



# On the trail of the outdoors



To win one of 25 family passes to Nature Play Anzac Day simply visit **thewestnatureplaywa** and upload a picture of your child taking part in unstructured outdoor play.

Bentley mother of two Verity Mansfield is bucking the trend of parents keeping children indoors for their safety.

Ms Mansfield captured her entry for *The West Australian's* Nature Play WA competition when her unsuspecting daughters Lila and Olivia were bush-walking on a trail near the Karri Valley Resort.

"They were out in nature looking at leaves, leaving trails behind them with sticks and exploring everything around them," Ms Mansfield said.

"I was never brought up to be outdoors but in April we are going on our first camping trip.

"We try not to be overprotective."

University of WA assistant professor Lisa Wood, co-author of a report on the impact of parental fear on children's physical activity, said busy modern lifestyles, higher density urban living and concerns about children's safety had restricted childhood play. But she said evidence, based on actual crimes committed against children by strangers, suggested there was no increased threat to children in recent years.

Police Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan said parents needed to make sure they didn't become overprotective and stifle their children's development.

Nature Play WA, a Department of Sport and Recreation initiative to encourage outdoor play, is inviting families to attend a dawn service and family fun day at Rottneet Island on Anzac Day.

**Phoebe Wearne**



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**Walk trail: Lila Mansfield and sister Olivia discover bushwalking at Karri Valley.**