

Infant and Toddler Newsletter

Cold Weather Adventures for Infants & Toddlers

It can be challenging to take young children outside—from naps to mealtimes and sunscreen to mittens, a trip outdoors might feel like too much hassle. Additionally, play outside may seem unruly, overwhelming, or lacking in learning opportunities. But outdoor play is worth the time and effort.

Let's read about one special interaction.

Co-teachers Marissa and Kate are out for a walk around the block with a small group of 18- to 30-month-olds. The sky is a brilliant blue and there are bright green grass shoots and spring leaves to touch and smell. Two-and-a-half-year-old Aisha approaches Marissa, eyes shining, clutching a treasured object in her hand. She uncurls her fingers to reveal an acorn. "Look!" she says. "What dis?"

"Wow! That's an acorn. It fell from the tree last fall," Marissa answers. "If you plant it in the ground, it will grow into a big tree."

Aisha discovers two more acorns and shares them with Brady, who is 2 years old. Kate offers Aisha and Brady small bags they can use to collect more acorns and other interesting objects they find during the walk. The group's progress around the block is slow as the children find twigs, old brown leaves, new green leaves, and more acorns to bring back to the center.

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/may2019/outdoor-play-is-essential>

Infant and Toddler Winter Training Opportunities:

January 19th 6:30-8:30 pm

I Can Pretend Too! Dramatic Play Experiences for Toddlers & Twos

February 16th 6:30-8:30 pm

Discoveries of Infancy: The What and How of Learning

March 4th 10-Noon

Take a Look in a Book: Infant & Toddler Emergent Literacy

March 14th 6:30-8:30 pm

Math and Science for Infants and Toddlers



Eastern Shore Child
Care Resource Center

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Let's Look at the Regs!

Regulations are not just rules. They are a guide to help us keep children safe.

.12 Outdoor Activity Area.

A. A child care facility shall have an outdoor activity area on the premises of, adjacent to, or near and safely accessible to the facility that provides adequate usable activity space for the approved capacity of the facility.

B. A facility for which a notice of intent, filed pursuant to COMAR 13A.17.02.02A(1), is received by the office on or after January 1, 2009, shall have an outdoor activity area that provides at least 75 square feet of usable play space for:

- (1) One half of the approved capacity of the facility; or
- (2) Each child, if the facility has an approved capacity of 20 or fewer children.

C. Usable activity space may include only the area and the activity equipment approved for use by children in care.

D. The activity area shall be free from potential hazards to child health or safety.

E. All outdoor activity equipment shall be safe, in good repair, clean, and nontoxic.

F. Any pool on the premises of the facility shall be made inaccessible to children in care and have security features, including but not limited to a:

- (1) Fence that surrounds the pool at least 4 feet in height;
- (2) Self-closing and self-latching mechanism on the gate, door, or access to the pool;
- (3) Lock that is operable and secured; and
- (4) Sensor or alarm in the pool and on the access door.



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What are the benefits of outdoor play?

It invites children to learn science. As seen in the opening vignette, you don't have to plan for science lessons when you take young children outside. Children are natural explorers and discoverers, and you can bring whatever interests them back to your early childhood setting for further exploration. By turning their questions into group inquiry projects, you'll soon have several starting points for emergent curriculum. An acorn won't grow quickly enough to satisfy a curious child—it takes two months for the first shoots to appear! But there are faster-growing seeds (peas, green beans, corn) perfect for classroom experiments. Picture books like *The Carrot Seed*, by Ruth Krauss, and *Growing Vegetable Soup*, by Lois Ehlert, add early literacy to the mix while building children's vocabulary and knowledge.

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