



Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of the Children & Nature Task Force of the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (MDAAP), I would like to encourage your support of the “Docs in the Park” program, a collaborative project of the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks and the Chesapeake Center for Youth Development.

In 2011, our MDAAP Children & Nature Task Force envisioned a program that would promote outdoor activity and reconnect kids with nature. Now in its fifth year, the Baltimore chapter of Docs in the Park provides opportunities for families to engage in and learn more about park programs, such as biking, hiking, fishing, paddling, stewardship, and gardening. Ultimately, Docs in the Park connects physicians with families in the city parks to encourage spending time in nature to promote both physical and mental wellbeing.

You can support our efforts in two ways. We need physicians and health care providers on-site during Docs in the Park events to model healthy behavior and answer questions. As a volunteer for this position, your commitment would be approximately 1-2 hours per event. Previous physician volunteers have greatly enjoyed their time interacting with families and getting to know our Baltimore City parks.

If you are unable to be on-site during an event, I hope you will consider promoting the Docs in the Park program by encouraging patients to engage in outdoor activities in their local area. Currently there are printable brochures available to promote the program, and the Baltimore City Department of Recreation and Parks is developing online materials to locate which parks and activities are most accessible to your patients to guide your recommendations.

Your support is an integral part of the Docs in the Park program, and we are hopeful this program will continue to expand as outreach increases. We greatly appreciate your efforts to help us get underserved communities active and healthy.

Maria Brown, MD, EdM, FAAP  
Chairperson, MDAAP Children & Nature Task Force

