

## **Kids2Parks FAQs**

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 Title 1 students 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 also 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 people are aware of and get to enjoy their local state parks.

Q: Who is eligible for Kids2Parks field trips?

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

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

School district budget cuts impact the ability of districts to maintain a fleet of school buses, causing field trip transportation to the parks to depend on parents to be capable and available to drive students. Less-wealthy families that have two working parents often are unable to help transport students because 1) they are at work; 2) they often own only one car or rely on public transportation; 3) the type of work they do is often the type where they have very little flexibility. Therefore, many children in less-wealthy school districts are disadvantaged by the inability to get to State Parks on school field trips.

Q: Why are Title 1 schools the only ones 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 may have parents with more-flexible work schedules and extra vehicles to chaperone field trips.

Q: How many field trips are awarded?

A: There is a limited number of field trips based on State Park staff and volunteer/docent capacity, as well as available funding for transportation.

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, the Rancho Del Oso Unit, Seacliff State Beach and Wilder Ranch State Park. At this time schools are chosen for specific parks based on their geographic proximity 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 trips come from?

A: Funding has been committed by Friends of Santa Cruz State Parks as well as local grants and generous individual donors. To donate please visit:

[www.thatsmypark.org/donate](http://www.thatsmypark.org/donate)

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

A: Kids2Parks began with a small pilot program in 2016, with six classes in Pajaro Valley School District. In 2017, the program organized 20 field trips. 2018 is the continuing pilot of the Kids2Parks program.

Q: What costs does Kids2Parks cover?

A: If needed, Kids2Parks covers all expenses related to transportation to the parks. The cost is usually \$300-\$550 per trip. Kids2Parks funding also pays for State Parks staff time to host the additional field trips, and administration costs of the program.

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 assigned a range of parks to choose from, based on proximity to the school.

Q: How are classes selected for field trips?

A: Teachers must submit a request online at [www.thatsmypark.org/K2P](http://www.thatsmypark.org/K2P) during the application time period. Field trips will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

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 barrier and the hardest to overcome.

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

A: Get information about additional State Parks field trip opportunities at [www.thatsmypark.org/visit/field-trips](http://www.thatsmypark.org/visit/field-trips).

Q: What is the difference between a Kids2Parks field trip and a regular field trip at a state park or beach?

A: The content of the field trip is the same as a regular field trip. Outside of the Kids2Parks program all schools are eligible for all State Parks field trips. The difference is Kids2Parks covers transportation costs because the Kids2Parks program works to ensure that Title 1 schools 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: At this time, we have a limited number of field trips available and they will be chosen on a first-come, first-served basis. Teachers who have not attended a field trip at the park they have applied for will be given priority.

Q: What do students do on the Kids2Parks field trips?

A: Every field trip is different. Please refer to [www.thatsmypark.org/K2P](http://www.thatsmypark.org/K2P) for specific information on each tour available.

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

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

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

A: The form will be available online in early April 2018 and the application window will close May 8. State Parks will award the field trips by May 18, 2018. Teachers are encouraged to submit their request early.

Q: How can community members donate to Kids2Parks?

A: Contact Jo Kenny, Parks Philanthropy Director, at 831.429.1840, ext. 312 or [Jo@ThatsMyPark.org](mailto:Jo@ThatsMyPark.org), if you'd like to help fund Kids2Parks. You can also visit [www.thatsmypark.org/donate](http://www.thatsmypark.org/donate)