

## **CMHA PARTNERS WITH YOUTH OUTDOOR PROGRAM**

On Saturday, November 20, 2010, Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) took students to the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Ledges as a part of their new Adventure Club.

CMHA and Youth Outdoors have partnered to provide CMHA students with a program that consists of outdoor adventure activities that include hiking, fishing, nature explorations, canoeing, kayaking, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, golf and special events. All programs are led by Youth Outdoors staff, contract instructors, or approved volunteers.

The club is free and open to CMHA residents ages 8 through 18. The idea is that the same group of kids progress through a number of outdoor activities starting with hiking and moving to kayaking and overnight camping trips.

CMHA was able to take nine students from Riverside and Bellaire estates on a hike through the Ledges in the Cuyahoga Valley in Peninsula. The Ledges are located within the Virginia Kendall Park Area of Cuyahoga Valley National Park. They extend for about two miles and are 30 feet in height. CMHA Officers Troche and Burgos provided the children with transportation and supervision.

“We have a good group of kids,” said CMHA Officer Jackie Burgos. “They really got a chance to bond and get to know each other. It was so successful; we are already planning the next outing.”

As the youth group gains experience in outdoor activities, the children may participate in the planning and preparation for outings, including planning menus, activities and routes, and packing food and equipment. This experience helps the children grow in leadership skills and their ability to work with others. They will try new things, learn new skills, and work with other youth and adults in our programs. Through challenges, cooperation and adventure they will build valuable life skills as well as foster an appreciation of the outdoors.

“Our CMHA kids were simply amazed with the venue and want to come back again,” said Larry Davis, CMHA Program Outreach Manager, who helped jump start this new Adventure Club at CMHA. “It’s a wonderful partnership that we hope will continue long into the future.”