



## Media Advisory

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### **This Columbus Day, Leave the Car Keys at Home: Take Part in the Make Tracks! Family Trail Weekend™**

*The event helps families connect with each other,  
discover nearby trails, and enjoy a "staycation."*

The National Wildlife Federation® hopes families will **trade some screen time for green time this Columbus Day weekend** -- by walking, biking, hiking or strolling on the trails and paths right outside their front door. Be an explorer -- like Columbus!

NWF has created a program that encourages families to discover and reconnect with nature with the first annual **Make Tracks! Family Trail Weekend™, October 11-13, Columbus Day Weekend**.

NWF has taken the leg-work out of preparing for this fun family outing. A new web site, **maketracks.org**, provides a list of supplies, tips for family-friendly activities, and a link to NatureFind, a terrific database to locate the best nearby trails, walking paths and parks, just by entering your zip code. With today's high gas prices discovering nature nearby has even more benefits.

**Haven't hiked much, or ever?** No problem, you don't need to be an expert or in top physical condition to enjoy the outdoors. **Have small children? Grab the stroller.** Your outing can be as long or as short as you want. Be part of a growing movement in the U.S. to rediscover the outdoors – and realize the benefits of stepping away from the computer or TV or video game and breathing some fresh air while experiencing the wonders of nature.

Make Tracks! is part of National Wildlife Federation's **Green Hour® campaign** which urges parents to give their kids a daily dose of nature – unstructured time for children to leave homework, piano lessons and soccer practice behind to play outside and discover the freedom it provides. This time can improve both physical and mental health for adults and kids alike. The alarming spike in childhood obesity has revealed the true cost of a "plugged-in" lifestyle.

"Unplugging play and family time is critical to the health and wellbeing of today's children," says Beth Almeras, Senior Manager of Family Programs for the National Wildlife Federation. "Kids today spend half as much time outdoors as children did just 20 years ago."

Put your best foot forward this Columbus Day and visit **maketracks.org**. Register your family and join the thousands of parents who have become members of the Green Hour movement. More information and a weekly guide to outdoor fun can be found on **greenhour.org**.