

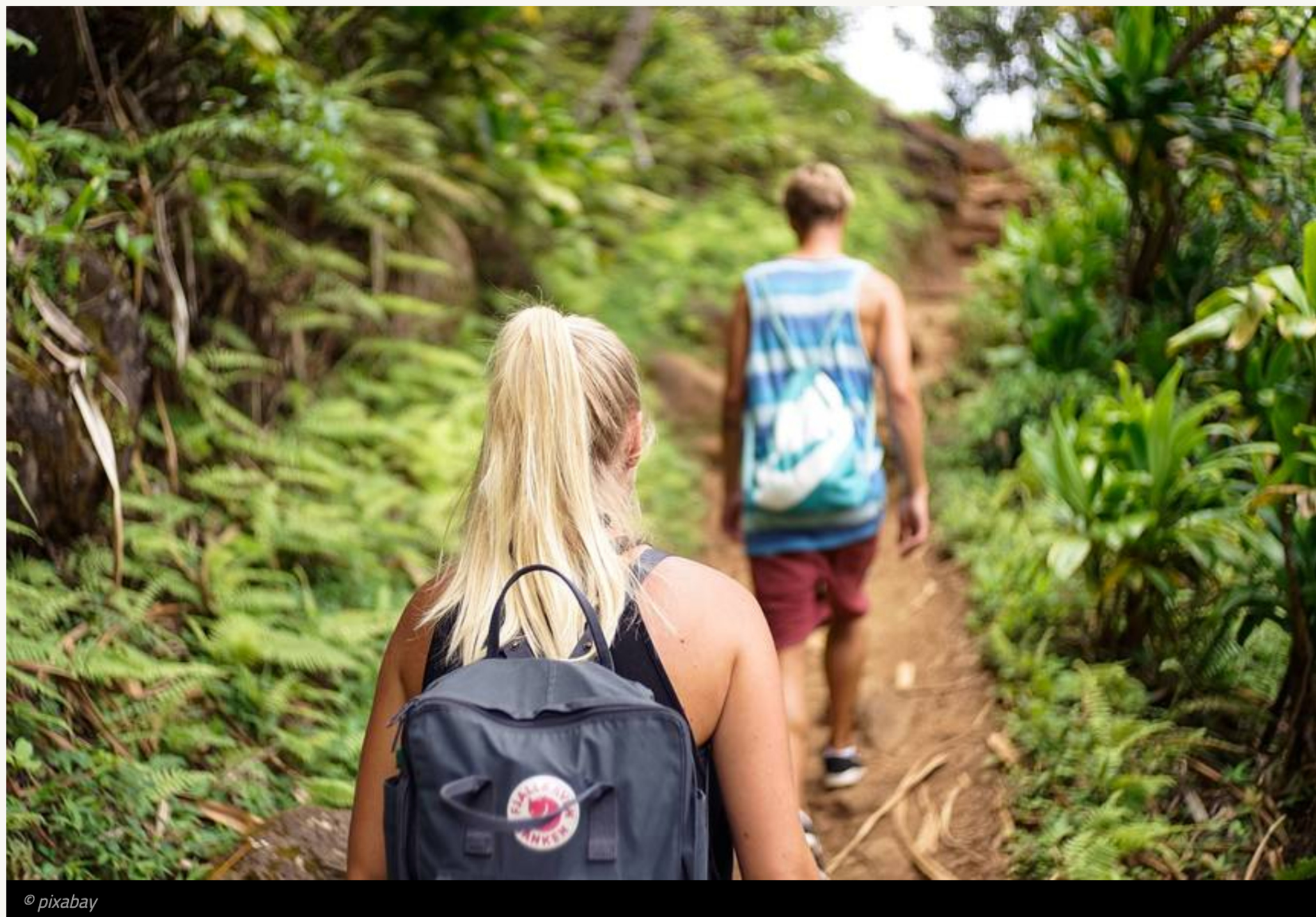
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# Have you gone screen-free yet? Get 7 Tips for Screen-Free Week

Sustainable Forestry Initiative  
May 4, 2018

**Screen-Free Week** lasts until May 6, so it's not too late to unplug and play. Born out of a concern that digital entertainment dominates the lives of too many kids, Screen-Free Week is a call to spend less time online.

Excessive screen time and limited outdoor activity have been linked to both attention problems and childhood obesity, which has doubled in the United States and Canada over the past 30 years. Obesity in children increases their risk of high blood pressure, diabetes, and lifelong health problems. Physical activity is critical to reversing this trend.

Take some time this week to rediscover life beyond the screen. Get your family outside, be active, and re-connect. These tips can help.

## Use 7 Simple Screen-Busters

1. Re-arrange furniture so the TV isn't the focus of a room.
2. Create a morning routine without screens.
3. Ban screens at mealtime.
4. Plan a few creative, hands-on activities like arts and crafts.
5. Find a local forest for hiking, biking, horseback riding, or boating.
6. For young children, make activity kits you can grab when you need them. Put puzzles, blocks, and toys in a shoe box, for example.
7. Be the role model. Only use screens when you have to for work.

## Think Long-Term: 5 Examples for Inspiration

Reflect on the changes during Screen-Free Week and consider what you'd like to continue. Youth programs are available to help in communities throughout North America. Take a look at these examples of kids doing good — and feeling good — in the great outdoors.

These programs are supported by the **Sustainable Forestry Initiative**, an independent, non-profit organization that aims to make the world a better place by promoting sustainable forest management through standards, research, conservation partnerships, and community building.

SFI is eager to help get more kids away from their screens and into the great outdoors by fostering partnerships with, and awarding grants, to nature-based community programs like these across the US and Canada.

### 1. Project Learning Tree Makes the Connection

**Project Learning Tree (PLT)** helps spread the word about the link between environmental health and kids' health. It provides educators with environmental curriculum and lesson plans for all ages.

### 2. Girl Guides of Canada Get Their Ducks in a Row

With support from SFI and Ducks Unlimited Canada, 23 Girl Guides pitched in to improve local duck habitats. They built 60 duck nest boxes out of wood certified to the SFI Standard in order to provide nesting sites for ducks that nest in tree cavities.

### 3. Boy Scouts of America Seek High Adventure

The Philmont Scout Ranch is the Boy Scouts of America's largest, national High Adventure Base with 34 staffed camps and 55 trail camps. The facility provides an unforgettable adventure in the high country along hundreds of miles of rugged, rocky trail.

### 4. Scouts Canada Puts Down Roots

Through its annual Scoutrees program, Scouts Canada has planted over 80 million trees across Canada since 1972. By planting trees, Scouts not only get vigorous outdoor exercise, they also get hands-on learning about how trees protect the environment.

### 5. 4-H Inspires Future Forest Leaders

The National 4-H Forestry Invitational gives aspiring foresters from across the US an opportunity to compete for their states in forestry skills and include. Tasks include tree measurement, insect and disease identification, compass orienteering, and topographical map use.

To learn more about the nature-based youth programs that SFI supports, visit <http://www.sfiprogram.org/>. To get more ideas for a successful Screen-Free Week, visit <http://www.screenfree.org/>. Then go enjoy some time offline.



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