



# Out is In!

## *How Outdoor Play Environments Bring Learning Outdoors*



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Director of Education*



*Presented by:*



*Beth Wise  
Editor-in-Chief*





# Learning Objectives

- Discuss **research-based strategies** for creating quality outdoor play environments that provide unique hands-on learning experiences that support **creativity, imagination, and learning** outdoors.
- Summarize developmentally appropriate **play elements** and **design best practices** that align with early childhood accreditations and requirements for outdoor play and learning environments.
- Outline a variety of **resources and ideas to extend classroom learning** outdoors in areas such as creative arts, circle time, math, dramatic play, science, literacy/language, music, sensory-motor, sand/water, and social and motor skills.









# Community Benefits of Play

## Play is the foundation for learning...

- Growth and development
- Healthy physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development
- Enjoyment and emotional fulfillment
- Creativity, individuality, and imagination

## Play fosters communities who...

- Value the benefits of play
- Support people of all ages and abilities
- Connect with the wonders of the natural world
- Learn through meaningful experiences
- Engage in physical activity and healthy life balance
- Promote creativity and imagination
- Create passionate members of society



Play contains all developmental tendencies...and is itself a major source of development... Children are at their highest level of development when they are at play.

Vygotsky, 1978





# Developmental Benefits

Powerful effects on the whole child

- Intellectual and academic learning
- Mood and memory
- Stress relief
- Disease preventative
- Health and healing
- Self-esteem and self-confidence
- Social interaction
- Sensory stimulation
- Exploration and discovery
- Language and communication
- Attention restoration

Free, spontaneous play and outdoor playscapes, both natural and built, are essential for the fitness, health, and development of children and for their adaptation to their culture, society, and world.

- Dr. Joe Frost



DISCOVER  
LEARN  
LIVE





# THE MIND

## Cognitive Development

- Ideas & problem solving
- Logical & critical reasoning
- Language & symbolic thought
- Exploration & interaction
- Imagination & dramatic play
- Abstract Thinking
- Ability to focus & control behavior



ENGAGE  
EXPLORE

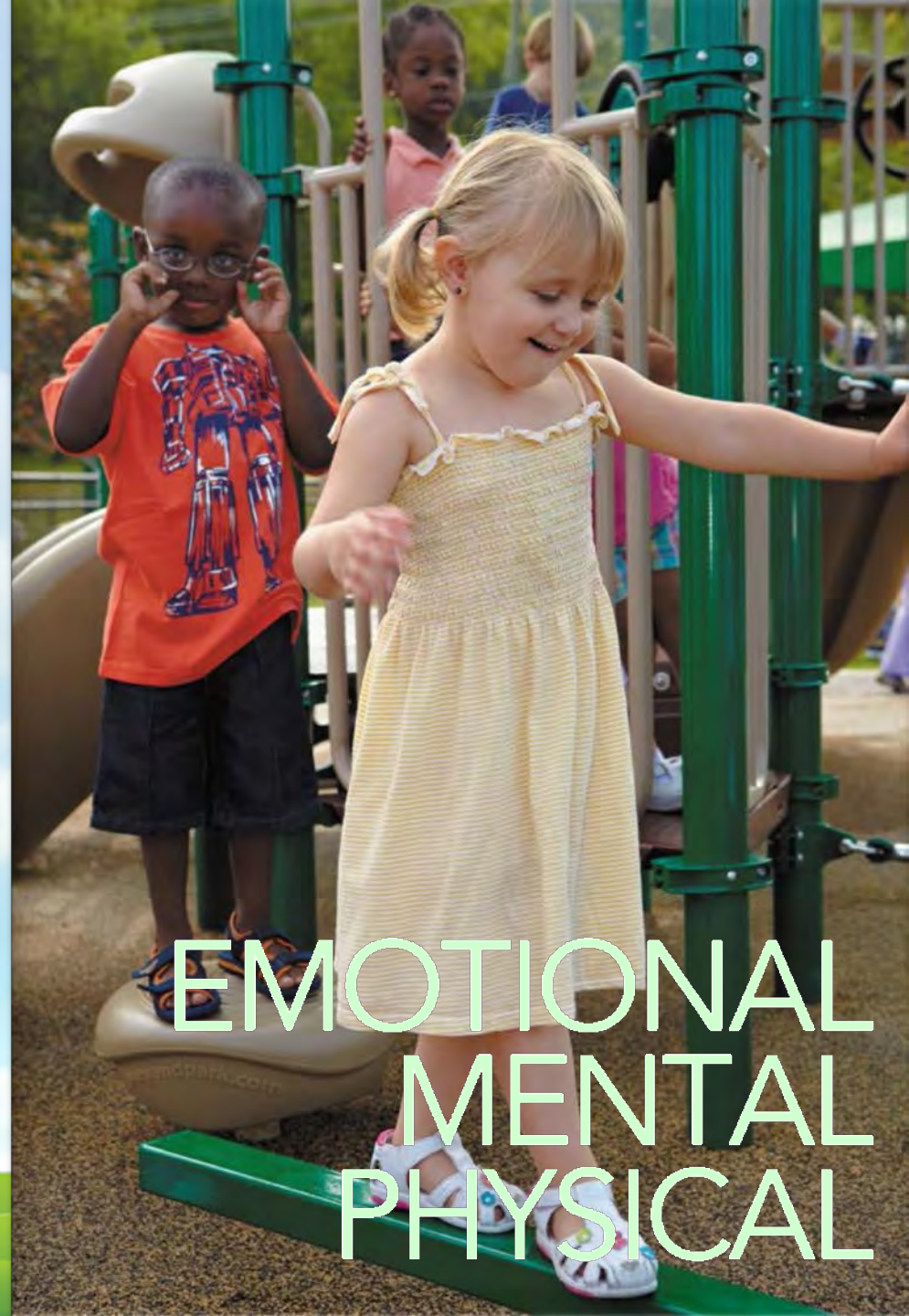




# THE BODY

## Physical Development

- Physical fitness/strength
- Gross & fine motor
- Flexibility
- Aerobic & muscular endurance
- Perceptual-motor development (hand-eye)
- Basic, refined, and coordinated movement skills (locomotor, manipulative & balancing)



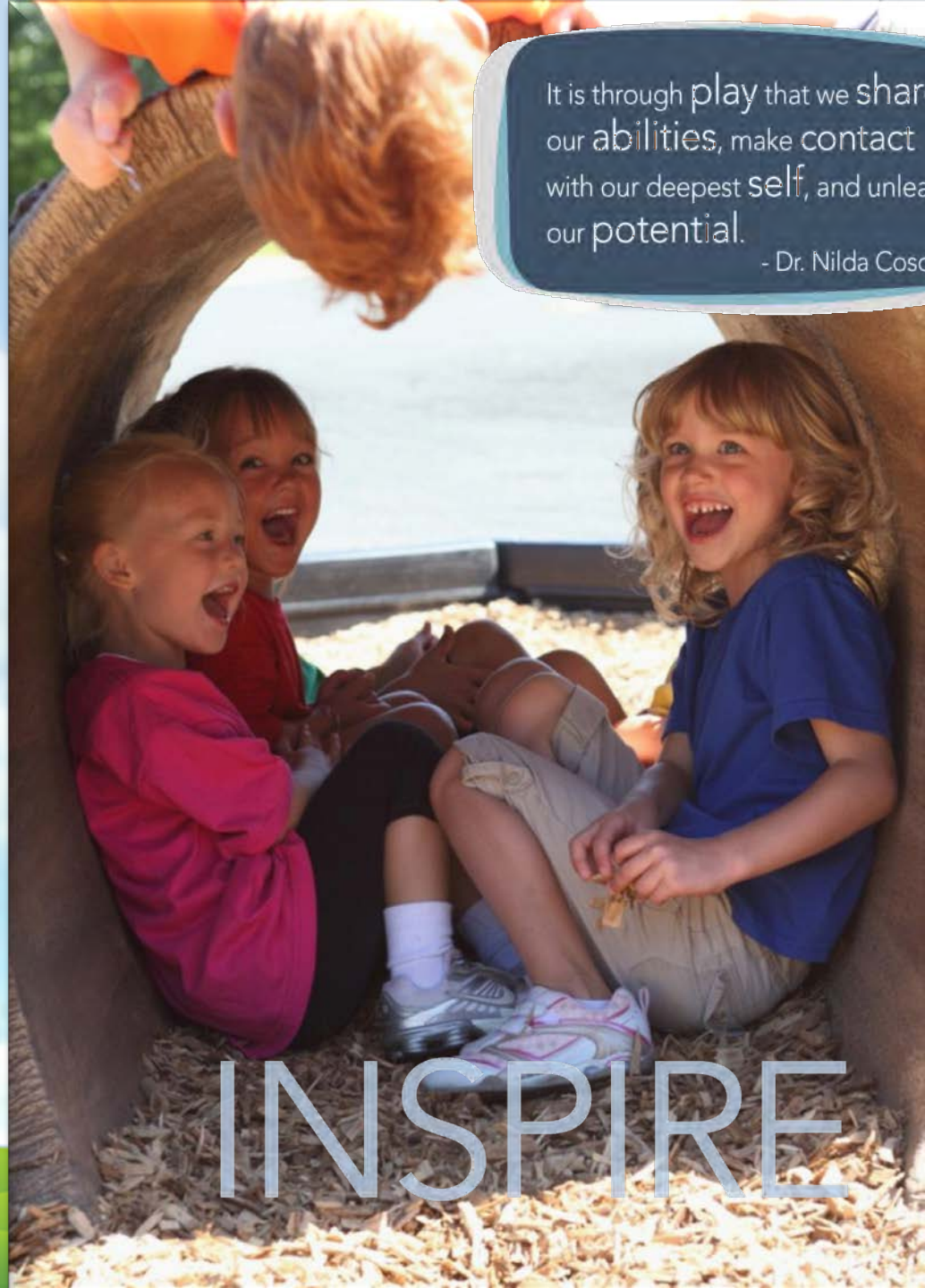
EMOTIONAL  
MENTAL  
PHYSICAL



# THE SPIRIT

## Social-Emotional Development

- Communication/Expression of feelings
- Cooperation/Sharing/Turn-Taking
- Negotiation/Compromise/Conflict resolution
- Assertion
- Concepts of friendship, love, & belonging
- Moral judgments
- Play signals
- Trust
- Leadership
- Self-expression
- Self-esteem
- Self control
- Compassion/Empathy



It is through play that we share our abilities, make contact with our deepest self, and unleash our potential.

- Dr. Nilda Cosco

# INSPIRE





physical

cognitive

**PLAY**

social

communication

sensory



# Learning

## Intimately Engaging Young Minds

- Cross-curricular
- Individual interests and learning styles
- Creative, adaptive, and problem-solving functions of the brain
- Learning, memory, concentration, and mood impact directly can influence academic performance
- Establishing relationships with the environment and its people
- Develop strengths and experience successes
- Dynamic, relevant, and developmentally appropriate

The out-of-door environment holds particular potential for mediating children's social, emotional, and intellectual learning in distinct ways not possible in the traditional indoor classroom.

- Dr. Kathleen Burriss

A photograph of two children, a boy and a girl, playing on a colorful playground structure. The boy is wearing glasses and a yellow shirt, and the girl is wearing a white shirt and a dark skirt. They are both reaching towards a panel of colorful buttons on the structure. The background shows a green landscape under a blue sky with clouds.

DYNAMIC  
HANDS-ON



# Aligning to Early Childhood Accreditation Requirements

## NAEYC Accreditation Criteria

### Physical Environment Outdoor Environmental Design

#### Standard #9



Outdoor play areas, designed with equipment that is age & developmentally appropriate & that is located in clearly defined spaces with **semiprivate areas** where children can play alone or with a friend, accommodate:

- Motor experiences such as **running, climbing, balancing, riding, jumping, crawling, scooting or swinging.**
- Activities such as **dramatic play, block building, manipulative play, or art activities.**
- Exploration of the **natural environment**, including a variety of **natural & manufactured surfaces**, & areas with natural materials such as nonpoisonous plants, shrubs & trees
- Adaptations are provided so **children with disabilities** can fully participate in the outdoor curriculum and activities

# Aligning to Early Childhood Accreditation Requirements

## Gross Motor Equipment

- Accessible for at least one hour a day
- Access without a long wait
- Equipment stimulates a variety of skills (balancing, climbing, ball play, pedal toys, etc.)
- Adaptations made or special equipment for children with disabilities.
- Both stationary and portable gross motor equipment used.
- Stimulates skills on different levels (Ex. ramp and ladder access to structure)

## Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)





# Aligning to Early Childhood Accreditation Requirements

## Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS)

### Activities

- **Fine Motor-** Many developmentally appropriate fine motor materials of each type
- **Art-** Many and varied art materials
- **Music-** Available as both a free choice and group activity
- **Blocks-** Some block play available outdoors, block area accessible for play for substantial portion of the day
- **Sand and Water-** Provisions for indoors and outdoors daily, variety of toys accessible for play
- **Dramatic Play-** Props provided for active play outdoors, props around themes accessible for substantial portion of day.
- **Nature/Science-** Materials are accessible for a substantial portion of the day, and everyday events used as a basis for learning about nature
- **Math/Number-** daily activities used to promote skills



# Aligning to Early Childhood Accreditation Requirements

## Head Start Early Childhood Framework



### The Domains

The 11 Domains represent the overarching areas of child development and early learning essential for school and long-term success. The eight domains of the original Framework, listed below, are retained and in some cases renamed. The domains in the revised Framework are:

1. Physical Development & Health
2. Social & Emotional Development
3. Approaches to learning
4. Language Development
5. Literacy knowledge & Skills
6. mathematics knowledge & Skills
7. Science knowledge & Skills
8. Creative Arts Expression
9. Logic & Reasoning
10. Social Studies knowledge & Skills
11. English language Development







# 1. Key Features of Quality Spaces

**\* No ranking or sequence \***



Only one aspect of a Quality Play Space



# Research-Based Best Practices & Considerations

## Designing Quality Outdoor Play and Learning Environments

- Diversity
- Variety
- Developmental Challenge
- Nature
- Physical Activity
- Inclusion





# Physical & Social Variables



- **4 processes that interact to promote the growth of intelligence:**
  - Maturation
  - Physical interaction with objects in the environment
  - Social transmissions of knowledge through experiences with people
  - Equilibration (constructing knowledge by organizing & relating experiences)

**2 of the 4 can be directly influenced**

- physical perceived knowledge
- socially transmitted knowledge

*Piaget (1952)*



# Keep it in Perspective

## **-Adult-functional:**

Explanations & descriptions about the functions & values of play – facilitating healthy development

## **-Child-experiential :**

Personal, experiential value is of equal, if not greater, importance

David Elkind, (2003). *Thanks for the Memory: The Lasting Value of True Play*. Young Children.





# Types & Forms of Play

## TYPES

- Autonomous
- Parallel
- Associative
- Cooperative

## FORMS

- Object Play/Exploration
- Sensorimotor
- Dramatic Play
- Symbolic Play
- Construction
- Loose Parts Play
- Organized Games
- Work-Play Activities







Develop appropriate environments that address the needs of the whole child!



## SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

For play to be truly inclusive, children need to be socially included. As children play together, they learn to cooperate, take turns, and engage in meaningful dramatic and imaginative play experiences that create lifelong memories. Providing places for children to feel emotionally secure allows them to belong and choose how and when to engage in play.



## PHYSICAL

All children need opportunities to be physically active through play. Play environments that provide a variety of developmentally appropriate activities, offer healthy risk, and challenge children of all abilities, create places where everyone wants to play.



## SENSORY

Play is most meaningful in sensory-rich environments that encourage discovery and exploration. Sensory play through tactile, visual, auditory, smells and tastes, vestibular, and proprioceptive experiences help children understand the world around them.



## COGNITIVE

Children learn through play and interacting with the people and world around them. Supporting intuitive play behaviors that stimulate development can help keep children engaged in meaningful play for longer periods of time. Opportunities for children to problem solve, think abstractly, and develop cause and effect skills help provide unique hands on opportunities to bring learning outside.



## COMMUNICATION

Playgrounds can support the development of receptive and expressive language, allowing children to demonstrate what they know and express themselves. Language development occurs through natural play behaviors and routines and is enhanced through developmentally appropriate play elements, loose parts, and outdoor programming.



# SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL

Under deck activities and dramatic play elements encourage children to think creatively and use their imagination.

Seating areas around, under, and on play structures offer a place to socialize, rest, or observe until emotionally ready to engage.

Signage and unique play elements can create an atmosphere of respect and acceptance and promote cultural/disability awareness.



# PHYSICAL

▶ Pathways, natural elements, loose parts, ground level, and freestanding activities encourage higher levels of physical activity.

▶ Play activities that promote fine and gross motor skills and others that require varied operating force, provide choices for how to play.

▶ Beginning, intermediate, and advanced level play events encourage children to move along a developmentally appropriate continuum of skills.













# SENSORY

▶ Consistent multisensory cues, using contrasting colors, landscaping, and textures for orientation and exploration help organize the playscape.

▶ Crawl tubes and under deck activities provide spaces for sensory relief, while activities such as spinning, rocking, or swinging provide sensory input.

▶ Natural materials such as child friendly plants and sand and water provide elements that stimulate the senses.





# COGNITIVE

▶ Activities that appeal to a variety of interests give children ways to make choices and demonstrate what they know at their level.

▶ Play activities that provide auditory, visual, or tactile feedback reinforce and develop the understanding of cause and effect.

▶ Creative opportunities to bring learning outdoors can support development in new and exciting ways.



# COMMUNICATION

▶ Play activities, talk tubes, and interactive games encourage children to communicate, cooperate, and/or vocalize.

▶ Music activities provide children a way to contribute to the sounds of the play environment.

▶ Creative play elements enable children to demonstrate understanding and develop vocabulary.





# Inclusion

## Providing Equal Opportunities for Physical and Social Play



- Make a ***fundamental statement*** about how you value and believe in every child's right to play!
- Recognize the ***strengths, individuality, dignity, and abilities*** of people of all ages and abilities!
- Encourage ***equal*** play opportunities, full ***participation*** in active play, and promote ***independence!***
- Address ***social and physical*** inclusion

A young boy with dark hair, wearing a blue polo shirt and jeans, is smiling and holding a large blue circular sign with a rainbow-colored border. The sign contains the title and subtitle of the document. The background is a bright blue sky with white clouds and a green grassy field at the bottom.

# 7 Principles

## of Inclusive Playground Design

Best Practices for Creating Meaningful  
Play Environments for People of  
All Ages and Abilities

be

fair  
included  
smart  
independent  
safe  
active  
comfortable

So that ...  
**EveryBODY**  
Plays!



# Resources: Inclusion

## Providing Equal Opportunities for Physical and Social Play

**1 be fair**  
The play environment is equitable and usable by children of all abilities.

**2 be included**  
The playground supports multi-generational and inclusive play in social and physical activities.

**3 be smart**  
The play environment is easy to understand, allowing individuals to be successful and gain confidence through play.

**4 be independent**  
The play environment allows children to effectively explore and participate in play on their own terms.

**5 be safe**  
The play environment addresses current safety standards while providing developmental opportunities needed for exploration and challenge.

**6 be active**  
The playground supports various degrees of physical and social participation in play while minimizing unnecessary fatigue.

**7 be comfortable**  
The play environment is usable by individuals with diverse body size, posture, mobility, motor control and sensory sensitivities.

me<sup>2</sup>

7 Principles of Inclusive Playground Design

PLAYCORE

2 Play Together

Fostering Friendships Through Inclusive Play

inclusive play activity book





# Nature

## Infusing the Natural World into the Everyday Spaces of Childhood

- Intellectual, emotional, and psychological well-being
- Independent mobility & connectivity
- Physical activity, fitness, and health
- Social interaction
- Rich sensory experiences
- Learning and hands-on experiences
- Increased play value
- Creativity, imagination, dramatic play
- Inclusion
- Stress reduction
- Increased attention and focus
- Intellectual, emotional, and psychological well-being
- Self-esteem, self-confidence

If we are going to solve the problem of sedentary childhood, we have no choice but to refocus intense professional attention on design for outdoor free play in everyday naturalized settings.

- Robin Moore





# NATURE PLAY SCHEMA

Infusing Nature into Everyday Spaces of Childhood



## UNDESIGNED

In The Woods

- Immersion in Nature
- Wildlife Exploration
- Discovery & Interaction

## INTENTIONAL DESIGN STRATEGIES

Natural Play Spaces

- Playing with Nature
- Intentional Activity Settings
- Manipulating Nature Elements

Naturalized Playgrounds

- Bring Nature to People
- Integrating Living and Built Environment
- Physical Activity

Playful Pathways

- Bring People to Nature
- Community Connectivity
- Environmental Literacy

**NatureGrounds** *Fitting nature into play™*

Overview

- What is NatureGrounds?
- Bringing nature back into a child's life
- A playground paradigm shift
- Why successful playgrounds?

News

- Outreach Training
- Background Research
- Case Study
- Partnership
- Best Practice Guidebook
- Resources
- Demonstration Sites
- Searchable Plant Database



**What is NatureGrounds?**

NatureGrounds: Putting Nature Into Play is a comprehensive program that provides best practice guidelines for creating and retrofitting play environments for parks and school grounds that integrate manufactured play equipment and the living landscape. The purpose of NatureGrounds is to create a dramatic shift in the standard playground development process by deliberately designing nature back into children's lives, not only to benefit children's play but also to engage communities in working together to create richer play experiences for all ages.

**Register for the guidebook**



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[www.naturegrounds.org](http://www.naturegrounds.org)

**NatureGrounds**  
*Fitting nature into play™*

**Creating & Retrofitting Play Environments**  
BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES

Designing Play Environments that Integrate Manufactured Play Equipment with the Living Landscape

**pathways for play**

home | about | benefits | research | case studies | my path | resources | partners | contact us

**my path...**  
interactive activities for pathway play



**My Path** offers useful information and interactive activities to further inspire play and enrich childhood experiences outdoors in nature. The content found on my path changes seasonally to provide families or educators new and fun ideas to infuse play, learning, and engagement along the way of their real journey. Purposefully created to be simple to implement, the activities are designed to get children and families moving, imagining, and engaging with the natural world around them during their pathway journey. Share your playful pathway experiences with others across the nation to bring play to nature!

**Spontaneous Play**

Spontaneous play (children playing together without direct adult intervention) is recognized by child development experts as a crucial aspect of healthy childhood.

Request the book



[www.pathwaysforplay.org](http://www.pathwaysforplay.org)

**pathways for play**

**Best Practice Guidelines**  
Infusing play into pathway networks to encourage active lifestyles for children, families, and communities





# Physical Activity

- Natural pattern of physical activity in children – short bursts of activity of mostly moderate-intensity exercise interspersed with brief periods of very vigorous exercise
- Active Start- Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years
- 60 minutes to several hours of positive physical play daily
- Impacts:
  - academic achievement
  - lifelong healthy habits
  - Bone growth and development
  - muscle strength
  - lungs and heart health
  - happiness
  - self-confidence
  - endurance and flexibility



Bassett, D.R. et al. (2013). Estimated Energy Expenditures for School-Based Policies and Active Living. American Journal of Preventive Medicine. 42(2), 108-113. Link to paper <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0749379712008057>



**CHILDREN ARE OVER WEIGHT**



**33% WATCH MORE THAN 3 HOURS OF TV**



**KIDS EAT 50% OF RECOMMENDED VEGETABLES**



**1 OF 3 MEALS ARE FAST FOOD**



**30% MORE IN HEALTH COST**



**PORTIONS 2 TO 5 TIMES BIGGER**



**SNACK SIZES HAVE GROWN**



**DRINK LESS POP MORE WATER**



**CHOOSE HEALTHIER CHOICES**



**INCREASE ACTIVE PLAY**



**SOLUTIONS**





# 6

## Essential Elements of Physical Activity



- Brachiating/Upper Body
- Balancing
- Climbing
- Swinging
- Sliding
- Spinning

### Balancing Benefits

Increases understanding of efficient body positioning and control when stationary or moving.

Promotes muscular strength and endurance throughout the entire body.

Introduces mechanical principles such as center of gravity, equilibrium, base of support, and counterbalances that are essential in most sport skills, especially gymnastics activities.

**Balancing Suggestion:** With your child, generate as many different matching balance poses as possible.

### Swinging Benefits

Integrates a smooth and synchronized movement pattern.

### Spinning Benefits

Develops kinesthetic awareness and postural control.

### Sliding Benefits

Enhances core stability, shoulder balance, and leg and arm control.

### Brachiating (Overhead Climbing) Benefits

Enhances spatial awareness and arm and leg coordination.

Advances the development of body management skills on stable and unstable apparatuses.

Fosters whole-body muscular strength, endurance and flexibility.

**Climbing Suggestion:** With your child, ascend and descend on their climbing structures as possible.



# Loose-Part Play

*“Portable materials or “loose parts” are essential to developing more broadly based, creative, developmentally sound play environments that allow and stimulate spontaneous play.”*

-Dr. Joe Frost, Child Development Expert

- Empowers **creativity**
- Encourages **cooperation**
- Offers **multisensory** hands-on experiences
- Encourages children to **plan, organize, discuss, build, create, and design** their own games and rules
- Child-directed play helps **translate abstract images** in their minds to concrete examples
- Motivates and inspires **movement**
- Promotes **communication** and discussion
- Addresses **individual learning styles**
- Promotes a **sense of power**, control, mastery, self-esteem, responsibility and ownership











# Natural Materials

- bamboo poles
- bark wedges
- straw bales
- small stones
- log stumps
- tree cookies
- trimmed branches
- pine cones
- leaves
- seed
- nuts
- flowers
- wood chips
- and many more





# Equipment Selection

Developmentally appropriate?

Promote **healthy risk-taking**?

**Variety** and **diversity** of play activities available?

**Beginning**, **intermediate**, **advanced** opportunities?

Address the **developmental domains**?

Intentionally promote **social interaction**?

Promote **physical activity** through play?

Opportunities to engage with **nature**?

Promote **inclusion**?

Opportunities for **loose-parts** to be used?

Additional learning opportunities?



# Putting it all together

Use our convenient worksheet to assess the quality of your outdoor play environment, identify areas of strength and need, and help set priorities to add a variety of equipment that support these learning categories.

## Learning Categories

Playground Equipment	Item #	Catalog Page #	Under 2 Area	Gardening	Cozy Spots	Creative Arts	Circle Time	Gross Motor	Outdoor Classroom	Math & Counting	Music & Movement	Play Village	Dramatic Play	Science	Sand & Water	Motion & Sensory	Literacy & Language
Friendship Table	MEC-024	10						✓									
My Existing Equipment																	



\*These research-based outdoor environment categories were derived from the following resources: Casey, T. (2007). *Environments for outdoor play: A practical guide to making space for children*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing Company; DeBord, K., Hestenes, L., Moore, R., Cokoo, N., & McGinnis, J. (2005). *POEMS: Preschool outdoor environment measurement scale*. Lewisville, NC: Kaplan; National Association for the Education of Young Children (2011). *All criteria document*. Washington, D.C.: NAEYC; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. (2010). *The head start child development and early learning framework: Promoting positive outcomes in early childhood programs serving children 3-5 years old*. Arlington, VA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



# Outdoor Play & Learning Environment





# Outdoor Play and Learning Centers

Multipurpose • Social • Nature



Gardening



Manipulative Equipment



Social & Emotional Development



Fixed Play Equipment



Music



Creative Arts Expression







What's the WEATHER?

Today is \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday \_\_\_\_\_

Monday \_\_\_\_\_

Tuesday \_\_\_\_\_

Wednesday \_\_\_\_\_

Thursday \_\_\_\_\_

Friday \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday \_\_\_\_\_

SEASONS

SUMMER

Blank panels for weather and season information.

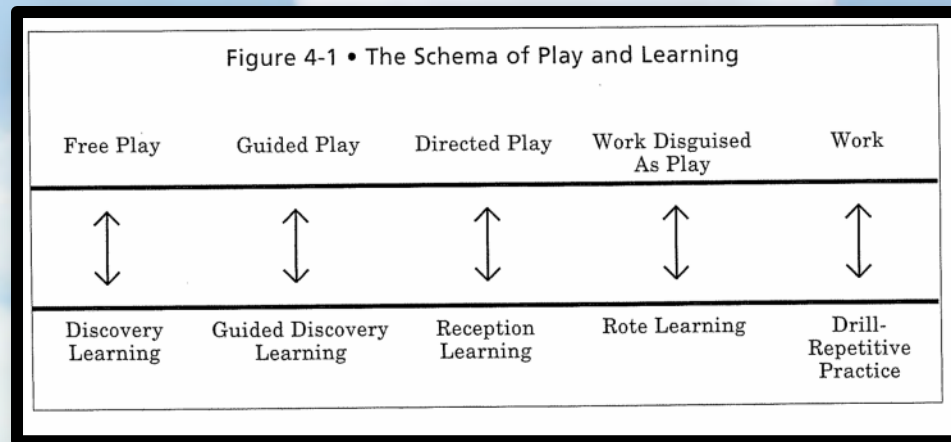
**OUT IS IN!**





# Play-Work Continuum

- Free Play
- Guided Play
- Directed Play
- Work



*“In order to use play effectively as a curricular tool, adults must have an intellectual understanding of the connections between play and learning. In addition, they must have personal experience of the power of play to enrich their own lives.”*

-Doris Bergen (1998). *Play as a Medium for Learning and Development*. ACEI.





# 3 Central Beliefs = Success

1. Involve a playful instructor
2. Offer learning benefits
3. Make activities  
F-U-N!

*Combining playground equipment, a creative program, and an enthusiastic facilitator can greatly enhance your programming efforts!*



**“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.”**

**- Fred Rogers**







- physical
- social
- emotional
- communicative
- sensory
- cognitive



# Outdoor Learning Centers







# Sand & Water

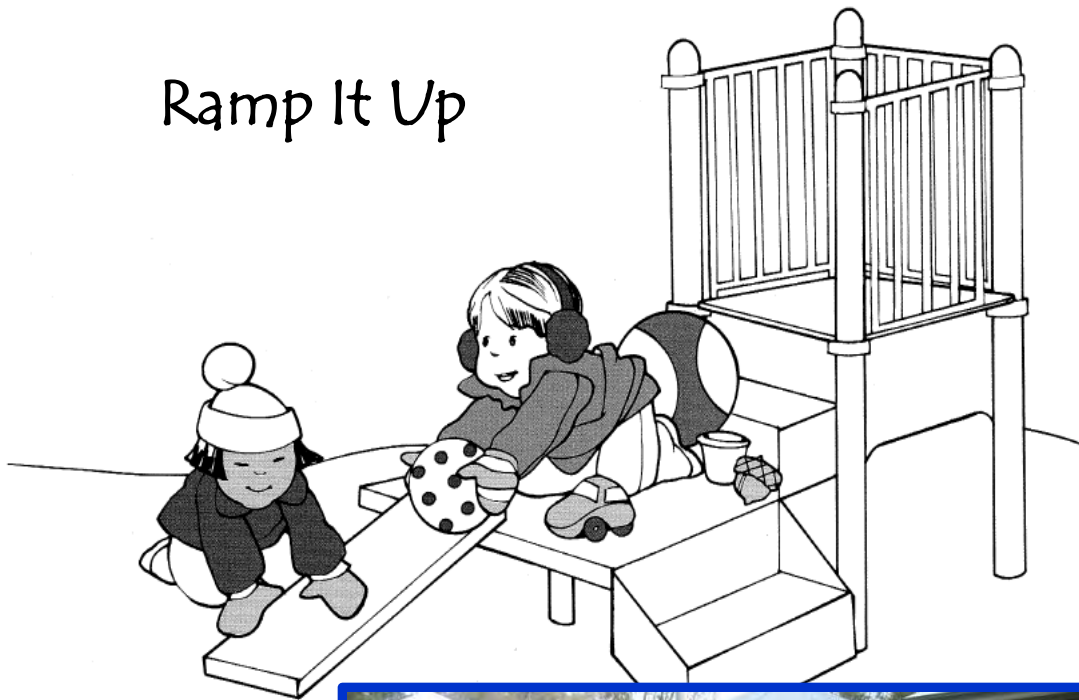
## Materials:

- cups, sifters, shovels, rakes, buckets
- dinosaurs, or other small objects

## Objectives:

- Explore volume (empty and full).
- Measure fractions (half, quarter, whole).
- Compare weights
- Find hidden objects.

## Ramp It Up



## Science

### Materials:

- boards or cardboard of different lengths and widths
- objects that roll or slide
- playground equipment (optional)

### Objectives:

- Trace an object's motion.
- Observe properties of different objects.





# Gross Motor

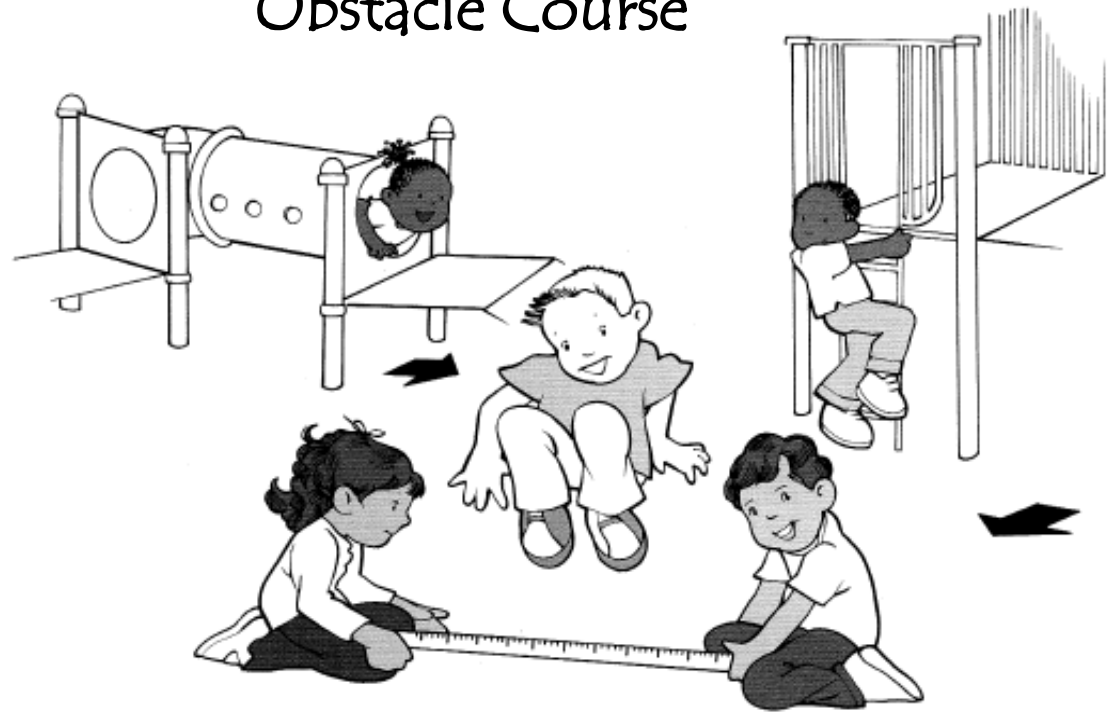
## Materials:

- yardsticks, traffic cones, beams
- game and playground equipment

## Objectives:

- Use words to describe relative location (over, under, through, in)
- Use space and materials creatively.
- Plan and carry out a sequence of actions.

## Obstacle Course



# Math

## Materials:

- shallow tub
- soap, water, glycerin
- chenille stems

## Objectives:

- Identify shapes.
- Discuss properties of shapes.
- Make predictions, observe, draw conclusions.





# Three Pigs on the Playground



## Dramatic Play

### Materials:

- “The Three Little Pigs”
- character tags, tape or headbands with wolf ears or pigs ears

### Objectives:

- Apply creative ideas from peers and adults.
- Act out imaginary roles.
- Retell a story in the correct sequence.
- Understand character, setting, and plot.





Stick to the Rhythm



# Music

## Materials:

- pairs of rhythm sticks
- buckets or large cans
- playground equipment (optional)

## Objectives:

- Apply creative ideas from peers and adults.
- Identify and perform rhythmic patterns.
- Listen for different purposes.
- Participate in musical activities.



# Art

## Materials:

- paint brushes, spray bottles, paint, chalk paper, easels, tape

## Objectives:

- Express self by participating in art activities.

## Pavement Paintings





# Gardening





# Managing the Centers











**Let's Go Outside!**

**Activity Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Playground Equipment Needed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approximate Time Needed for Activity/Day** \_\_\_\_\_

**Special setup(s)/game(s) for outside play** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Activity:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Books, Materials, Loose Parts Needed :**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Developmental Domains/Academic Areas Addressed:**

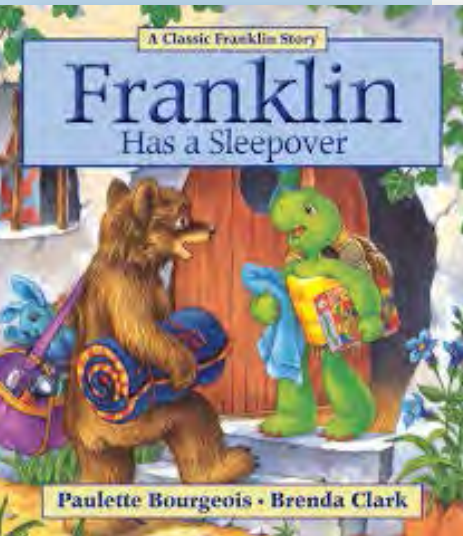
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# School-Wide Event

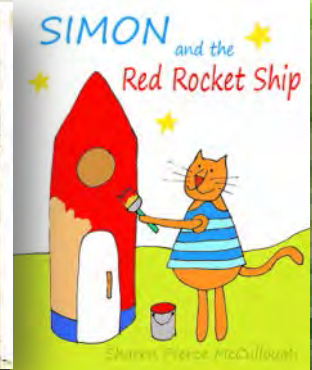
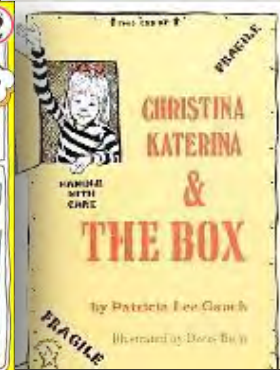
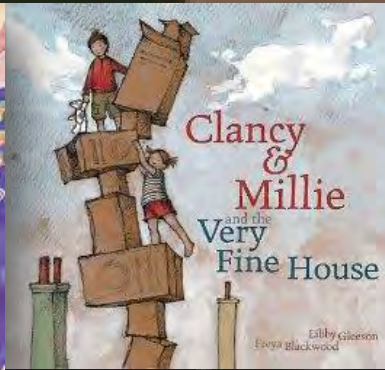
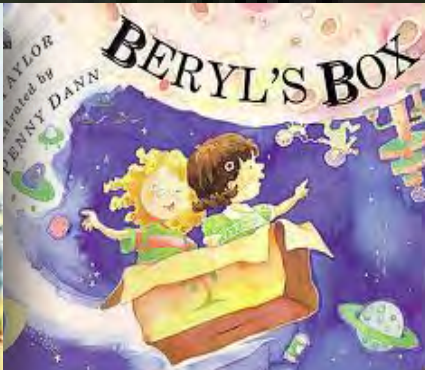
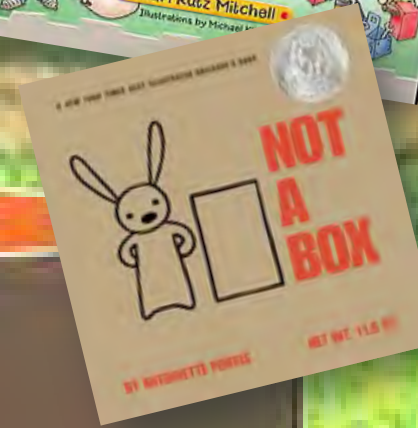
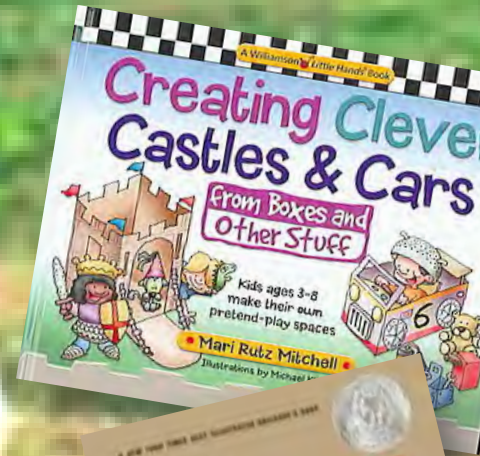




# Culmination of a Unit



# Literacy Connections







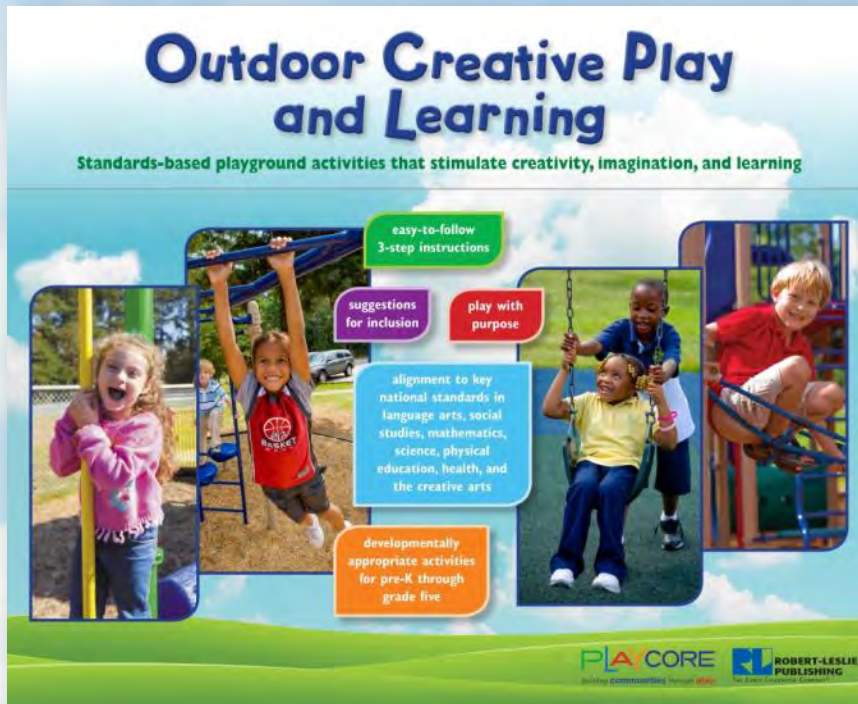
# Other Play Inspirations

- Habitat/Animal Creations
- Team Building & Game On
- Shape Up
- What's for Dinner?
- Art Design and Innovation
- Body Parts & Systems
- Responsibility
- Soar into Space
- Draw a Picture
- Around the World
- Community
- Safety First
- Math Mania



# HELPFUL RESOURCES

*Standards-based playground activities that stimulate creativity, imagination, and learning!*



- 100 Activity Cards
- Activity Guide
- Preschool-5<sup>th</sup> Grade



- 20 Activity Cards
- Activity Guide
- Preschool



# Arrow Game

**Activity:** Children play a version of a Native American throwing game.

**Content Connections**  
Thematics

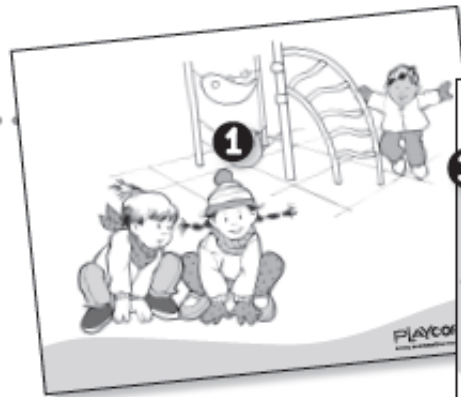
**Play with Purpose**  
Throw an object toward a target. Count with understanding. Learn to represent addition with objects.

**What You Need**  
Newspaper, rubber bands, tape, markers or crayons  
Playground equipment (optional)

**Physical Education**  
Ask children to balance on one foot, run, skip, gallop from a designated area as they throw their arrows.

**Inclusion**  
Move closer to the target or use denser objects that are bean bags for arrows.

	Easy	Challenge
<b>1</b>	Explain that long ago, some Native American children practiced their throwing skills by flinging arrows at a target. Have children make their own "arrows" by rolling newspaper into an arrow shape and using tape or a rubber band to secure it. Suggest that children decorate their arrows so they can easily locate them after each throw.	Encourage children to think of ways to make the game more challenging, including moving the hoop farther away, reducing the size of the hoop, opening, or rolling the hoop to create a moving target. Also, have children look for large and small openings in play structures to use as "targets."
<b>2</b>	Stand the hoop upright, making sure arrows can pass through the center easily. Explain that the hoop is the target. To begin, children stand behind a line to throw their arrows through the hoop. Move the line back as children's throws become more accurate. After each child, pick up their arrows one at a time and count aloud with children.	Have children line up behind you some distance to the side of the target. Model how you hold your arrow at shoulder height and throw it as you walk or run past the target from the side. Have children take turns, scoring one point each time the arrow goes through the target.
<b>3</b>	Ask children what they could do to their arrows to make them "fly" more accurately. For example, they might experiment with longer, shorter, or thinner arrows. What characteristics of the various arrows seemed to help them fly better?	Have children brainstorm other games they can play with their arrows and the hoop. For example, they could lay the hoop flat on the ground and toss their arrows underhanded from a distance. The child whose arrow lands closest to the center of the hoop wins.



**PLAYCORE**  
Building communities through play™

**Let's Be Frogs!**

Rank by 1 Circle a picture showing what jumping with air is like to be Frog.

Easy	Challenge
1. Jumping a person's height.	1. Jumping a person's height.
2. Jumping a person's height.	2. Jumping a person's height.
3. Jumping a person's height.	3. Jumping a person's height.
4. Jumping a person's height.	4. Jumping a person's height.
5. Jumping a person's height.	5. Jumping a person's height.
6. Jumping a person's height.	6. Jumping a person's height.
7. Jumping a person's height.	7. Jumping a person's height.

**2** Circle a picture showing what jumping with air is like to be Frog.



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# Activity Guide



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## Correlation to National Standards

The activities on the Outdoor Creative Play and Learning cards address the standards-based. That means that the objectives on the cards help address the Common Core State Standards for older children and are also based on, or directly taken from, learning or performance objectives cited by the national associations included in the list below:

- Language Arts:**
  - Common Core State Standards
  - International Reading Association Standards for the English Language Arts
- Science:**
  - Next Generation Science Standards
- Mathematics:**
  - Common Core State Standards
  - National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Standards
- Physical Education and Health:**
  - Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children From Birth to Five Years
- Social Studies:**
  - National Council for the Social Studies Standards
- Early Childhood:**
  - National Association for the Education of Young Children
  - Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs: Serving Children from Birth to Age 8
- Creative Arts:**
  - National Standards for Arts Education

The chart on the following pages shows which skills or objectives are listed next to that objective.

# User Friendly Activity Guide

## Outdoor Creative Play and Learning

### Preschool Assessment Checklist

Use this checklist to document the progress that children demonstrate as they work toward skill proficiency.

Scenarios Key	
1 = Not Yet	The child is just beginning to show some of the signs of this skill.
2 = Developing	The child is developing some understanding and/or ability.
3 = Secure	The child exhibits proficiency for his or her age.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Preschool Assessment Checklist continued)

Social Studies
Explore new places.
Compare the past and the present.
Talk about how people create places.
Use words to describe relative location.
Take turns in a group.

### Preschool

Date \_\_\_\_\_

#### Language Arts

Follow simple directions.	1, 9
Begin to talk with others to describe objects and movement.	2, 7
Listen for different purposes.	5, 10
Gather information to answer a question.	12
Recite a nursery rhyme.	13
Gather information to question.	17
Recite a nursery rhyme.	20

#### Science

Experiment with different objects to compare their effects.	2, 2, 9
Talk and ask about objects in nature.	4, 5
Trace an object's motion.	12
Observe properties of different objects.	12

#### Social Studies

Explore new places.	7
Compare the past and the present.	11
Talk about how people create places.	15
Use words to describe relative location.	16
Take turns in a group.	18

#### Mathematics

Begin to count.	3, 6, 10
Identify simple shapes.	3
Begin to recognize "how many" in sets of objects.	6
Recognize numbers 1-10.	13
Identify and copy shapes.	19

#### Physical Education

Participate regularly in physical activity.	
Experiment with gross-motor movement.	
Develop fine-motor skills.	
Mime a sequence of actions.	
Kick, throw, and catch a ball with accuracy.	
Play cooperative games.	
Plan and carry out a sequence of actions.	
Move in response to verbal cues.	
Use materials properly.	
Demonstrate passing skills.	
Willingly try new movements and skills.	

#### Dramatic Play

Act out imaginary roles.

#### Music and Movement

Play instruments and move to music.	1
Sing in a group.	14

#### Art

Create artworks.	2
Use line and space in artworks.	19

#### Creativity and Imagination

Use space and materials creatively.	11, 14, 16, 19
Make creative contributions in a group.	15
Apply creative ideas from peers and adults.	17
Work creatively with others.	20

#### Physical Education continued

Identify simple shapes.	
Begin to recognize "how many" in sets of objects.	
Recognize numbers 1-10.	
Identify and copy shapes.	
Participate regularly in physical activity.	
Experiment with gross-motor movement.	
Develop fine-motor skills.	
Mime a sequence of actions.	
Kick, throw, and catch a ball with accuracy.	
Play cooperative games.	

#### Dramatic Play continued

Act out imaginary roles.

#### Music and Movement continued

Play instruments and move to music.	1
Sing in a group.	14

#### Art continued

Create artworks.	2
Use line and space in artworks.	19

#### Creativity and Imagination continued

Use space and materials creatively.	11, 14, 16, 19
Make creative contributions in a group.	15
Apply creative ideas from peers and adults.	17
Work creatively with others.	20

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Preschool Assessment Checklist continued)

Mathematics
Begin to count.
Identify simple shapes.
Begin to recognize "how many" in sets of objects.
Recognize numbers 1-10.
Identify and copy shapes.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Preschool Assessment Checklist continued)

Physical Education
Participate regularly in physical activity.
Experiment with gross-motor movement.
Develop fine-motor skills.
Mime a sequence of actions.
Kick, throw, and catch a ball with accuracy.
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Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Preschool Assessment Checklist continued)

Physical Education continued
Identify simple shapes.
Begin to recognize "how many" in sets of objects.
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Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Preschool Assessment Checklist continued)

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Kick, throw, and catch a ball with accuracy.
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Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

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(Preschool Assessment Checklist continued)

Physical Education continued
Identify simple shapes.
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Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Preschool Assessment Checklist continued)

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Kick, throw, and catch a ball with accuracy.
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Date \_\_\_\_\_

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Begin to recognize "how many" in sets of objects.
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Develop fine-motor skills.
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Kick, throw, and catch a ball with accuracy.
Play cooperative games.

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Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Preschool Assessment Checklist continued)

Physical Education continued
Identify simple shapes.
Begin to recognize "how many" in sets of objects.
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Experiment with gross-motor movement.
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Mime a sequence of actions.
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Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Preschool Assessment Checklist continued)

Physical Education continued
Identify simple shapes.
Begin to recognize "how many" in sets of objects.
Recognize numbers 1-10.
Identify and copy shapes.

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(Preschool Assessment Checklist continued)

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Experiment with gross-motor movement.
Develop fine-motor skills.
Mime a sequence of actions.
Kick, throw, and catch a ball with accuracy.
Play cooperative games.

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Preschool Assessment Checklist continued)

Physical Education continued
Identify simple shapes.
Begin to recognize "how many" in sets of objects.
Recognize numbers 1-10.
Identify and copy shapes.









# WORDS ON PLAY

Play offers **dynamic, hands-on** experiences that provide people of all ages opportunities to **explore, learn,** and make **connections** within their **community,** form meaningful relationships, and **engage** in the neighborhoods where they **live.** It is through play that we **inspire** the **mental** and **emotional mind,** motivate the **physical body,** and **discover** an **awareness** of **spirit** and **equality.** Now more than ever, it is critical to **study** play **behavior,** seek **knowledge** on the power of play, and **promote** best practices that **advocate** lifelong play across nations.

How will you  
advocate and  
communicate  
the  
importance  
of play bring  
learning  
outdoors?



# Thank You!

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