

## 5 TIPS FOR TRAIL CLEANUP SAFETY



### **Bring proper cleanup supplies**

Certain supplies will come in handy during a trail cleanup. This would include gloves, trash grabbers, and bags. It's a good idea to have the 'Littles' carry the trash bag instead of picking up trash. They may not know what they should and shouldn't touch.



### **Work in pairs or groups**

Sticking together and staying in communication with the organizer are very important. Make sure you have a charged cell phone or walkie-talkie with you. A compass could also come in handy if you're off the beaten path. Make sure someone knows exactly what area your group will be working in. Check in often with the organizer and stay close to your partner or group. Or, if you're hosting the hike, help the group stay together and communicate the meet-up locations and times.



### **Bring your normal safety supplies**

All normal hiking injuries can occur on a trail cleanup. In fact, after winter, the trail will likely be in worse shape than usual, so be prepared. Make sure you pack your typical first aid kit plus plenty of water and snacks. In addition, The Group Organizer should get a Sharps Container (Free at local Pharmacies) and get training/guidance on Sharps or have a plan to document location and call local authorities. Note: It is illegal to simply throw away needles in regular trash.



### **Give the kiddos simple tasks**

The concept of trail cleanup is super important to share with our kids beginning at a young age as it teaches them to be Stewards of Conservation. It's even better to reinforce as they get older. But not every trail cleanup is organized with young children in mind. If attending a hike organized by another group or parks department, speak to the cleanup organizer before deciding whether or not you will bring young children. Make sure there will be tasks suitable for their age and ability. For toddlers and little kids, have them spot the trash ("I spy!") instead of picking it up. This will ensure they aren't picking up anything dangerous or unsanitary. With supervision and proper gloves and grabbers, tiny people are great at holding trash bags, spying trash, and they love to use trash grabbers! Older kids can also be great to pair with younger kids. If hosting your own hike, make sure you communicate what supplies to bring and provide safety tips during Welcome Circle or Trail Head Safety Brief.



**CAUTION**

### **Use caution**

Don't ever touch anything sharp or lift anything too heavy. While you will typically feel totally awesome after participating in a trail cleanup, you might not if you cut yourself and get an infection. After winter, there could be trees or large branches across the trail. Don't try to be the hero and lift something too heavy on your own. Give a list to the trail cleanup organizer so that the proper crew can address it. (Or, if you're hosting, contact the appropriate town or county official with this information.)