

A place of amusement, tranquility, and adventure. The green space of our park districts is an important sanctuary to many people within the community ranging from the young to the old. Harkening back to the transcendental philosophies of Henry Thoreau, we are all inherently drawn to nature. From the enjoyment derived playing games within parks to the peace away from technology and our hectic lives, these green spaces provide a much needed outlet. A place to relax, collect ourselves, and let loose within an environment different from one a typical person resides in for the majority of their day. Our parks provide an escape where each person can revel in the beauty of nature: a stunning sunset, blossoming foliage, and teeming wildlife. Without these nature preserves, many important aspects of our lives would be lacking the meaning we attribute to them. The memories of family hikes as a kid, geocaching through the park with friends, or running along trails for example would lose their significance and cease to exist without these parks. In a world where the green space is ever shrinking, our interactions inside these parks garner an invaluable worth. These community parks provide us with a refuge filled with meaning. A refuge that showcases a power outside the realm of mankind. A refuge that demonstrates the unparalleled glory of nature. This treasure is something we must work to preserve to ensure that the role of parks do not dwindle in the lives of mankind.

To guarantee that our parks and even furthermore our environment is protected, we must begin education on the importance of both at early age. School programs should introduce their students to a variety of occurrences within parks in their community. If students' interests within the community green spaces are peaked early, then they will fully be able to enjoy the park's benefits. This interest or developing passion paves the way for the student to become an active proponent for parks. A variety of activities should be developed and made open to the community encouraging people to participate and find an enjoyable release in their lives. With

increased exposure, people will be willing to fight for a park they are not only familiar with but also deeply treasure. Schools can continue to involve students within the parks by providing field trips and outdoor activities. Through these interactions students will know where accessible parks are and the types of activities they may partake in there. However, schools should not only be trusted with student integration into parks but, parents should also play an active role in this immersion process. By participating in family activities and outings to the park, their children will fondly look upon parks when remembering the fun they had engrossed in nature. Park workers should also broadcast any park activity or attempt to engage within the community to shed interest upon the parks. Environmental awareness programs can also work closely with parks to enlighten visitors on current environmental issues and solutions. There are a plethora of ways each individual may involve themselves within the green spaces around them. An effort should be made to demonstrate the importance to fight for the preservation of nature against the expanding modern world.