Hiking with Kids in the Canyon Lakes District
Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest

PREPARED BY
Poudre Wilderness Volunteers
Kids in Nature Committee
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www.pwv.org

explore!

SCAVENGER HUNT
How many can you find?
Remember! Leave what you find! We want to LEAVE NO TRACE

___ A feather or a bone
___ 3 different kinds of seeds
___ A leaf which has 2 or more colors in it
___ Something round
___ Something fuzzy or soft
___ A piece of litter
___ Something perfectly straight
___ A chewed leaf (not by you!)
___ A cone from a tree
___ A piece of fallen bark
___ A colorful rock
___ Something burnt
___ A dried flower or bud
___ Something totally white
___ Something that you like or find interesting

Remember!
It’s the journey and not necessarily the destination that counts!

For detailed trail descriptions, trail closures, trail conditions and driving directions, see www.pwv.org and check out the Trails tab.

For more information specifically for kids, including this brochure and recommended trails, also see the Hiking with Kids link information on the Trails tab (Find a Trail/Trails by Interest).

Forest maps are also available on line at: https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/arp and are sold at local outdoor stores.

For current conditions and other information:
USDA Forest Service, Canyon Lakes Ranger District
Phone: 970-295-6600

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TRAILS
Northern Colorado has an abundance of scenery and trails to enjoy! Elevations in the Canyon Lakes Ranger District vary from 5,000 to 13,000 feet. You may wish to consider hiking portions of trails.

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Hiking with children is an enjoyable experience for everyone. By taking a few precautions and doing some trip planning in advance, everyone will be better prepared. Here are some tips to consider.

**FUN**

Start with short walks in city parks, open spaces or natural areas near home to help your child learn trail walking. Teach your child to stay with you while hiking and exploring the sights, sounds, smells and textures of nature.

Plan and prepare for the hike. This includes finding out what regulations apply to the area you will be visiting. Go to www.pwv.org and pull up the Trail Description on the Trails tab (Find a Trail on the drop-down menu). When you get to the trailhead, read all the signs with your children so that everyone is informed. Also, let a responsible person know where you are going and when you plan to return.

Carry the 10 Essentials in your backpack: a map and compass, PLENTY of water for all of you, plenty of high-energy food, matches, knife, first-aid kit, trash bag, whistle for each person. Wear appropriate clothing and be prepared for changes in the weather:

— Dress in layers
— Sturdy walking shoes and socks
— A long-sleeved jacket or sweatshirt
— A hat for the sun
— Gloves
— Rain gear (raincoat or poncho)
— Sunglasses
— Sunscreen and bug repellent

Explain to your child low-impact techniques: Leave what you find. He/she can learn to protect the forest for future hikers. Carry a camera your child can use to bring home memories. Also, carry all of your trash out—including food scraps. Abide by LEAVE NO TRACE principles. See: www.LNT.org.

**SAFETY**

Explain the “don’t touch” hazards—like poison ivy and cactus—before you start the trip and provide reminders while on the hike as needed. Many plants and berries are inedible or poisonous. Don’t let your child get ahead of you! (Curiosity killed the cat.)

Teach your child what to do if he/she becomes separated from you: Stay put. Blow the whistle (3 short blasts) to attract attention.

Always carry your own water. NEVER drink stream or lake water without purification! Giardia is only one of the parasites it may contain.

Respect animals from a distance. Never approach even smaller animals, which can carry diseases.

Stay together, keeping your child in sight at all times. If there’s a warning posted at the trailhead regarding rattlesnakes, children should not be allowed off the hiking path and an adult should lead.

Cell phones usually don’t work in our remote areas.