



HEALTH AND HAPPINESS

Outdoor Play in Winter

BEING IN THE WEATHER

As the weather is becoming colder, we sometimes retreat indoors and wait in hope for the return of warmer days to again engage in outdoor experiences. Being in the fresh air, however, is important for our health, and active outdoor play in the colder months can be so much fun!

With layers of clothing, gumboots and rain jackets, children are warm and protected and able to enjoy uninhibited outdoor play. Feeling the exhilaration and fun of puddle jumping, watching and feeling the falling rain, watching rivulets of water turn into streams and puddles are opportunities for children to be one with their natural environment.

Mud and water play are all about fun - they engage all the senses, resulting in a highly stimulated and active brain.

Children have an inbuilt need to play in mud and water. Children spend uninterrupted and lengthy periods of time in sensory play, which supports developing concentration and engagement. Mud and water play are open-ended experiences. There is no right or wrong way to play and no end to creations, possibilities and ideas. This unstructured play allows for problem-solving, thinking critically, as well as creativity and inventiveness.



BEING IN NATURE

Exploring natural environments builds a stronger connection with nature as children explore and play with elements such as mud, sand, water, bark and stones. They have the opportunity and permission to get dirty.

Children of all ages enjoy and benefit from playing outdoors in all except the most extreme weather. Daily outdoor play is healthy and burns energy.



To find out more click on the link:

<https://www.ecms.org.au/getting-back-nature>

IDEAS FOR NATURE PLAY

- A short video on ideas for and benefits of outdoor play: <https://bit.ly/Outdoor-play-is-good-for-you>
- In this ABC Kids Community video, Daniel Burton has some tips about connecting with the natural world. This video has been adapted from an ABC podcast, Parental as Anything.

Video: <https://bit.ly/Staying-connected-to-nature>

Podcast: <https://ab.co/2SGuedq>

- Considerations for safety during COVID19, and making the most of the outdoors, from the International Play Association: <https://bit.ly/your-time-outside>



BEING IN THE FRESH AIR

- Soothes nerves, promotes feelings of relaxation, of being refreshed and a sense of happiness and well-being.
- Stimulates appetite and helps our food to digest more effectively.
- Helps us sleep more soundly at night.
- Helps to clear our mind, improves our concentration, and helps us to think more clearly.



Sunshine is delicious, rain is refreshing, wind braces us up, and snow is exhilarating; there is no such thing as bad weather, only different kinds of good weather”.

- Anne Lamott

