

Time to give kids more freedom to explore

By Katie Arnold, Outside

Even if you're not ready to yank your kid out of fourth grade to let them run loose in the woods, there are plenty of ways to give your kids more freedom to learn on their own while still sending them to school.

Start at home by encouraging them to follow their passions and explore subjects that interest them.

"It doesn't matter where or when you do it. The main thing is to show kids that they can teach themselves," says Leo Babauta, 41, father of four unschooled children ages 8 to 17 and founder of the blog *Unschoolery*. "Learning is everywhere: parks, museums, nature trails, online, libraries, even video games, like Mind Craft, which are a great way for kids to control what they're learning."

Outside the home, numerous alternative and nature-based schools and programs around the country incorporate the essential tenets of unschooling – curiosity, intellectual independence and child-directed learning – into their curricula. Others have no formal curricula at all.

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