today's youth, and we see this as an urgent public health crisis,” said Sylia Obagi, CEO of the Winston Family Foundation who is spearheading Project One Health JAX. “Research shows children who regularly spend time in nature have stronger social skills, improved focus, higher levels of self-confidence and greater physical health. By helping kids get off their devices and reconnect with the natural world right outside their doors, we create a positive cycle of change that improves the health of humans, wildlife and the environment.”

To support this work, Project One Health JAX has awarded a total of \$2.75 million in implementation grants to four Jacksonville nonprofits: **Groundwork Jacksonville, LIFT JAX, LISC Jacksonville and the Partnership for Child Health**. These organizations will be working in the neighborhoods of Brentwood, Eastside, New Town and Springfield to actively promote healthy screen habits, develop nature-based programs for children and teens, improve access to community gardens, activate green spaces such as the Emerald Trail, and facilitate more face-to-face connection among families and neighbors.

The initiatives launching this fall include:

- **Groundwork Jacksonville** (Brentwood) – Through dynamic weekly youth nature clubs and strong partnerships with local schools, the Brentwood model is sparking a nature-powered movement. Groundwork is transforming the northern stretch of the Emerald Trail S-Line into a thriving nature hub – complete with a lush micro forest, an imaginative play area, and an inspiring outdoor classroom. They are also reimagining schoolyards and equipping educators with the tools and training to get kids outdoors and bring nature into every lesson.
- **LIFT JAX** (Eastside) – The Eastside model builds on the collective impact approach already happening within the neighborhood to weave urban farming, environmental stewardship, and youth leadership into a dynamic vision for community wellness. With a network of partners, the initiative will activate parks, schools, and gardens with youth-led urban farming, monthly eco-excursions, and creative wayfinding to boost park access.
- **LISC Jacksonville** (New Town) – In New Town, LISC will partner with youth-serving organizations to provide nature-based after-school programming at S.P. Livingston Elementary and introduce families and children to the benefits of nature through park activities. Weekly activities will include school gardening, sensory-based nature exploration and grounding exercises that help youth develop healthy habits and advocate for time outdoors.
- **Partnership for Child Health** (Springfield) – The Springfield model combines screen-free wellness campaigns, NatureRx programs, and youth ecological stewardship activities to create engaging, nature-based opportunities for youth and families. Highlights include a badge-based Youth Ecological Stewardship Program, monthly wellness and cultural events, along with a teen Trail Stewardship Program that activates the Emerald Trail.

The implementation grants follow an investment of more than \$1 million in planning grants and expert support to develop the neighborhood-based initiatives and engage the community in the visioning process. Additional grants are in development to benefit the four target neighborhoods and drive community-level change.

“I’m thrilled to see these partners come together to advance a new way of thinking about youth well-being here in Jacksonville,” said Dr. Saralyn Grass, CEO of Kids Hope Alliance, who serves as Co-Chair of the Project One Health Regional Advisory Council. “Less screen and more green is a simple commitment we can all make to improve every area of our health. I’m proud to be part of this movement to build healthier families and a greener Jacksonville.”

Advisory Council Co-Chair Dawn Lockhart, CEO of the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida, added: “Project One Health JAX has developed an innovative and collaborative model that allows for neighborhood autonomy supported by an advisory council that is positioned to align community assets. This approach leverages important resources for greater impact.”

To support and scale the important work at the neighborhood level, the Advisory Council convenes regional leaders to advocate for policy and systems change across every sector that impacts youth. The Council members are:

- Saralyn Grass, Ed.D., *Co-Chair*, CEO of Kids Hope Alliance
- Dawn Lockhart, *Co-Chair*, CEO of the Nonprofit Center of Northeast Florida
- Heather Albritton, Ph.D., Director of Health Education & Physical Education at Duval County Public Schools
- Anne Coglianese, Chief Resilience Officer for the City of Jacksonville
- Rachael Tutwiler Fortune, President of the Jacksonville Public Education Fund
- Erin Largo Wight, Ph.D., Director of the Institute of Environmental Research & Education at the University of North Florida
- Charles Moreland, Ed.D., Chief Customer Experience Officer at JEA
- Daryl Joseph, Director of Parks, Recreation & Community Services for the City of Jacksonville
- Mike Ramirez, Chief of Staff at Duval County Public Schools
- Garland Scott, Ed.D., GVI Outreach and Support Manager at the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office
- Lynn Sherman, MHA, CCHL, Executive Director of Health Programs in the Office of Mayor Donna Deegan, City of Jacksonville
- Kerri Stewart, Chief Strategy Officer at Miller Electric
- Stephanie Toelle, MS, CFLE, County Extension Director for UF/IFAS Extension Duval County
- Susan B. Towler, Vice President at Florida Blue Foundation
- A. Quinton White, Jr., Ph.D., Founding Executive Director of the Marine Science Research Institute and Professor Emeritus at Jacksonville University
- Dennis Whittle, President and CEO at the Jacksonville Civic Council

An Innovative National Partnership

A critical component of the work in Jacksonville is an innovative partnership with Children & Nature Network, which provides expert guidance, educational resources, and strategic support.

“Early in our research, we discovered the work of Richard Louv, author of *Last Child in the Woods* and founder of Children & Nature Network,” Obagi said. “Through the *Nature Everywhere Communities* initiative, Children & Nature Network created a movement to improve access to nature everywhere children live, learn and play, and their work now spans 80 U.S. cities. We realized they were the right national partner for this work in Jacksonville.”

“Nature is one of the most powerful tools we have to support children’s growth, learning, and resilience,” said Sarah Milligan-Toffler, President & CEO of the Children & Nature Network. “We have seen this work create lasting and positive change for children, families and communities across the U.S. – and we welcome Jacksonville’s leadership and engagement in this crucial work.”

About Project One Health JAX

Project One Health JAX is a strategic initiative dedicated to improving the well-being of children and adolescents by connecting them to the therapeutic benefits of nature. Founded by the Winston Family Foundation and guided by the globally-recognized [One Health framework](#), Project One Health JAX works with national experts and local partners to support youth-focused programs that reduce screen time, provide meaningful outdoor experiences, facilitate greater face-to-face social connection, and empower young people to become champions for environmental health.

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