



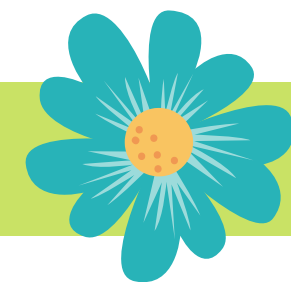
# NATURE BASED PLAY

## What Is Nature Based Play?



Any activity that gets children active or thinking actively outdoors, with the end goal of building skills and ability to play without the need for parental or adult control. This can be in any setting, so long as it's outdoors.

## Benefits



- Boosts children's physical activity, potentially decreasing childhood obesity.
- Provides for more diverse forms of play for children of varying ages and competencies.
- Contact with nature is **as important** to children as good nutrition and adequate sleep!
- Increased time in nature is correlated with an increase in student motivation and enthusiasm to learn.
- Regular habits of active play during childhood are one of the best predictors of active adulthoods—a perfect prescription for combating the obesity epidemic.
- Time outside also correlates with better performance in maths, science, reading and social studies.

## Guidelines for Good Nature Play



### 1. The right kind of place

Good nature play requires land that is not too protected and is wild. However large or small, the site must have elemental nature to play with and discover: things like rocks, dirt, trees, bugs, flowers, mud, and water. Also important, kids must be **free** to dig, collect, climb, build, and hide.

### 2. The right kind of play

Outdoor, "child-centered" play is the goal: play that children themselves initiate, guide, change, or abandon. BALANCE **freedom** with **necessary limits** to ensure a safe environment for exploration!

### 3. The right kind of re-play

Repetition of play regardless of changing circumstances. Bringing nature play into our families' yards, local green spaces, and school playgrounds—places they can reach on foot or by bicycle, day after day, to play and re-play is important.

Sources:

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13679-015-0179-2>

[https://caeyc.org/main/caeyc/proposals/pdfs/TEmbry%20handout3\\_Sat.pdf](https://caeyc.org/main/caeyc/proposals/pdfs/TEmbry%20handout3_Sat.pdf)