EXPLORING THE OUTDOORS: NATURE PLAY BIRTH - 5

Spending time outdoors is beneficial for both children and adults. While it can feel like a hassle balancing naps, meals and sunscreen, outdoor play is worth the time and effort!

Why Nature Play?

Nature play provides young children with tremendous opportunities for authentic learning as they take risks. Moreover, it benefits their intellectual, emotional, and physical growth.

INTELLECTUAL BENEFITS

- Teaches how to classify, observe, and interpret
- Requires questioning & making hypothesis
- Inspires creativity

EMOTIONAL BENEFITS

- Teaches new forms of self-expression
- Develops resilience & confidence
- Reduces anxiety

PHYSICAL BENEFITS

- Develops 5 senses
- Builds strong bodies
- Contributes to a stronger immune system
Explore the Great Outdoors with Your Child

Try one of these helpful tips from the National Association for the Education of Young Children to enhance your child’s nature play.

Consider Safety
Have your children dress appropriately and teach basic safety rules.

Let Child Choose
Let your child choose what they do in nature. Do they want to run, build, climb, or collect?

Ask Questions
What do you see?
How does it feel?
What can you do with it?

Allow Touch
If safety is not a concern, touch, lift, and look at nature. Look under, on top, from the sky or laying on the ground.

Additional Resources

How Can I Support Nature Play?

INFANT NATURE PLAY
Take your inside activities outside!

Encourage sensory play. Let your infant crawl in the grass, sand, or leaves. Let them touch and pick up nature (i.e. rocks, sticks).

Visit: Best Outdoor Activities for Babies

TODDLER NATURE PLAY
Discover and collect nature together!

Encourage sensory play. Create nature sensory bins outside (i.e. place nature in water to see what sinks and floats).

Visit: 50 Activities for Outdoor Sensory Fun

PRESCHOOL NATURE PLAY
Observe and record nature in a journal!

Encourage risky play. Let your preschooler take risks climbing, running, and jumping in nature. In stead of saying, "Be careful!" try asking, "Do you feel safe?"

Visit: 23 Nature Activities

LET US HELP!
We can provide one-on-one support, and we also offer parenting workshops. Scan the code at right or go to bit.ly/ccafamilies to get in touch!

60 Nature Play Ideas for Kids