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Welcome Outside Launches Outdoor Education for the New Era *Outdoor Education meets Restorative Practices for Social-Emotional Learning*

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 1, 2020 -- Welcome Outside is launching a new outdoor education program for social-emotional learning. Welcome Outside provides underserved youth and adults opportunities to participate in nature-based community-building and restorative justice circles in San Francisco, the only city where 100% of residents are within 10 minutes of a park.¹

Social-emotional learning opportunities will provide youth and adult groups with ways to develop social-emotional assets through the shared experience of discussing emotionally significant topics utilizing trauma-informed practices. With behavioral and mental health concerns on the rise, and the increase in use of public parks,² Welcome Outside seeks to help meet a growing need in the city:

- Social, Emotional & Behavioral Health is 1 of 5 of the identified health needs for impoverished communities experiencing racial health inequities in San Francisco (2019).³
- San Francisco's Dept. of Children, Youth & Their Families (DCYF) Community Needs Assessment Cycle for 2019-21 aims to address Community Healing.⁴
- "Because only 50% of individuals with behavioral health concerns actually enter any form of treatment, we must develop new strategies to reach people wherever they are — at work, in school, and in the community."⁵
- 70.63% of voters in San Francisco approved \$487.5 million in funding for Prop A, the *2020 Health and Recovery Bond* that includes approximately \$239 million for improvements to parks and open spaces among its priorities.⁶
- "Parks support good mental and physical health, and they can help park users deal with trauma."⁷

First cohorts will begin January, 2021.

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¹ https://data.sfgov.org/browse?Department-Metrics_Publishing-Department=Recreation%20and%20Parks

² streetlightdata.com/park-management-data-captures-increased-visits-more-resources/

³ San Francisco Health Improvement Partnership's (SFHIP) *2019 San Francisco Community Health Needs Assessment*, https://www.sfdph.org/dph/hc/HCAgen/2019/May%207/CHNA_2019_Report_041819_Stage%204.pdf

⁴ <http://www.sfhip.org/initiatives/current-efforts/>

⁵ The Critical Need for a Population Health Approach: Addressing the Nation's Behavioral Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond, https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2020/20_0261.htm#

⁶ <https://sfrecpark.org/1370/Better-Parks-for-the-Future> and https://sfelections.sfgov.org/sites/default/files/Documents/candidates/2020Nov/20200724_GeneralObligationBond_HealthAndRecovery_LT.pdf

⁷ <https://sfgov.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8661240&GUID=695A83C0-83C9-4A84-996E-B8381F39EC67>