



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is Kids2Parks?

A: Kids2Parks is a partnership between Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks and California State Parks that strives to ensure state parks are accessible to all children by enrolling students from Title 1 schools on a state park field trip. If needed, the Kids2Parks program pays for all the field trip transportation costs, including bus rental, driver time and fuel, and funds State Parks' staff time to support the field trips. The program seeks to increase the number of students who have visited a state park or beach, ensure there are no barriers to access and invite students to come back with their families to use the parks' many amenities throughout the year.

Q: Why was Kids2Parks started?

A: Kids2Parks was created to enable access to state parks for school children of all socioeconomic backgrounds. Kids2Parks sponsors field trips for school children who would not otherwise be able to visit state parks due to lack of funding, parent participation/chaperones, or transportation. Both Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks and California State Parks are committed to ensuring that all people are aware of and get to enjoy their local state parks.

Q: Who is eligible for Kids2Parks field trips?

A: Select Title 1 schools from Santa Cruz, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties are eligible.

Q: Why don't all students have equal access to California State Parks' field trips?

A: Children in less affluent school districts are disadvantaged by the inability to get to state parks on school field trips. School districts budget cuts impact the ability of districts to maintain a fleet of school buses, causing field trip transportation to depend on parents capable and available to drive students. But families that have two working parents or single-parent families often are unable to help transport students because they are at work, they often own only one car or rely on public transportation, and the type of work they often do has very little flexibility.

Q: Why are only Title 1 schools eligible for Kids2Parks?

A: Title 1 means that more than half of the students at a given school come from economically disadvantaged families. These schools are the least likely to be able to afford field trips, while many other schools have parents with more flexible work schedules and extra vehicles to chaperone field trips.

Q: How many field trips are awarded every year?

A: The number of field trips each year varies, based on State Parks' staff and volunteer/docent capacity, as well as available funding for transportation. Teachers may apply for multiple field trips for their class but will only be selected for one trip per class.

Q: Which parks offer Kids2Parks field trips?

A: The program currently includes Castle Rock State Park, Castro Adobe State Historic Park, Half Moon Bay State Beach, Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park, Natural Bridges State Beach, The Forest of Nisene Marks State Park, the Rancho del Oso Unit of Big Basin Redwoods State Park, Santa Cruz Mission State Historic Park, Seacliff State Beach, and Wilder Ranch State Park. At this time schools are eligible for specific parks based on their school's geographic distance to the park.

Q: What is the age range of students attending Kids2Parks field trips?

A: Currently field trips are open to elementary school students.

Q: Where does the funding for these field trips come from?

A: Funding comes from Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks, which is supported through grants and generous business and individual donors. It costs an average of \$10 to send a student on a Kids2Parks field trip. To donate please visit <https://bit.ly/donatek2p>.

Q: How many years has Kids2Parks been an active program?

A: Kids2Parks has served almost 13,000 students since it began as a pilot program in 2016:

- 2015/16 (Pilot Year 1): 20 students on 1 field trip to Wilder Ranch.
- 2016/17 (Pilot Year 2): Approximately 180 students from 6 classes.
- 2017/18: Approximately 1,200 students from 40 classes.
- 2018/19: 2,820 students from 83 classes attended 51 field trips.
- 2019/20: 1,606 students from 59 classes attended 35 in-person field trips before field trips were postponed due to school and state park closures during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2020/21: 2,238 students attended 91 virtual field trips through interactive video conferencing.
- 2021/22: 2,146 students attending 34 in person and 10 virtual field trips.
- 2022/23: 2,711 students attending 57 blended access (virtual + in person) trips.

Q: What costs does Kids2Parks cover?

A: Kids2Parks covers all expenses related to transportation to the parks, as well as State Parks' staff time to host the field trips, coordinate volunteers, and administer the program. The transportation costs range from \$400-\$800 per trip.

Q: Can teachers select the state park or beach where they would like to take their class? A: Title 1 schools from Santa Cruz, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties are offered a selection of parks to choose from, based on proximity to the school.

Q: How are classes selected for field trips?

A: Teachers must submit their application(s) online at www.thatsmypark.org/K2P during the open registration period.

Q: What are the current health and safety protocols?

A: Currently, Kids2Parks plans to offer in-person field trips for the 2023-24 school year. If

COVID safety restrictions prohibit in-person participation, State Parks' staff will work with teachers to augment students' learning experience.

Q: Is transportation cost the main obstacle for Title 1 schools sending classes to state parks?

A: California State Parks and Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks studied the deficit of school field trips before launching Kids2Parks and the cost of transportation was the most often noted and hardest-to-overcome barrier.

Q: How do I invoice the transportation costs for K2P field trip?

A: Teachers/schools are responsible for arranging transportation to the park. Please have the school district or bus company invoice Friends by mailing the bill directly to the address below or emailing the bill to K2P@ThatsMyPark.org:

ATTN: Accounting (K2P Field Trip)
Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks
1543 Pacific Avenue, Suite 206
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Remember to include your verification number with your invoice. If you have any questions regarding invoicing transportation costs or reimbursement, please email K2P@ThatsMyPark.Org.

Q: Is there anything a teacher must do to prepare students for a Kids2Parks field trip?

A: To ensure students have a rewarding and high-quality educational experience during their field trip, each class is required to participate in a pre-trip virtual program. During the virtual program, students will be introduced to the park staff, get an introduction to the park, get information about what to expect during their visit, and get the opportunity to ask questions about the field trip.

Q: Is there anything a teacher must do after a Kids2Parks field trip to conclude the experience?

A: Following a field trip, the park interpreter will send a short online survey to the teacher. Completing this 5-minute survey will help improve participants' experience and secure funds to expand the program in the future. Thank you for participating.

Q: How can teachers and schools who are ineligible for Kids2Parks funding arrange field trips to State Parks?

A: Teachers can always apply for field trips outside of Kids2Parks at www.thatsmypark.org/visit/field-trips/ or by contacting the state park where a field trip is desired.

Q: Is there a difference between a Kids2Parks field trip and another school field trip at a state park or beach?

A: No, the educational content of all school field trips is the same. Outside of the Kids2Parks program all schools are eligible for all State Parks' field trips. The difference is Kids2Parks field trips cover transportation costs to help ensure that children attending a Title 1 school have the opportunity to enjoy and explore our local state parks.

Q: If a school has already had one class selected for a Kids2Parks trip, are other classes less likely to be chosen?

A: A limited number of field trips are available. However, if there are more applicants than

available field trips priority will go to teachers who haven't been on a field trip, regardless of the school.

Q: What do students do on field trips?

A: Field trip educational content and activities are dependent on the subject being studied. Please refer to www.thatsmypark.org/K2P for specific information on each tour.

Q: Can students with mobility needs attend Kids2Parks field trips?

A: Yes. All field trips are designed to be accessible to students regardless of their mobility needs.

Q: When can teachers submit a request to participate in Kids2Parks?

A: The field trip application window will be open at www.thatsmypark.org/K2P from Monday, July 31, through Sunday, Aug. 27, 2023, for trips during academic year 2023/24. Teachers are encouraged to submit their request early.

Q: Who can answer additional questions about K2P Field Trips?

A: For questions about the transportation scholarship, contact Lauren Kitayama at lauren@thatsmypark.org or (831) 429-1840 ext 301. For questions regarding field trips or field trip scheduling, please contact santacruz@ports-ca.us

Q: How can community members or businesses support to Kids2Parks?

A: If you'd like to support Kids2Parks with a financial gift, please visit <https://bit.ly/donatek2p>. Please contact Jo Kenny, Program & Philanthropy Director, at (831) 429 1840, ext. 312 or Jo@ThatsMyPark.Org for any donation questions.