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Northwest Connection

FAMILY RESOURCES

5 Benefits of Outdoor Winter Play

Outdoor winter play has long been blamed for colds and the flu. Our parents told us “bundle up or you’ll catch a cold” and their parents probably told them the same thing. But winter play gets a bad rap. Although going outside unprepared for the elements is unwise, viruses that are spread by other human beings cause colds and the flu indoors.

The indoor circulation of germs and bacteria is much more harmful to your child than playing outside. There are plenty of excellent references for winter safety tips, such as an article by the American Academy of Pediatrics that explains proper clothing, winter health and so much more. With the right preparation and understanding of winter weather, your child can have as much fun in the cold as he or she does in the sun!

Here are five benefits of outdoor winter play:

Breathe Fresh Air

It’s no secret that most parents blame winter air as the cause for colds and the flu. Although the viruses that cause flu and colds are more common in the winter months, the

circulated air in closed environments (school, daycare) are the main cause of your child getting sick. All of the bacteria, dirt, dander, and other germs simply get recycled through the air vents over and over. The more time you spend inside, the more you are exposed. Nothing is more refreshing than that first deep breath of cold, winter air before starting hours of fun outdoor play.


Strengthen Immune System

As stated above, playing outside allows your child an escape from indoor germs and bacteria. This will not only be good for the healthy bunch; the sick kids benefit from the fresh air as well. Just make sure they are properly bundled up and moving around to capture and generate warmth. Being outside more often also allows your child to develop a stronger autoimmune system and a resistance to allergies. Studies have shown that children in rural areas or those who are active outside have the best overall health.

Engage in Physical Exercise

Just because it’s cold outside doesn’t mean your children have lost their energy or desire to play. In fact, the

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**Why fit in
when you
were born to
stand out?**
Dr. Seuss

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5 Benefits of Outdoor Winter Play (continued from page 1)

California Childcare Health Program states outdoor winter play “gives children an opportunity for a change of environment, a balance in play and routine, and large muscle activities (gross-motor development.” You must remember your child is still growing.

During these months, and prolonged sessions of inactivity are not conducive to their muscular development. Video games are a fine idea in the worst weather, but if it is a sunny winter day there are a lot of physical activities kids can do.

Stimulate the Imagination

The winter also offers a variety of ways to stimulate your imagination through play. Does your child like to build things? Build a snow fort in the back yard with tunnels and a home base. Do you have access to a park? Go for a wildlife hike and look for birds and other woodland creatures. With all of the technological advancements of the past decade, many children are using their imaginations less and

less. Something as simple as building a silly snowman utilizes problem solving and imaginative skills they would not be using while sitting on the couch.

Have Fun!

The list of fun things to do in the winter goes on and on. Sledding, ice-skating, snow angels, snowball fights, building snow forts and building snowmen are all unique to winter weather and provide tons of fun for everyone. And by “everyone” we mean the parents as well. Nothing makes your children more comfortable and motivated for outdoor winter play than when dad is going to help build a snow fort or mom is taking them sledding. As with any activity, this is a great time to bond and enjoy a fun outdoor activity together. Don’t forget to bring the camera!

-This article was taken from Kids in the House website and was written by David Reeves.

<http://www.kidsinthehouse.com/toddler/play-and-downtime/5-benefits-of-outdoor-winter-play>



Here’s what Family Child Care Providers & Center Directors are saying about their recent experiences with YoungStar Technical Consultants .

TESTIMONIES

- ★ “Tiffany has enhanced my program by observations and recommendations for individual room improvement.” - Noah’s Ark Daycare, Douglas County
- ★ “Robin helped give reinforcement and support for what we do everyday in our work with children.” -Camp Jörn YMCA, Vilas County
- ★ “Technical consultant helped with ideas for environment changes, helpful ideas with moving furniture, what to discard, etc.” -Phelps Daycare, Vilas County
- ★ “Jessie helped with my budget and policy and taught me what goes into my policy for my daycare.” -Dolls Daycare, Ashland County
- ★ “The technical consultant helped with getting staff all on the same page.” -Douglas County
- ★ “Amanda was able to give a lot of different ideas for things that I was struggling with.” -Ashland County

Wisconsin AfterSchool Association Conference

Join with others throughout Wisconsin to support high-quality out-of-school time programs.

The Wisconsin AfterSchool Association provides a professional network for all providers of out-of-school time programs serving the diverse needs of Wisconsin's children and families.

The Wisconsin AfterSchool Association is the state affiliate to the National AfterSchool Association (NAA). As a state affiliate our members join with providers across the nation to enhance the quality of out-of-school time for all children and youth

The Wisconsin AfterSchool Association:

- ★ Supports staff training and professional development through a state conference, regional trainings, newsletter and information sharing between members
- ★ Promotes quality initiatives through the National Accreditation Standards and the administration of the Wisconsin School Age Credential Advocates for legislative initiatives and funding in support of AfterSchool programs

For more information about the Wisconsin AfterSchool Association Annual Conference please visit the website at waaweb.org. There you will find dates, times, registration, and lodging.



-This information was taken from the Wisconsin AfterSchool Association website www.waaweb.org

Changes to YoungStar in 2016

With the new year, comes new changes! The 2016 YoungStar evaluation criteria is here!

An overview of 2016 Evaluation Criteria is a document available online that outlines clarifications or modifications that were made to YoungStar for 2016 implementation. These changes will be effective for any program that applies to YoungStar on or after January 1, 2016 or whose anniversary date is in 2016.

Example: In the 2016 changes in the YoungStar Evaluation Criteria you will have 90 calendar days instead of 60 to replace staff members that have left when you use your one-time grace period. This means that staff transitions are less likely to negatively affect your current star rating. How great is that?

To look over the rest of these changes please visit the YoungStar website or click on the link below http://dcf.wisconsin.gov/youngstar/pdf/ys_changes/2016-ys-changes.pdf

If you have any questions, please call our office at (715) 634-2299, we would be happy to assist you!



Upcoming Training Opportunities

Pyramid Model

This training examines why professional development in social emotional competence is important to children, families and child care providers. This training will be offered in a 4 part series in Rusk County and in an 8 part series in Ashland County, in which you must attend all sessions in the series. There is a \$50 fee for this training.

- ★ *At Rusk County Community Library from 9:00 - 4:00 pm on the following Saturday's. Lunch will be included.*

January 16th

February 6th

March 19th

April 9th

April 23rd (make-up day)

- ★ *At CESA 12 in Ashland from 6:00 - 9:00 pm on the following Wednesday nights.*

February 3rd, 17th, and 24th

March 9th, 16th, and 30th

April 13th and 20th

April 27th (make-up day)

Healthy Bites

This training will empower programs to improve the quality of the meals and snacks that they provide to the children in their care. There is a \$20 fee for this training and it will include lunch.

- ★ *Saturday, March 12th at Bad River Lodge & Casino in Bad River from 8:00 - 4:00pm*

Developmentally Appropriate Practice DAP

This training will discuss the Developmentally Appropriate Practices for children ages 0 - 8. Join us to renew your passion and bring you back to best practices. There is a \$15 fee for this training.

- ★ *Tuesday, February 16th at the Oneida County Law Enforcement Center in Rhinelander from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*

- ★ *Thursday, February 18th at Iron County Courthouse in Hurley from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*

- ★ *Monday, February 22nd at Northwest Connection Family Resources in Hayward from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*

- ★ *Thursday, March 10th at the Crandon Public Library from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*

Family Engagement: Partnering with Families for Children's Success

This 3 hour course will explore best practices in family engagement, explore challenges and barriers to connecting with families and look at concrete strategies to improve your ability to develop relationships with families and increase their engagement. There is a \$15 fee for this training.

- ★ *Monday, January 11th at CESA 12 in Ashland from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*

Breastfeeding Friendly

This 3 hour training will focus on provider education on how to implement best practices and policies that support breastfeeding in early care and education environments. There is a \$15 fee for this training.

- ★ *Tuesday, March 29th at Northwest Connection Family Resources in Hayward from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*

Please call for more information &
to register for each training
(715) 634-2299 or (800) 733-KIDS

Upcoming Training Opportunities

Discovering Science: The Laboratory of Life

This training will provide education for providers on how to incorporate science concepts into their programs. Science will be explored through hands on activities. There is a \$15 fee for this training.

- ★ *Tuesday, February 9th at the Microtel Inn and Suites in Rice Lake from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*
- ★ *Thursday, February 11th at the Phillips Normal Building from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*
- ★ *Monday, February 22nd at the DNR in Spooner from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*
- ★ *Wednesday, March 23rd at the Eagle River Inn from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*

Ages and Stages 3 Questionnaire (ASQ-3)

This developmental screening is a proven strategy for identifying children's strengths and opportunities for growth. Come learn more about the Ages & Stages Questionnaire and how to empower parents to meet their children's needs. There is a \$20.00 fee for this training including materials.

- ★ *Tuesday, February 16th and Thursday, February 18th at the Superior Public Library from 5:30 - 8:30 pm. You must attend both sessions.*
- ★ *Tuesday, March 15th and Thursday, March 17th at the Chetek School District from 6:00 - 9:00 pm. You must attend both sessions.*

Art from the Heart: Fostering the Creative Process in Children

This training will provide education for providers on how to incorporate art concepts into their programs. Art will be explored through hands on activities. There is a \$15 fee for this training.

- ★ *Tuesday, March 29th at the Superior Public Library from 5:30 - 8:30 pm*

Early Literacy

This training will examine the key components of a comprehensive, integrated literacy program and teaching strategies that encourage strong phonological awareness. There is a \$15 fee for this training.

- ★ *Tuesday, March 8th at the Oneida County Law Enforcement Center in Rhinelander from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome & Shaken Baby Syndrome Prevention Training

These trainings will help you to discover the causes, effects and ways to help prevent Shaken Baby Syndrome. You will also learn about Sudden Infant Death Syndrome and how to help reduce risk. This is a wonderful training for providers, parents, and community members. There is a \$20 fee for this combined training.

Each month this training will be offered at NCFR in Sawyer County (see specific dates below)

- ★ *Thursday, January 28th from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*
- ★ *Thursday, February 25th from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*
- ★ *Thursday, March 31st from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*

Training Dates being offered at Oneida County Law Enforcement Center:

- ★ *Thursday, January 19th from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*
- ★ *Thursday, March 22nd from 6:00 - 9:00 pm*



Helping Toddlers Become Problem-Solvers

All parents and teachers have seen the unique ability of toddlers to use toys and materials in unexpected ways. One child may turn a cup into a hammer or a basket into a hat. Another toddler may stand on a riding truck to try to reach a toy or pull over a chair to climb onto a bookshelf. Observant adults recognize these innovations as signs that children are learning to use their thinking skills to solve problems.

Experiences in problem solving help children develop curiosity and patience, along with thinking skills such as flexibility, and understanding of cause and effect. They learn to work toward achieving a goal, and gain confidence in their ability to reach a solution.

Even very young children make discoveries on their own. An infant who accidentally creates a noise with a rattle may then make the sound again and again on purpose. An older infant discovers that by looking under a blanket, he can find a hidden toy. A toddler who cannot pull a wagon up a hill by herself learns that she and a friend can push it up from behind.

By not rushing in and rescuing young children who are facing minor everyday problems, adults can help infants and toddlers develop confidence and increase their thinking abilities.

It's also helpful for parents teachers to provide materials that encourage children to explore. Some toys, such as jack-in-the-boxes and busy boxes, provide opportunities to explore simple cause-and-effect relationships. Other common materials like empty cardboard boxes, plastic bowls, or scarves can provide open-ended experiences through which toddlers can make choices and decisions, and find different ways to manipulate the materials.

Other activities can involve materials such as clear plastic tubing (such as the tubing used for aquariums) which children can fill with bright materials, and watch the materials move as they shake the tubes. If you provide inclines or ramps of wooden blocks, a toddler can watch what happens as objects roll down inside the tubes. She may discover that some objects roll faster than others. He may learn about actions and reactions when he sets plastic bottles at the bottom of the ramp to create a unique bowling game.

(Whatever materials you provide to help children experiment with problem solving, remember to be very careful about choking hazards.)

These everyday materials are fun, and can hold children's interest for long periods. They also help children experiment with cause and effect and with gravity and physics. In addition to supporting cognitive development, problem-solving activities help in the social arena as well. Groups of children engaged in these activities negotiate with their friends and learn how to solve interpersonal problems.

By providing interesting materials and enthusiastically reinforcing children's attempts to explore and solve problems, parents and teachers can stimulate children's development, promote advanced critical thinking, and help children take pride in their own abilities to find out more about how their world works.

-This article was taken from the naeyc website and was written by Laura Segatti, Judy Brown-DuPaul, and Tracy L. Keyes

Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss!

One hundred and eleven years ago on March 2nd, Dr. Seuss (or, Theodor Seuss Geisel) was born. Author and illustrator of 46 children's books, Dr. Seuss is one of the most well-known and beloved authors of all time, with his work having been adapted into 11 TV specials, four feature films, a Broadway musical, four television series and a theme park over the years.

Dr. Seuss could pack more meaning into a few short verses than most writers can manage in a whole novel. So selecting the best of the best in Dr. Seuss quotes was no easy feat. These quotes were picked for being especially thought provoking pearls of wisdom - or for just plain making you smile. They are quotes that every self-respecting "Seussophile" should know.

1. The more that you READ, the more things you will KNOW. The more that you LEARN, the more places you'll GO. - I Can Read with My Eyes Shut!
2. UNLESS someone like YOU cares a whole awful lot, NOTHING is going to get better. It's NOT.
The Lorax
3. Shout loud, "I am LUCKY to be what I am! Thank goodness I'm not just a CLAM or a HAM or a dusty old JAR of sour gooseberry jam!" - Happy Birthday to You!
4. Today you are YOU! That is truer than TRUE! There is no one alive that is you-er than YOU!
Happy Birthday to You!
5. You do not like them. So you say. Try them! Try them! And YOU MAY! - Green Eggs and Ham
6. ...A person's a PERSON, no matter how small. - Horton Hears a Who!
7. I know it is wet and the sun is not sunny. But we can have lots of good FUN that is FUNNY!
The Cat and the Hat
8. From there to here, from here to there, FUNNY things are EVERYWHERE.
One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish
9. Today was good. Today was FUN. TOMORROW is ANOTHER ONE.
One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish
10. And the turtles, of course...all the turtles and, maybe, ALL creatures should be. - Yertle the Turtle

- This information was taken from the Early Moments Share the Gift of Reading website

<https://www.earlymoments.com/dr-seuss/dr-seuss-quotes-everyone-should-know/>

7 Ways to Celebrate Dr. Seuss's Birthday

1. **Yikes Stripes!** Wear something striped, like the Cat and the Hat
2. **Favorite Color Day!** In honor of Dr. Seuss's book *My Many colored Days*, wear your favorite color
3. **Socks, Socks, Socks!** Roll up your pants and show off your socks in honor of *Fox in socks*
4. **Red and White Day!** Wear the Cat in the Hat's favorite colors in honor of Dr. Seuss's birthday
5. **Wacky Wednesday!** Swimming flippers and a snow parka? It's a perfectly acceptable outfit when celebrating Wacky Wednesday with Dr. Seuss
6. **Try Green Eggs and Ham!** Add pureed broccoli to make scrambled eggs green. You'll be giving your kids a hidden vitamin boost
7. **Make a Truffula Tree!** Celebrate Dr. Seuss's classic *The Lorax* by making your own Truffula Trees.

- This information was taken from the Early Moments Share the Gift of Reading Website.

<https://www.earlymoments.com/dr-seuss/fun-ways-to-celebrate-dr-seuss/>



Northwest Connection

FAMILY RESOURCES

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Office Hours

Monday - Friday 8:00am - 4:00pm



Rice Lake



Northwoods



Do you have washable markers that no longer work? Use them to make water colors for a fun art project. Put the markers in a glass or jar of water and watch the color drain from the markers.

Give your little ones a paint brush to paint a picture, put the colored water in a spray bottle for them to spray outside on the snow, or put the water in some homemade play dough to change the color.

