

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **National Kids to Parks Day Set for May 19, 2012**

*Classroom Contest Encourages Kids to Plan New & Exciting Ways to Explore Outdoors*

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ROCKVILLE, Md., Jan. 25, 2012 -- Children, parents and teachers are gearing up for this year's National Kids to Parks Day (KTP), a nation-wide day of outdoor play organized by National Park Trust (NPT) in cooperation with a host of national partners including American Academy of Pediatrics, National Education Association, Children's National Medical Center, Boy Scouts of America, U.S. Department of the Interior Youth in the Great Outdoors, Children & Nature Network, America's State Parks and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers among others. Over 15,000 families in nearly 200 towns and cities explored parks in their community in 2011 and NPT expects that number to grow exponentially as the grassroots initiative gains momentum.

This year's KTP Day will be held on Saturday May 19, 2012, the week before the official start of Summer. KTP Day and NPT officially support the First Lady's Let's Move Outside! initiative.

"We want to encourage children across the country to explore their neighborhood parks and discover the history, nature and adventure right around the corner or just across town. The Summer season is the time to be outdoors and have fun," said Grace Lee, executive director, NPT.

New this year, NPT is sponsoring a [national classroom contest](#) designed to inspire children to create their own KTP Day event. The theme of this year's contest is "*Explore outdoors, the parks are yours!*" which is the motto of NPT's wooly mascot Buddy Bison. Students across the country and in U.S. territories can submit proposals that exemplify this theme at a park in their community. NPT will award scholarships in the amount of \$250, \$500 or \$1000 to winning entries. Deadline for entries is Thursday, March 1st. Winners will be announced Monday, March 19th. For contest details and a full listing of national partners visit [www.kidstoparks.org](http://www.kidstoparks.org).

### **ABOUT NATIONAL PARK TRUST**

National Park Trust is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving parks today and creating park stewards for tomorrow. As people spend more time indoors and as successive generations grow up with less of a connection to nature, NPT wants to build greater awareness and appreciation for the importance of our country's public lands and parks. To learn more about our work visit, [www.parktrust.org](http://www.parktrust.org) or our website for children [www.buddybison.org](http://www.buddybison.org).