



As the weather gets warmer and days get longer, spending time outdoors can positively affect many areas of a child's development.

Being outdoors promotes:

- IMPROVED CONCENTRATION AND ATTENTION**
- INCREASED COGNITIVE FUNCTIONING**
- CREATIVITY & IMAGINATION**
- ENHANCED MOTOR SKILLS**
- HEALTHY SLEEP**
- FEWER SIGNS OF ANXIETY AND STRESS**
- SELF CONFIDENCE**
- PRACTICE OF SOCIAL SKILLS**

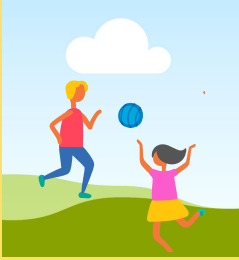
## TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

- Set expectations before going out. Tell them things like:
  - We are going to be outside for 15 minutes today, it's going to be a small play break.
  - You can play... in the grass, sand, with a ball, bubbles or chalk.
  - Remind them of safety rules such as:
    - We keep our bodies away from the street and cars.
    - We hold hands when walking.



**"The mud will wash away but the memories will last a lifetime."**

## OUTDOOR PLAY IDEAS



- Take one or many boxes outside and build! If children need some guidance, give suggestions such as making the box a treasure chest and putting grass, rocks and natural objects in it!
- Bring bubbles and chalk along
- Back and forth games such as kicking a ball, tag, chasing, or throwing a frisbee encourage reciprocity.
- Take a book and blanket for story time outdoors.

## "WHEN LIFE GIVES YOU A RAINY DAY, PLAY IN THE PUDDLES."

Moving about and exploring wet surfaces takes more concentration, strength, and agility. It enhances a child's sensory experience; a wet day and a dry day have very different smells, sounds, sights, and feeling. Try these ideas on a rainy day:

- Let them help decide what they need to wear in the rain (coat, boots, umbrella)
- Jump in puddles like a favorite super hero
- Use new language such as slippery, drenched, saturated, precipitation...
- Allow safe risk-taking (climbing, running) and talk about it:

"Notice how slippery the steps are."

"What do you think will happen if you run fast on the wet ground?"



## GOING INSIDE IS SAD

It is completely normal for children to show big emotions when they have to stop playing outside. Try these ideas to ease the transition:

- Give several countdowns: "5 more minutes" -Using a phone timer or kitchen timer is a great visual for children.
- Give them choices such as:
  - "Do you want to hop or skip to the car?"
- Give them a job such as carrying the ball to the car with positive praise such as "you are very strong to carry that ball".
- Talk about what fun thing they can do when they are inside.