

# Kids in Parks



**Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation**  
**Carolyn Ward , Ph.D. President**  
**Jason Urroz, Project Director**



**What matters to you?**

# Your Home?







# Your Health?







# Your Heritage?





# Kids in Parks: Linking home, health and heritage

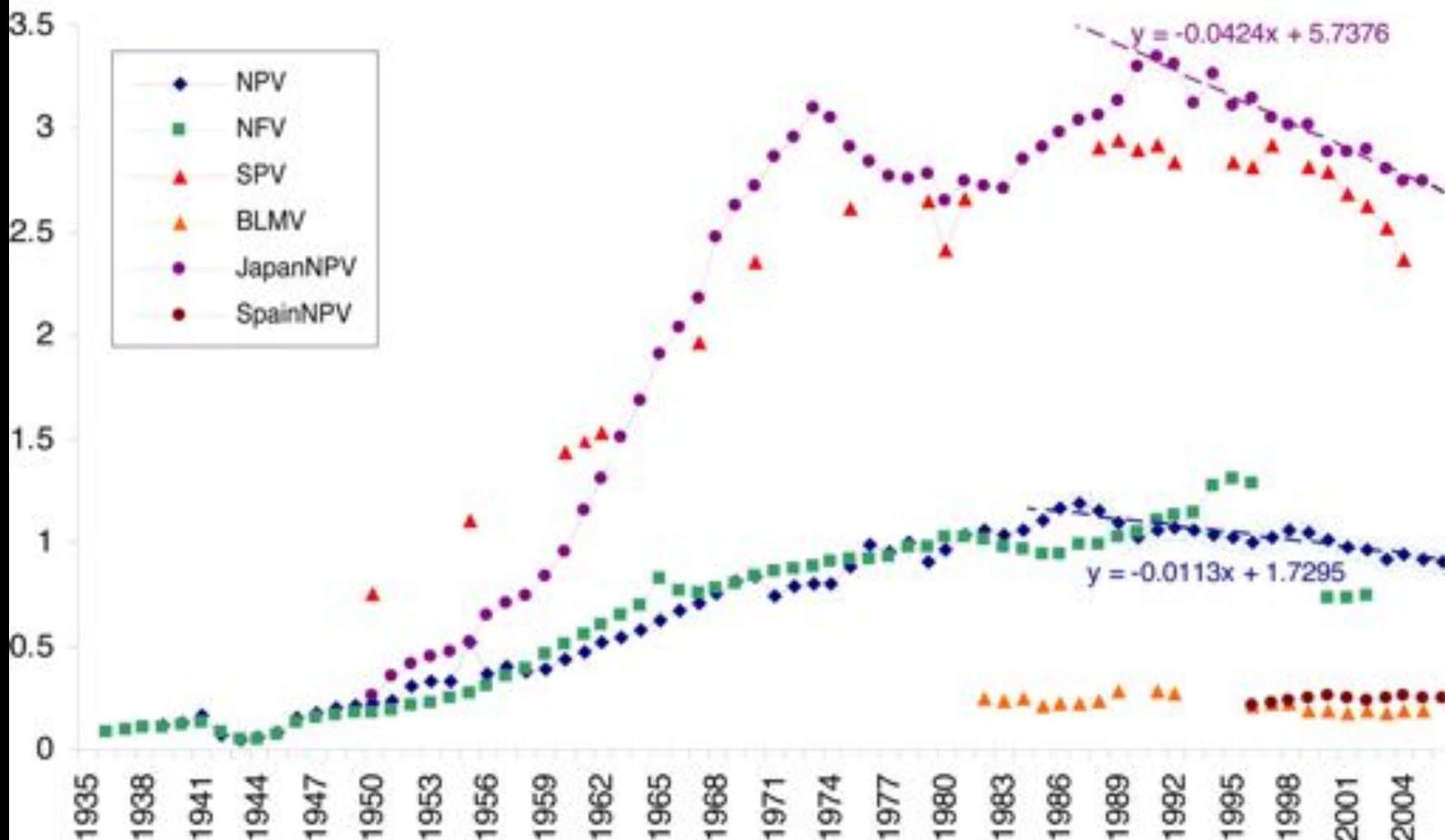


**The Problem?**

**The trails are empty...**



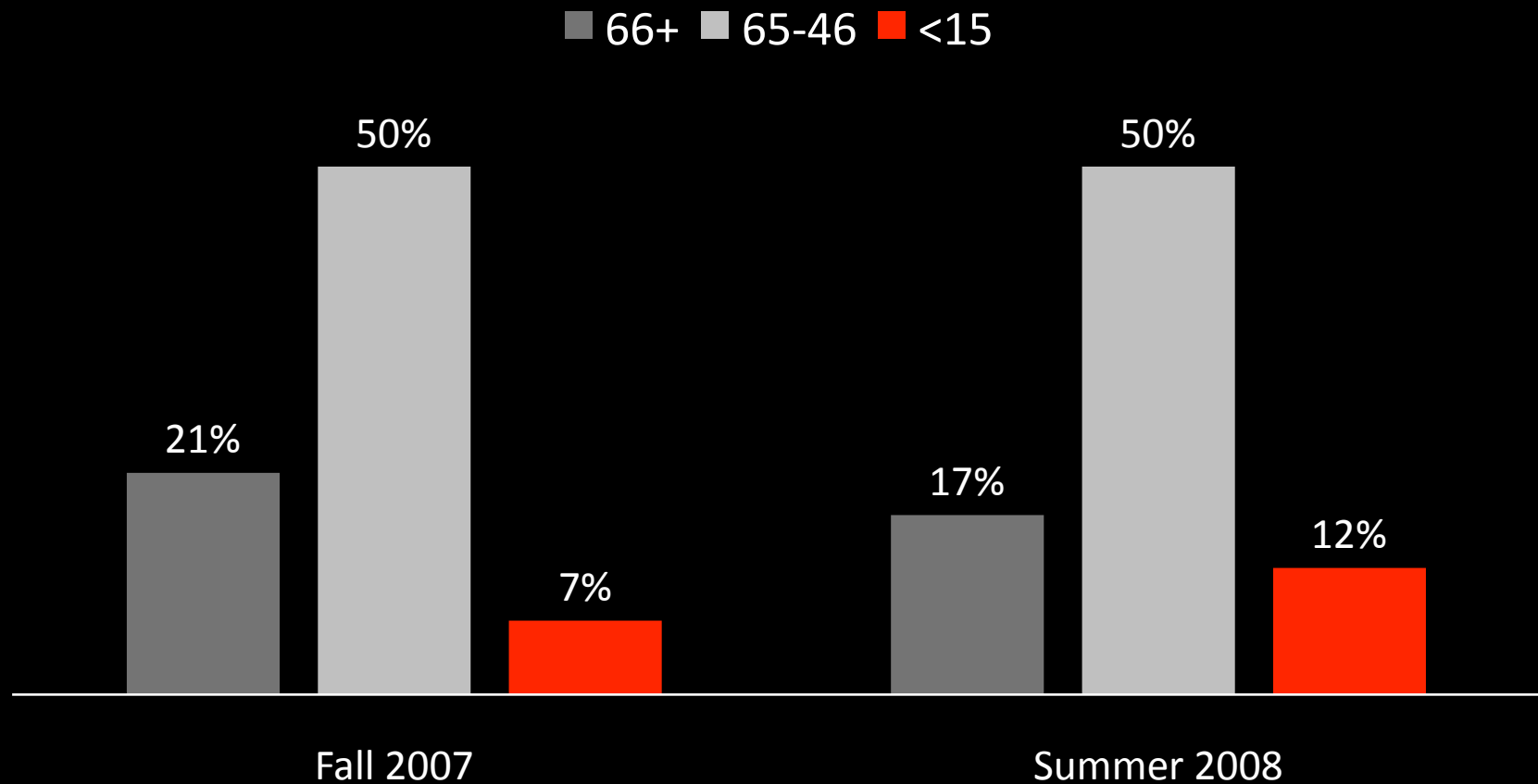
## World per capita Public Land Visitation



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PNAS

# Age of visitors to the Parkway



*Only 7-12% of visitors to the Parkway are under 15 years old*

**Kids are inside...**





**Plugged in for 7.5 hours a day!**



# Childhood Obesity is Rising



**The Solution...**

# Get Kids in Parks



# Benefits include:



# Physical





# Emotional







# Cognitive



# Future Stewards



◆ DESTINATION CENTER 10 ML  
◆ FOLK ART CENTER 31 ML  
◆ LOOP PAST DESTINATION CENTER

# Park Protection





# And then there is Reality...

- \* staff
- \* resources
- \* time
- \* money
- \* visitor preference
- \* expectation

# Will Another Approach Work?



Introducing the Kids in Parks TRACK Trails Program

# Grounded in Reality...

- Only 4-8% of visitors reported attending ranger-led programs
- 73-74% reported using brochures
- 81-86% reported self-guided information as extremely or very important



# TRACK trails



Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Center



Chimney Rock State Park





Pisgah National Forest



# Crystal Springs Recreation Area





Let the adventure begin...





# Tracking Tree Treasures

**2** Now, travel down through ferns and fungi, when you see the building start looking for fox.

In this ravine are many types of trees, so let's discover about diversity.

Smooth, rough, and shaggy there's all kinds of bark, just like fingerprints. It helps tell species apart.



Same for the leaves there's all kinds of shapes, but needle, scale, and broad are the basic forms they take.

**3** Stay safe in the rule of the day stay close to an adult when you cross the Pathway.

After crossing the road a few hundred feet we will see the effects of an insect feast.

If you look closely you might spy what caused all of these pine trees to die.

The tiny holes are one of your clues, what type of insect do you think bored through?



First Bark Beetles is what they're called, but don't get mad at them, they're just doing their job.

By attacking overmatured and injured trees, bark beetles open up the forest's canopy.

Microclimate are created, and sunlight is let in, sometimes good things come from a bark beetle infestation.



**1** The trail will quickly come to a 'T'. Follow up to the right to find the first treasure tree. It's big and tall and on the right side, with its enormous crown reaching for the sky.

The leaves are green in spring and summer too, but turn yellow, orange, and red when fall is due.

Its leaves are shaped with pointed lobes all around, it's an Oak tree with treasures that fall to the ground.

## Trail Start

**4** Now, look for the evergreen as we walk along the sky. Trees are called evergreens if they're green all 365 days.

We're looking for an evergreen of a specific kind, it has groups of 5 needles identifying it as white pine.



**6** Cross through the tunnel and on your way back, think about your favorite tree you tracked.

**5** After crossing a bridge, we're almost back, but we still have one more tree treasure to track.

Twisted and curvy like a snake, what gave these tree trunks their funny shape?

As vines grow and reach for sunlight tree trunks become 'deformed' when they are gripped too tight.

Take a look around and try to see the effects vines have on growing trees.



These were America's first protected trees, because, tall and straight they grow indeed.

This made them perfect for making the masts of England's sailing ships of the past.



Designed and Illustrated by David Williams, Morgan & Lewis

## Other Treasures You Can Find



### Sight

Take a look around and survey the scene. Can you count all the shades of green?



### Touch

It feels really good to hug the trunk of a tree, but if there is a hairy vine, Watch Out! It could be Yewm try!

Thank you for joining KIP and me on our adventure to TRACK some trees.

We hope that you learned a lot, and that tree tracking is loads of fun.

More important than that we hope you'd like to visit us again for an adventurous hike.



### Smell

As you wait on the trail stop and take time to smell. Some things smell sweet and some do not! Good or bad, scents can teach you a lot!



### Sound

Even if you can't see them, there are animals all around. Close your eyes and count how many sounds abound.

## TRACK and KIP want you to become a Trail TRACKER



We want you to join the Trail TRACKER Team. It's fun, healthy and free. Best of all, you can earn prizes by walking TRACK Trails and TRACKing them on our website. For more information about the Trail TRACKER Team, other TRACK Trail adventures near you, or for general information about the Kids in Parks program, please visit our website at:

[www.kidsinparks.com](http://www.kidsinparks.com)

The TRACK Trail program is part of a larger Kids in Parks initiative sponsored by the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, Blue Ridge Parkway, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation. Working together with partners throughout the community, our mission is to increase physical activity of children and their families, to improve nutritional choices, and get them outdoors and along the Blue Ridge Parkway.

*The Blue Ridge Parkway*  
your home, for your health and your heritage.



Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina

Foundation



## Tracking Tree Treasures

We'll be your leaders for this adventurous trip.

I'm KIP

An hour or so we might be gone, since this trail is about one mile long.



There are a couple of hills, and some stairs, poison ivy and a road crossing so we must be aware.

Hi, I'm TRACK

Hopefully you are as excited as we, to hit the trail and track some trees.

Let's Go!

















# Brochures

**KIDS TRACK IN PARKS**

## Nature's Hide & Seek

Schhhhh!  
I'm hiding from TRACK.

We'll be your leaders for this adventurous trip. An hour or so we might be gone, as this trail is about one mile long.

There are a couple of hills, a few stairs, and a road crossing you must be aware of.

Be fully excited as we follow the trail through some trees.

Go!

I can't find KIP. He always hides so good. Can you help me? Oh, there he is. You're a good helper.

Now, let's find some other things hiding in nature. Finding things in nature is fun. But, here at the Blue Ridge Parkway and in our National Parks we are not allowed to keep the things we find. All things in nature have a special place. Make sure you leave them here, so others can find them too.

**Hi, I'm TRACK**

**I'm KIP**

**KIDS TRACK IN PARKS**

## Nature's Relationships: Everything's connected

"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe."  
-John Muir

Discover how everything in nature is connected.

This brochure will lead you on a 1.2 mile loop. It will not guide you to specific locations, but tells a story to help you discover nature's relationships all along the trail.

**KIDS TRACK IN PARKS**

## FERNS

### Fall Foliage: Nature's Painted Landscape

Every fall, millions of people flock to the Blue Ridge Parkway to see the beautiful colors of fall's foliage. nature's painted landscape. The Blue Ridge Parkway has 469 miles of unspoiled road, approximately 350 miles of hiking trails, over 200 overlooks and countless vistas. This scenic, craggy road, with its numerous species of deciduous trees, makes the Blue Ridge Parkway one of the best places in the world to witness fall colors.

This brochure will guide you, whether by car or by foot, through the natural wonders that await on the Blue Ridge Mountains and in an unforgettable landscape.



# TRACK Packs

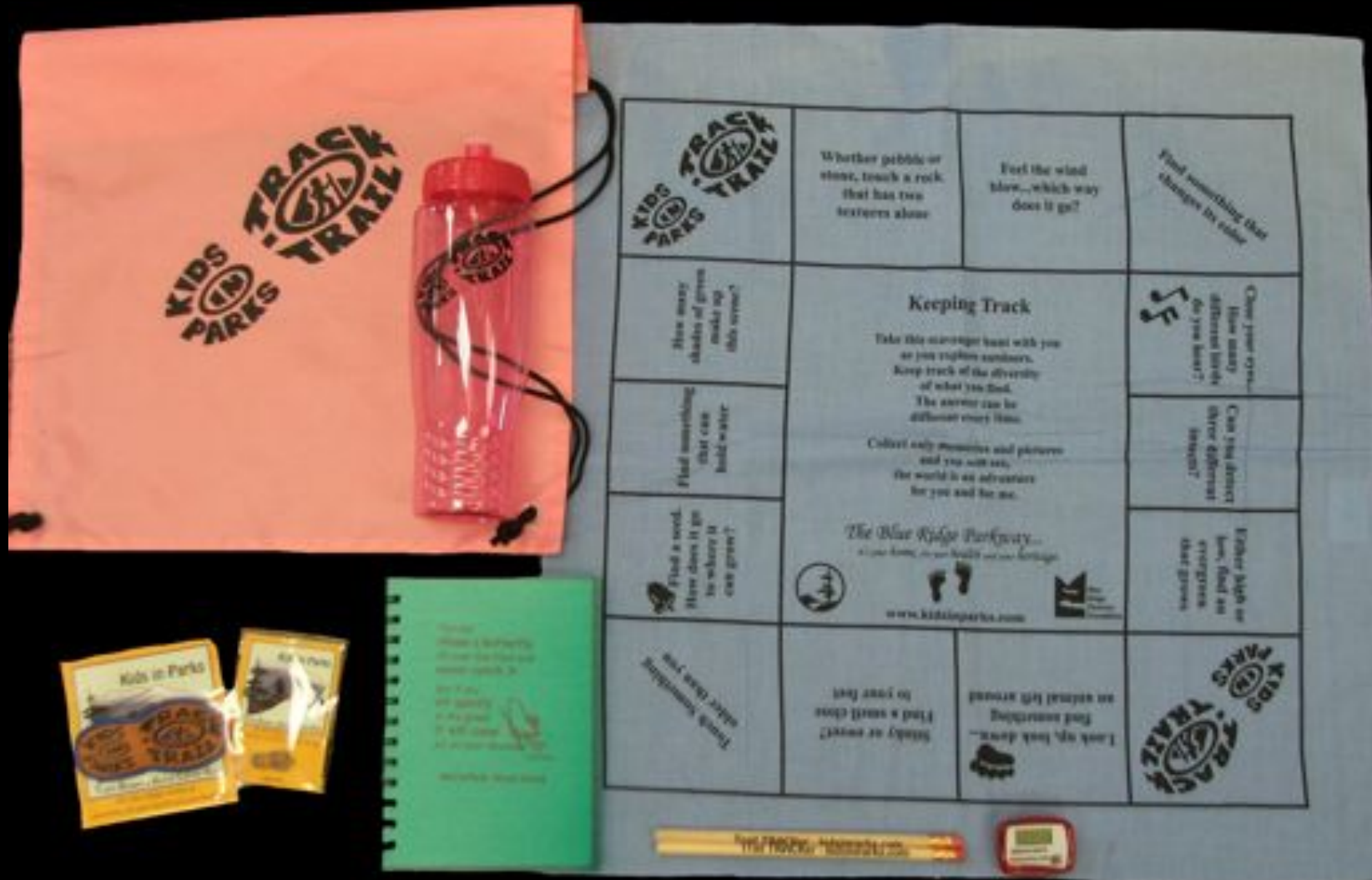




# Webpage



# Incentives



# Partners

*The Blue Ridge Parkway...  
your home, for your health and your heritage.*



**BlueCross BlueShield  
of North Carolina** | **Foundation**

An independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation

Appalachian  
STATE UNIVERSITY

beactive



partnership



**eliminating racism**  
**empowering women**  
ywca

Wythe-Bland Community  
Foundation  
Improving life in Wythe &  
Bland Counties



**Does it work?**



Only 7-12% of visitors bring children





34% of our users had never been to  
the Parkway before







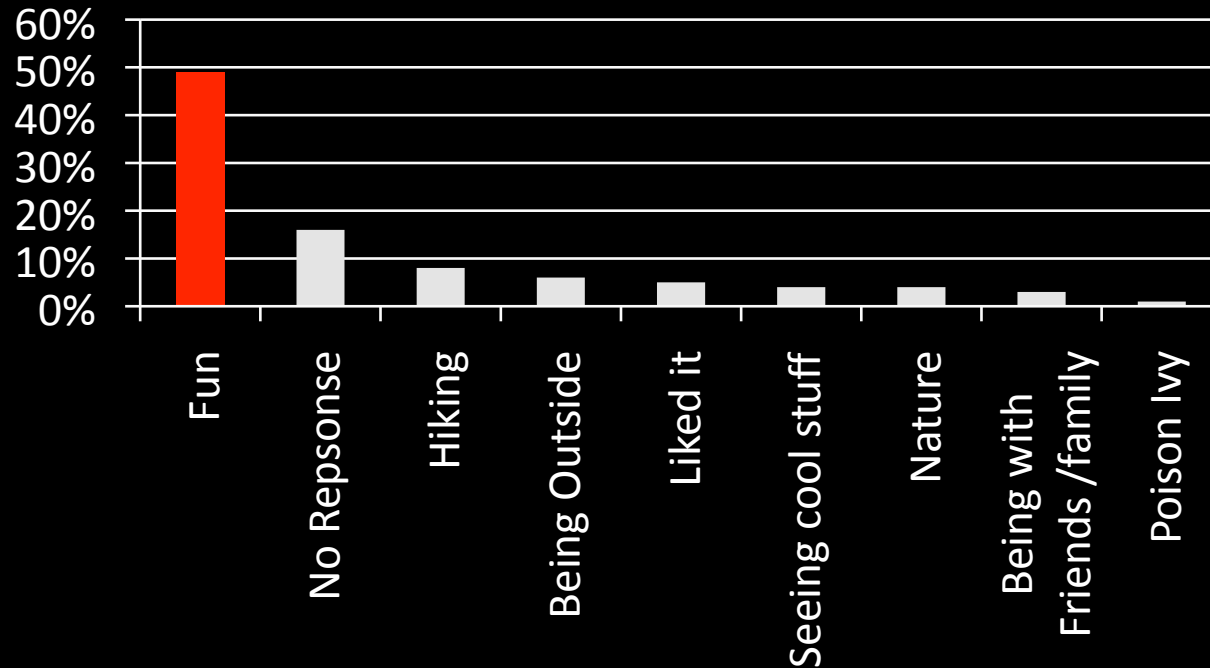
# Web-Registered Trail TRACKers

183 Registered Trail TRACKers  
(38% have returned more than once)



# Return Again?-Yes 99%

## Why or why not?



“Because it’s good for my family.” – Alaina (8 yrs old)

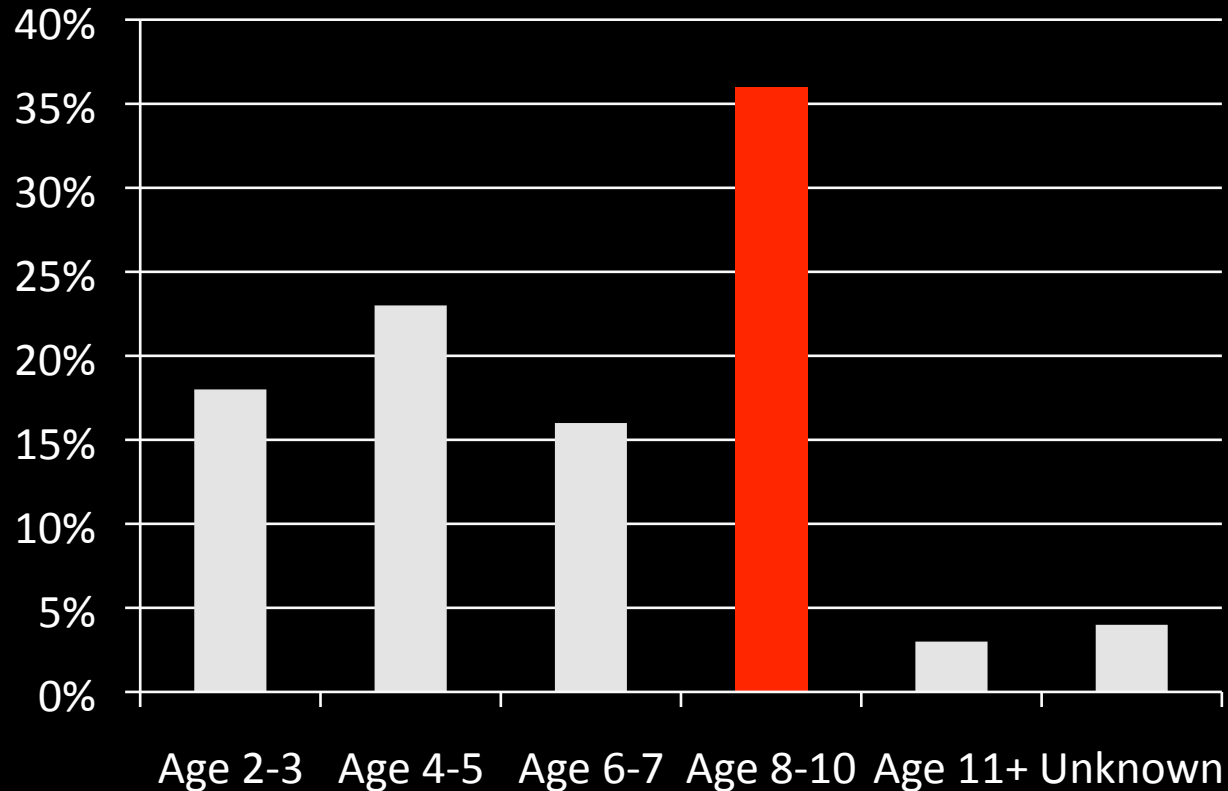


"Mom, this is cool."



“The ‘secret’ underground.”

# Age of registered participants



**Average Age: 9.5 yrs old**



# Brochures













# Next Steps for 2010...



-6 new trails slated to open in 2010

(Nutritional TRACK Trail and Disc Golf Nature TRACK Trail)

-targeted outreach and marketing

-enroll 700 active participants

-create replicable template

-produce assessment report

-incorporate policy level

changes

with concessionaires

# Three New Trails...



Will target older kids at three local High Schools

**A Disc Golf...**



**... Nature Trail**

# Disc Golf...



**...is a physical activity.**



# Disc Golf...



**...is a hike with a Frisbee.**

# Disc Golf...



Ashe County Park DGC – Jefferson NC



Sugaree DGC – Linville NC



...is along the Parkway.

# An Opportunity to get Teens Outside



**The 1<sup>st</sup> ever Nature Trail Disc Golf Course**

# Nutritional TRACK Trail

- In partnership with Food Lion
- Educate and excite kids about eating healthy
- Create four in-store adventures
- Pilot in Fairview, NC

**Think about it...**



# Healthy Kids...



**Healthy  
Parks...**



# TRACK Trails: Helping families unplug one adventure at a time





**For More Information Visit:**

**[www.kidsinparks.com](http://www.kidsinparks.com)**