We are seeking Early Childhood Educators working with children birth-8 who are interested in improving their outdoor play/learning environment. Applicants must wish to include more natural features that support children’s self-initiated play and spark child-centered learning. This project’s goal is to help YOU improve your outdoor environment, and to help test and improve a design resource for Maine’s Early Childhood Educators.

Would your (school / center / family child care) like to:
- Add more natural features to your outdoor play/learning environment/playground?
- Pursue a nature-based play curriculum making more use of the outdoors?
- Build on the idea that The Environment is the Third Teacher?
- Learn strategies to support parent engagement with increased outdoor time for kids?
- Other ________________________________

We need both your expertise and feedback on Draft Guidelines from educators who are working with children every day, utilizing the outdoor spaces where they play and learn.

How much funding is available? Selected Pilot Sites will range from a variety of sample early childhood settings. Each will receive up to $3500 in funds for materials, renovations, and construction. Design assistance from an experienced natural play environment designer will also be provided.

How can you apply? Please see the application requirements on Page 2-3

Application Deadline is May 28, 2018 11:59 p.m.

1. Send by Mail to:
   Learning by Nature for ME
   % Educare Central Maine
   56 Drummond Avenue
   Waterville, ME 04901

2. Or by Email to:
   LearningbyNatureforME@gmail.com

3. Or via this online form:
   https://goo.gl/forms/DRsfDIaIBnkAlggs2

Learning by Nature for ME is a collaborative initiative to increase young children’s access to nature-based play and learning across Maine. This specific project’s funding is in partnership with The Cabin Foundation through KVCAP/ECM in collaboration with SGGC, KVCC, MRTQ.
1. Contact  ____Center  ____School  ____Family Child Care
Program/School Name:
________________________________________________________________________________
Address:
________________________________________________________________________________
Main Contact Person:
________________________________________________________________________________
Position:
________________________________________________________________________________
Email:  Phone:
________________________________________________________________________________

2. Children
Total number of children on a typical day: _____
Age groupings at your program/school and Number of Children in each age grouping:
   0-3: _____  3-4: _____  5-8: _____  Older: _____

3. Team
List 3-5 Outdoor Environment Improvement Team members:
(name & role; parent/business owner/landscaper/neighbor)
1) Director or Principal (required)
________________________________________________________________________________
2) Parent (required)  
________________________________________________________________________________
3) Community Member (required)
________________________________________________________________________________
4) Other  
________________________________________________________________________________
5) Other  
________________________________________________________________________________

4. Interest
Describe your (or your program’s) interest in nature-based education or a natural play/learning
environment, and how those align with your approach to early childhood education and care. (limit
500 characters)

5. Current Playground
Describe your school ground’s current state and why you are looking to change it. (limit 500 characters)

(application continued on page 3)
6. Video (preferred) or Photos
Email us a video (taken on your phone limit 2 minutes) or a series of pictures of a walk around your site’s outdoor environment. Be sure to point out the different areas, what children do there, any problem spots (drainage, etc.) and things you would like to change. If there are spaces beyond your boundaries that you could use, include those too. Send attachments and/or links to learningbynatureforme@gmail.com. Please let us know if you need help with this! We will find a way to make it easy; text 207.650.4510.

7. Family Engagement
Describe how your program encourages family engagement. (limit 200 characters)

8. If selected for funding, we agree to the following (check boxes you agree to do):
   - Share before/after photos and video of our site, (ideally with some children visible as allowed)
   - Share before/after feedback on our outdoor space
   - Follow steps in a Draft Guide to guide our planning and improvements, then provide feedback on the tool (the Draft Guide)
   - Meet with your team before, during and after the process, a minimum of 4 times
   - Complete the project within the designated Time Frame, expending all dollars directly to the project

Applicant Signature: __________________________ Date: __________________________