



Laugh and LEARN

April 2024
Parent Packet

April is our last in person Laugh + Learn until Fall 2024. We will continue with Grab + Go bags through the summer months. Keep your eyes open for a possible Laugh + Learn pop-up summer play date!

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The “Yays” of Outdoor Play

Playing outside is a fun and exciting way for a caregiver to help a young child learn and grow. Outdoor play creates sensory experiences for young children. A sensory experience is a moment that helps a child learn about their body’s five senses - seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling. Learning and using the five senses early in childhood helps the brain develop and teaches the body movement. Sensory experiences also help to create stronger memory, build problem solving and creativity skills, and teach children about how their actions affect the world around them. Taking babies on walks to see and hear the outdoors, and letting toddlers find new areas and objects that they can’t find indoors are both ways for young children to have sensory experiences.

Playing outdoors helps children learn. You can use the outdoors to create new learning activities that excite young children. Activities include sorting and counting activities and using outdoor items to create things like sandcastles or snowmen. Young children can also learn about the plants and animals that live outside. You can do this by finding seeds and roots and watching for animals. These moments can make young children want to learn more about what is outside. From this, a caregiver and child may want to grow a plant or garden of their own or learn more about the animals they live around.

Outdoor play is a fun way to do physical activity and build gross motor skills. Using large muscle groups to look at nature by walking, jumping over rocks and branches, and running through open fields are all ways to do physical activity in a fun way. Having fun while doing physical activity can also create a foundation of making healthy choices fun for life. Playing outdoors also helps young children sleep at night. This is because children are doing physical activity, spending time in the sunshine and fresh air, and relieving stress.

Young children can also meet new people while playing outdoors. Outdoor play can be a social time for children and their caregivers. Setting up outdoor playdates or going to a local area like a park allows young children to meet new children, and it allows caregivers to meet other caregivers as well. Overall, outdoor play helps young children to learn about and grow into the world they live in.

To find more ideas for ways to play outside, visit <https://www.pinterest.com/gonapsacc/outdoor-play-learning/>.

References

1. NCT (National Childbirth Trust.) (2019, August 30). The benefits of outdoor play for children. <https://www.nct.org.uk/baby-toddler/games-and-play/benefits-outdoor-play...>
2. Kinsner, K. (2019). Rocking and rolling. Fresh air, fun, and exploration: Why outdoor play is essential for healthy development. *Young Children*, 74(2) <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/may2019/outdoor-play-is-essential>

Source

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Bunny Puppets

Instructions:

- Decorate your bunny
 - Color, glitter, glue and paper, paint - get creative!
 - Use glue/tape to place the cotton ball for the tail
 - Tape/glue the craft stick to the back of the bunny puppet, leaving enough underneath the bunny to hold onto!
- Give your bunny a name!
- What do they like to do for fun?
- What is their favorite food?
- What is their favorite color?
- Have fun and let your imagination run FREE!

