

1000 Hours Outside – A Conversation with Ginny Yurich

Transcript of Podcast Episode 367

Julie Walker: Hello, and welcome to the Arts of Language Podcast with Andrew Pudewa, founder of the Institute for Excellence in Writing or as many like to say, “IEW.” My name is Julie Walker, and I’m honored to serve Andrew and IEW as the chief marketing officer. Our goal is to equip teachers and teaching parents with methods and materials, which will aid them in training their students to become confident and competent communicators and thinkers.

Andrew, it’s spring finally.

Andrew Pudewa: Finally. And everyone is delighted. Why?

Julie Walker: Well, especially here in Oklahoma because winters are cold and oftentimes cold with no fun snow, and it’s just miserable. But now the spring ... the sun comes out. It’s warm. The trees are budding. It’s, oh, my goodness, the brown grass that we’ve been seeing for months is so verdant.

Andrew Pudewa: Verdant, what a good word.

Julie Walker: Isn’t that a good word?

Andrew Pudewa: I don’t think that’s really in my active vocabulary as much as it could be or should be. But yes, the winters seem long. But you know, it’s always good. I’m so happy to live in a place where there are seasons.

Julie Walker: Yeah, because we didn’t.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, I mean, we’re ex-Californians, where it was like an endless summer, except once a year when it would rain.

Julie Walker: Exactly. And because it’s spring, and we’re here in Oklahoma, we can now finally go outside.

Andrew Pudewa: We could have gone outside anytime we wanted.

Julie Walker: And truth be told, we both were outside. Yes, absolutely.

Andrew Pudewa: But it’s easier now.

Julie Walker: Yes, it’s easier now, and we don’t have much time here in Oklahoma because it’s going to get blazing hot.

Andrew Pudewa: Hot, yes.

Julie Walker: But I think we can squeeze in our thousand hours outside, maybe in the spring. I don't know.

Andrew Pudewa: Thousand hours. That is ... Why are you talking about a thousand hours?

Julie Walker: Because that's the challenge now: to try and get a thousand hours outside.

Andrew Pudewa: That's going to be 100 days at 10 hours a day, or 200 days at 5 hours a day, or 300 days at 3.3 hours a day.

Julie Walker: Okay. That just was math right there. That item too. But fortunately, we have someone that we can talk to who's going to make this easy for us.

Andrew Pudewa: Let me guess. It's the 1000 Hours Outside girl.

Julie Walker: It is. Welcome to our podcast, Ginny. So glad to have you.

Ginny Yurich: I love it. That is, that is my new name, isn't it? Usually people say 1000 Hours Outside lady. But I like girl a little bit better since my hair is starting to get a little gray. So I like that.

Andrew Pudewa: But you're young at heart. I mean, because of what you do and believe and your lifestyle, you'll be in the "looks way too young to actually be a grandma" club.

Ginny Yurich: That'll be great.

Andrew Pudewa: Right around the time I'm hoping to join the "looks way too young to actually be a great grandfather" club.

Ginny Yurich: Aw, well, we love IEW and really have been so encouraged by what you do and love seeing you speak at conferences and meet up with you. And I always tell people, you are just like the shining star. When you walk through these conferences, everyone is flocking to Andrew and just really thankful for your advice and your encouragement. And I think I have friends that grew up homeschooled and did IEW. And they say they went to conferences when they were kids, and you were there.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, that ... Okay. Now that I feel even older ... I think a lot of our listeners know who you are because you have a presence also, not just online but at conferences. We have mutual acquaintances who probably don't even know that you are a mutual acquaintance. But tell us a little bit about you and your history and how you got into this whole idea of motivating families to spend more time outside. And I know I was doing a talk years before I met you, called "Nature Deficit Disorder," which I shamelessly stole the title from the author.

Ginny Yurich: From Richard Louv.

Andrew Pudewa: Richard Louv. And so when I saw you, it really resonated with what I had been convicted of in terms of, you know, we're ... Regardless of who we think we are and what we think we are accomplishing, we are all suffering from a disconnect from nature. So how did you get into this?

Ginny Yurich: Well, I got into it just from not being a very good mother. Sometimes that's the way things go, I think. I really struggled when my kids were little. And I struggled because I wasn't quite sure what to do with them and because the needs of young children were more than I was expecting and really truthfully more than I felt comfortable even handling. We had three under three at one point. And I just felt like each day was so long and so hard and so difficult, and then it never ended. It didn't end in the night. It didn't end on the weekend. It just never ended. It was this forever feeling of drowning and failing. And so that's sort of how I started my mothering years.

And I really struggled because I wanted to enjoy it, and I was planning on enjoying it. And I loved my kids, but the day-to-day was so difficult for me. And so we just didn't even know ... I didn't know how to plan our days and what to do with our time. And so I was just signing up for all of these different programs, like the ... in programs that were great: the library program, the swim class, the mom and tot movement/music class, all of these different things.

And it was a lot of work for very little payout in our particular situation, to try and corral a bunch of kids into a vehicle and get them out and through the parking lot, and no one get their fingers smashed and all the car seats and all the diaper bags, and everyone's in a different size diaper. And this one spit up.

And I ... It was just a thing. And I would go, and I'd put in this maximum effort for forty-five minutes of an activity where they didn't even really want to be there and then do it all in reverse. I was just exhausted, and it would be eleven in the morning. And I'd think, oh, my goodness, I still have seven hours till my husband comes home.

So I lived that way for several years. And then I had a friend at MOPS, which is Mothers of Preschoolers, which is one of those, another program that I signed up for, which was really one of my favorites. You're supposed to be able to drop your kids off in the daycare, but then my kids never lasted. They were always bringing mine to me crying. But that was the point.

And so we met twice a month. And you know, sometimes you have these things in life that just are happenstance. I love learning Andrew's story about, you know, his path toward being a writer, and it includes violin and Suzuki. I mean, we have these different things in our life, these different things that seem sometimes even inconsequential.

But I had a friend at my table who talked about Charlotte Mason, who was a British educator in the 1800s. And I didn't know anything about her. I didn't even know she was from the 1800s. And this friend at my table told me that; she said it like this. She said, "Charlotte Mason says kids should be outside for four to six hours a day whenever the weather is tolerable." And I just remember thinking that was the most outlandish idea. I mean, that's what I thought in my head. I

didn't say it out loud because you're, like, desperately trying to make friends when you've got these little kids. But I just thought four to six hours? First of all, who has time for that?

Second of all, what would the kids even do? Because I was used to these shorter programs, thirty minutes, forty-five minutes. It's kind of a disaster. You know, you're trying to make sure your kid does the craft and doesn't hit the other kid, and all these different things. And I thought, well, what would a child do for four to six hours outside?

But she asked me to do it. She says, will you? Will you do it? Will you try it? And I thought, goodness, no, I don't want to. But I guess so. And so this is a long time ago, back in 2011. And we had a three-year-old, a one-year-old, and then an infant. And she had the same. And she said, here's the plan. We're going to meet at this park from nine in the morning until one in the afternoon.

And she said, bring a picnic lunch and a picnic blanket. And I thought, well, that's it? Like, well, shouldn't we be bringing toys and action figures and Play-Doh and should ...? And she said, no. Like you're just, just ... And I thought this is going to crash and burn. What are the kids going to do with just a picnic lunch and a picnic blanket?

But what I tell people, and this is the truth: it turned out to be, I say, the best day of my life because it was the first good day I had as a mom. And I had just had such a hard time for three years. And then I had a good day. And so what ended up happening was we spread out the picnic blanket, and we had food and snacks.

And her older two and my older two – they played. And I mean, it sounds like such a simple thing, but it was ... There was no playground. It was just this grassy area, a creek that ran through and ducks and rocks. And they just ran around. And I got to sit and have a conversation. And we held our babies, and the babies slept and nursed and napped and just kind of sat there.

And it was beautiful, and the sun was warm. And we left and packed up at one o'clock. And I just was so surprised that all of us were refreshed. All of us felt good. The kids fell asleep. It was like a miracle that never happened; they all fell asleep on the way home. You know, I drove around for a couple hours. It was like when gas was cheaper. And so, you know ... And then all of a sudden, it's four o'clock. And my husband's coming home in a few hours.

And so it was this one day and this one concept really that kids should be outside for these extended periods of time. And it changed our entire life. It changed my mothering experience. It changed their childhood experience. And really at the beginning, we completely shifted how we were scheduling our days. And we're trying to get out these four- to six-hour chunks of time whenever the weather was tolerable with a small group of families.

We had a little nature group of other like-minded families. There was just a few of them. And we would ... We were in Metro Detroit area. Nothing spectacular. Everything's pretty flat and plain, but it was very life-changing. And in time I read Richard Louv's book – what you were talking about, nature deficit disorder, but *Last Child in the Woods*. And now we have a stack of 100, 150 books that go through the developmental benefits of nature time for children.

It helps their cognition; it helps them socially. It helps them physically. It helps them with their emotions. It helps them spiritually if that's something that you're looking for. And it also helps the parent. It just ... it helps the caregiver. It helped the teacher. You know, it helps everyone. And so what started out as just being a saving grace for myself, for my own sort of mental well-being and learning to be present, turned into this thing that was really giving our kids lifelong foundational skills and a lifelong foundational foundation that everything else builds off of.

And it makes everything else easier in the long run. It helps them with their schoolwork in a myriad of ways to spend time outside. And so it started there. I ended up adding up the time that we were spending outside because there were statistics out at the time that kids are outside for four to seven minutes in free play a day, but on screens for four to seven hours. So four to seven minutes versus four to seven hours. And Andrew rattled off his math facts earlier, so that's amazing. I'm kind of a numbers person. I've got a math degree. So I was just curious: out of curiosity, how much time are we getting outside?

We had this little nature group. We were outside for about eighteen to twenty hours a week, which added up to twelve hundred hours a year. And at that time ... That was the exact amount of time that kids were on screens and twelve hundred hours a year. And it stopped me in my tracks because we are not anti screen. We use screens. Our kids like YouTube and all of the things that kids like.

But it made me realize what we would have missed had those twelve hundred hours gone to screens and not to outside time. And so I called it ... I decided I'm going to call this "1000 Hours Outside" because it's a little catchier than "Twelve Hundred Hours Outside." But just this premise of returning balance ... a premise of returning balance to childhood between real and virtual, and returning balance really to all of our lives between real life and virtual life, and making sure that we are modeling how important it is to set aside the two-dimensional world, to set aside screens and to live in nature and to have all those experiences to connect and also just this part of how important it is for kids' development.

So there's a lot to it. And we've been living this way for over a decade, which means our kids have spent ten thousand hours outside in the last ten years. And it just is an answer to a lot of modern parenting problems. It has worked for us, ages three all the way to ... Our oldest is now fourteen. And it just ensures that we're continuing to connect with each other. We're continuing to connect with ourselves; we're continuing to connect with nature and to have these experiences that really make our lives very rich.

Andrew Pudewa: Now, I know there's got to be some listeners right now who are thinking: You have a fourteen-year-old; you're homeschooling. That's like high school. But you're still able to get three to four hours average a day outside. What about the schoolwork? So the question obviously is do your kids do schoolwork outside? Or do they just have other things they do outside, and they manage to fit all their schoolwork into their day without that time? I'm sure it varies, but how do you integrate the outside time and the need for getting your academics in?

Ginny Yurich: Was an interesting way to look at it is that I believe that learning ... Movement is learning. And so I think that for so long—and maybe this is where the biggest misconception

is—is that when we think of learning, we think of sitting. And we think of bookwork. And we think of chalkboards. And we think of classrooms and desks.

And there is this phenomenal book called *Smart Moves* by a pediatric occupational therapist named Dr. Carla Hannaford. And the subtitle is *Why Learning Is Not All in Your Head*. And the point of the book ... And she has this really cool statistic in there, Andrew, where she says, elderly people who dance regularly have a 76 percent less chance of developing Alzheimer's and dementia.

Elderly people who dance regularly have a 76 percent less chance of developing Alzheimer's and dementia. And so this is a big stat, right? I'm like, I want a 76 percent less chance of developing that. And all I have to do is dance? You know, it's an interesting thing. What she talks about in the book is that when we engage in complex movements and increasingly complex movements, it helps our brains work more productively.

The wiring and the pathways – they just become faster. And so she has that book. And then Angela Hanscomb, who's also a pediatric occupational therapist ... These are people who are on the front lines of seeing the decline in skills of children over the past several decades, and seeing the wait list for occupational services ... She, in her book, talks about sort of similar hours to Charlotte Mason – that even through the teenage years, that teens should be getting three to four hours of outdoor play and movement a day. So it's a little bit of a shift in terms of what we value. And knowing that that movement and our kids, as they get older ... Now, we have a fourteen-year-old. So he's out shooting hoops, and they're riding bikes. And they're doing these tricks on their skateboards.

And so the complex movements continue as long as they have the time and the space. But we're looking at it over the course of a year. We're looking to be outside for a thousand hours over the course of a year because there are different seasons. And you're in Oklahoma; we're in Michigan. It's of course easier for us to get outside in the summer than it is in the winter, the fall. Actually the fall is really nice in Michigan. But so over the course of the year, we're just having that as a priority.

And by having it as a priority, we are able to fit other things in around it. And our high schooler loves IEW. We love the *Fix-It! Grammar*. That's one of our favorite things. But we have that, and we have all sorts of things that we use that work for our family. But for us, I think that balance is still important and remembering that there is value in both the learning that we do at a desk, but also the learning that happens when we're moving our bodies and when we're outside in nature and having these different sensory experiences and even these different social experiences. So I don't know. It's just a little bit of a different way to look at learning, and it has worked for our family.

Andrew Pudewa: One of the things that came to me as I was reading Richard Louv's book was my own childhood. And I compared my own childhood with the experience my children were getting and then other people's children. And I realized probably from the age of about twelve, eleven or twelve, when I could freely wander outside without supervision until I got a car ... so

probably a good four-year period of time, it was kind of like life began when school was over, because then you could ride your bike and explore.

And we lived near a school, an elementary school, and so that was kind of like this huge area that was accessible. And Southern California – we really didn't have winter. So you know, all year really I would be outside for as much of the afternoon time as I could, which probably averaged two to three hours from, say, you know, three to six. My father would get home, have to have dinner. And then you'd do homework at night.

And I just ... I look back on that as being so rich, whether it was just climbing a tree or sitting on top of the roof of one of the buildings at the school or pick-up football games with kids or ... You know, as I got a little bit older ... One of the things that really struck me is that when I was probably thirteen or fourteen, my mother never knew where I was.

I would just get on my bike, and I would go wildly crazy, faraway places. There were no cellphones. There was no need to be in communication, and I knew when I needed to be home. And this level of freedom that I grew up with, I think, is very hard for parents today to even be willing to think about, let alone actually implement.

And so I'm sure you've intersected a little bit with this. And Richard Louv talks about the impediments to having more time in nature, one of those being, you know, the fears and constrictions that more modern parents place on their children. Do you have comments or thoughts about that?

Ginny Yurich: There's a lot of people who write about that. Lenore Skenazy has a book called *Free-Range Kids*.

Andrew Pudewa: Yes. I love that. I could not believe she didn't go to jail for writing that book.

Ginny Yurich: She was dubbed America's Worst Mom because she let her child go home on the subway. I don't remember what age, maybe eight or nine, maybe ten even. And she was dubbed that. And he wanted that challenge and came home exhilarated. And so she has this whole program called Let Grow, where we have to step back and let our kids grow.

And she partners with this man, Dr. Peter Gray, who has a book called *Free to Learn*, which was a life-changing read for me. And he talks a lot about that freedom component. And Lenore ... And they have this organization together called Let Grow. But they do talk about the fact that crime is down, that we see these things on the news.

And they're really made to incite fear, and that overall the crime statistics are down from what they used to be. There's never been a safer time to go out and play. It takes into account the fact that there are much less kids even playing outside. But their point is, is that kids can go. But then I think for our particular situation, the tricky part is that there is no one else outside. And that was how things used to be, that the neighborhood kids would all get out and play. And that was sort of ...

Andrew Pudewa: All be on the street.

Ginny Yurich: Yeah. Oh, yes. My father-in-law grew up in a street with a bunch of bungalows. And he said, you know, within the first ten houses on either side, there was something like seventy-eight kids, you know? So it was built into the cultural fabric, and it's not anymore. And so for a long time, I felt a little put out as a mom. I thought, well, goodness, what if I could just shoot my kids out the door, and there's twenty kids for them to go play with? And this is not the way things are. But what really it's doing is it's providing me an opportunity to also get that nature time. And so this is a gift.

I mean, we're in a really technological age. There's a lot of pressures on mothers, working parents, all of these different things. And so what used to seem like a drag now feels a lot like a gift that I have an opportunity to go to. And so then what it becomes is we get together with a group of families. Maybe the mothers or the parents are off on the sidelines. And the kids are playing, and they get a little bit of that sense of freedom.

You know, as our kids have gotten older, they're allowed to go bike. And they walk the neighborhoods and things like that. So they are getting a sense of that. But it's interesting: Dr. Peter Gray – he ends that book, *Free to Learn*. You're going to think this is crazy, Andrew. He ends the book, and he talks about how his son ... This is in the eighties. So it's a long time ago, but not that long ago. In the eighties his son wanted to go to Europe. He was super into *Dungeons and Dragons*. He wanted to go see all these sites he learned about.

And so he requested to his parents: can I go to Europe? And I'll figure out how to make the money, and I'll figure out how to buy the plane ticket, and I'll figure out the lodging. You know, this is back before Airbnb, before the internet. And they said ... And he is a type 1 diabetic. So they were kind of concerned about his health. And so they finally said that he could do it. And he could go for two weeks, and they would drop him off at the airport. And they would pick him back up in two weeks. He did a collect caller too. He was thirteen years old.

Andrew Pudewa: Wow.

Julie Walker: Oh, my word.

Ginny Yurich: I know.

Andrew Pudewa: That's the modern day equivalent of ... I bet you know the book *Bud & Me* about the Abernathy brothers.

Ginny Yurich: Yes, yes. I bought that one based off of your suggestion.

Andrew Pudewa: Oh, gosh, that is a scary, mind-blowing book. But I do recommend it to people. So you know, it takes, I guess, today a level of courage and faith, just much more.

Ginny Yurich: Yes. And there are great things. There's great things out there. Like there's this company called Cosmo Technologies, and they make a smartwatch for kids. And it's just for

that. It can call 911 if you fall off your bike, if there's an emergency. I guess maybe you wouldn't call 911 if you fall off your bike. But if there was an emergency, it's got these things built into it so that you can communicate if you're in trouble.

And I think there's this book out by Mike Lanza called *Playborhood*, which is a take on neighborhood and just bringing back play to the neighborhood. And I think that's something that parents can strive to do if parents are scared, is to have everyone get a little smartwatch. And let the kids go play at the park for an hour.

I think, with Peter Gray ... I mean, none of us are sending our kids to Europe for two weeks. That time period has come and gone. But even just reading that, it challenged me to really think through my own fears. Sometimes I'm like, I'm exaggerating what might happen. This guy sent his kid to Europe for two weeks in the eighties.

You know, I can let my kid bike the neighborhood if they have a smartwatch on. I mean, all of these different things. And so it just reminds you ... He talks a lot about how ... and kind of what you were saying earlier, Andrew, that when you talk to people about their core, golden, sort of childhood memories, that most of them were in this spot of freedom when there are not adults around, and when kids are in their own worlds making up their own things, and that those pieces of childhood are important. And we got those pieces of childhood. And so it's important that our kids at least get some sort of a taste of that as well.

Andrew Pudewa: Well, and you know, I'm understanding from people—I'm not in that world really—but even schools have really cut back on the opportunity for kids to be outside on a playground, you know, on the blacktop, the whole sports. Like, let's do everything in the gymnasium so that these kids are easy to supervise and control because a five-acre playground is too hard.

And you know, that's kind of tragic too, because I think a lot of teachers – they just look at their little room full of eight-year-olds thinking we're done. They need to be outside. But they can't; they can't do that. The constrictions on the schedule and the space and all that.

Ginny Yurich: Yeah, it is very tricky. And when you were talking about, you know, playing outside from three to six in the afternoon ... Angela Hanscom, who I talked about earlier, who wrote that book *Balanced and Barefoot* – she says she polls people when she goes and speaks different places: how much time do you think you got outside as a child?

And people would say the same as you. They would say, look, I walked to school. We walked to school; it took an hour. You know, or half hour. So an hour both ways. And then we had three different recesses. I mean, I remember in elementary school we had recess in the morning. We had a recess at lunch. We had recess in the afternoon.

They were all at least thirty to forty-five minutes. And then we played outside in the afternoon when we got home until dinner. And so that was sort of built into the social fabric, was that kids did get that time outside. And now we're looking at the statistic of four to seven minutes. And so even inside ... I think even inside ... So for the teacher who says, look, we live in an urban area.

We don't have a safe space for our kids to go roam on an outside playground. It's this thought that play, free play, unstructured, undirected free play ... I don't even know if that's a word. And I'm super self-conscious about saying the wrong words on IEW podcast.

Andrew Pudewa: You mean free play? If it isn't a word, it should be, so we'll just declare it.

Ginny Yurich: But the play where the adult does not direct it, and the child gets to dive into their imagination – that can happen anywhere. That can happen indoors. I remember play stations when I was in kindergarten, where there was all sorts of stations set up where you could go play.

Julie Walker: Different kind of PlayStation that our listeners immediately thought of, which is ... And I, and you know, as you guys are talking, I think ... You know, Andrew, you mentioned a couple barriers to this. And the courage that it takes, but it also takes conviction and a plan. And I think that's what you give us, Ginny, is a plan to at least start the idea that you can spend more time outside. Maybe in 2023, a thousand hours isn't possible, but maybe a hundred is. Maybe next year it's three hundred. And you've got a couple books.

I want you to just spend a couple minutes to talk about the resources that you have available to help our listeners pick up the mantle and do this because mama says, whenever you say yes to something, you have to say no to something else. So what are we saying no to, Ginny? But more importantly, what are we saying yes to?

Ginny Yurich: Well, it's interesting. I think that we're not saying no to as much as we thought because it's just a different way to look at our time because it does help kids with their cognition. It is like doing schoolwork and because it helps kids with their social skills. I mean, Kim John Payne has a book called *Simplicity Parenting*, where he says, "the primary predictor of success and happiness in life ..." which is a big statement.

I don't know who feels bold enough to come out and say, here's the primary thing. The primary predictor of success and happiness in life is how well we get along with others. And that's what you learn when you play without adult direction because you're constantly having to compromise. And kids are intrinsically motivated to keep playing.

And so they're learning how to negotiate, and they're learning how to assert their will but in a way that doesn't turn off other people. And so, so much is happening during play. It's a different way to use your time. And you can take your schoolwork outside. You can take your IEW books outside when the weather's okay and just do them at a picnic table or that type of thing.

And you're still getting that full spectrum sunlight. You're getting the surround sound of the nature sounds, so it doesn't have to be a hike or anything remotely spectacular. It can be the simple things. Take your books outside, and read in a hammock. Sit against a tree, and read your book. So there's a lot that you can do. We have a website 1000hoursoutside.com, where we have a lot of resources. We have a kickoff pack that has hiking prompts and picture book lists and adventure prompts for each month of the year. We have tracker sheets where we actually keep track.

Julie Walker: I love that: the checklist.

Ginny Yurich: Yeah, we keep track because you know what? This is something to celebrate in this day and age, where we're saving time for these hands-on, real life moments. And it's modeling to our kids. It's giving them a tool for how to maintain balance in their life between screens and real life. So we have that on our website. And then I have a couple books, a couple that I self-published.

I have a book called ... well, this is the problem. They all have the same name. This is what happens when you're a non-creative person who enters a creative space. So I have a *1000 Hours Outside Activity Book* that we self-published back in 2020. That's available on our website. And then a book called *1000 Hours Outside* that's just a book for parents that explains the vision and what really is going on when we get our kids outside. That's also called *1000 Hours Outside*. And then just this past December, I had a book come out through DK Publishing called *1000 Hours Outside: Activities to Match Screen Time with Green Time*.

So DK Publishing makes really cool books, and it's filled with hundreds of activities that parents could do outside with their kids. It's great for kids to look through and see all the hands-on ideas in there. And then I have a book coming out in November called *Until the Streetlights Come On*. And so that will be out this November 2023, about how a return to play brightens our today and sets kids up for an uncertain future.

So we have a lot of things that could help parents, things that are free, also things that you could buy, like a book, and have this presence of reminding myself. I have to remind myself and reminding others that what the child finds worthy is worthy, and that we can slow down and yet gain more, and that nature provides something for every age, every day. And we can get a lot out of our time in the outdoors.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, there's a Latin saying, *multum in parvum*, meaning there's more in less. And so, you know, when we simplify, when we prioritize well, when we just say no to unnecessary complexities ... And you know, a couple thoughts to finish up on my side is, number one, I love the fact that God used you in this time of hardship and despair and overwhelm as a young mom with three kids under three—good heavens!—to create something now that is influencing thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of other children for good.

And, you know, we just see that story, and you just love it because, you know, it's like you would never have woke up one morning and say, oh, let me write books and create a podcast and do a business about this. But because you had that need, look at what's happened. Another thing is, this is a generational effect as well, because I'm certain that kids who grow up having this larger amount of time outside and doing all these activities and getting that really wholesome, healthy emotional stability and foundation – they're going to be promoting this if not doing better with their children.

And so you can look at this. And you're not old enough to necessarily think about, you know, generational repercussions. But I assure you: as you get older, you will be probably amazed at ...

You'll meet young moms who'll say, yeah, I was a kid, and I was ten years old, and my mom read your book, you know. And that's going to be very, very exciting for you.

My last thing that comes to mind: I think we have several mutual, at least virtually mutual acquaintances, one of them being Katie Wells of Wellness Mama. And I've followed her for some time and been interested to see what would she say is the most important thing. You know, of all the things you could prioritize: nutrition, exercise, lighting ... You know what she put as the number one best thing to help your kids learn better?

Julie Walker: And we had her on our podcast, and this is when she said this.

Andrew Pudewa: Yeah, she said this: morning light. Outside morning light.

Julie Walker: I got on the phone and talked to my son.

Andrew Pudewa: Oh, did you? The most important thing if you want your kids to be able to learn better and ...

Ginny Yurich: Well, it, it helps their whole body systems, and it helps ours. That's the thing. And I think with homeschooling—and I know some of your audience is home educating or for public school teachers—that morning light enhances our mood, and then it resets all these body systems. So if there's any way possible ... I think that as a culture, we tend to get the work done first and leave the leftover time for play.

But if we can flip that a little bit, and even just get our kids out for our classrooms, our children out for ten to fifteen minutes before noon, then that's going to shift everyone's mood. It's going to help everyone's body systems align with the circadian rhythm. And it really is a powerful thing.

Andrew Pudewa: And Julie, you pointed out: it's spring. So this is the time to start new habits to change your home or classroom culture. Then once it gets to be getting cool again, or when it gets too hot, you know ... It's too hot. No. It's never too hot. I mean, most of humanity lived without heating or air conditioning for pretty much all the history of the world. So we can do it too.

I wish we had so much more time because you are just a wealth of information and ideas. And I appreciate you sharing what you could with us. And I just encourage everyone to go to 1000hoursoutside.com. And you've just curated so many wonderful resources.

Julie Walker: Which is going to keep us busy with our show notes this time.

Andrew Pudewa: Oh, yeah. Lots of great links.

Julie Walker: So please check us out on our website IEW.com/podcast. You'll see these notes. Ginny, what a delight to have you share with us.

Ginny Yurich: Thanks so much for having me. It was fantastic.

Andrew Pudewa: And I will look forward to seeing you again at a homeschool conference in Michigan in a very short time.

Ginny Yurich: Yes, in person.

Julie Walker: Thank you, Ginny.

Ginny Yurich: Thank you.

Julie Walker: Thanks so much for joining us. If you enjoyed this episode and want to hear more, please subscribe to our podcast in iTunes, Google podcasts, Stitcher, or Spotify. Or just visit us each week at IEW.com/podcast. Here you can also find show notes and relevant links from today's broadcast. One last thing: would you mind going to iTunes to rate and review our podcast? This really helps other smart, caring listeners like you find us. Thanks so much.