



Outdoor and Nature-Based Learning Resources for Early Childhood Programs

Early educators can use outdoor spaces to support the learning of all children. Many studies show outdoor learning can increase feelings of well-being, sustained attention and concentration. The benefits of outdoor learning for children are well documented and range from promoting physical health and well-being, to supporting social emotional development, to providing ample activities to meet academic standards in developmentally appropriate ways.

The Minnesota Department of Education developed resources to support early education programs and educators in developing and implementing outdoor and nature-based learning opportunities for young children. [View these resources and more on the Outdoor and Nature-Based Learning webpage.](#)

Webinars

Thirteen webinars on different aspects of outdoor and nature-based learning are available on the [Outdoor and Nature-Based Learning webpage](#). Topics include curriculum, assessment, research, safety, seasonal activities and more. Each webinar is closed captioned in English and Spanish.

Example webinars:

[Give Me Proof: Exploring What the Research Says About Nature-Based Learning](#)

Hear directly from researchers in the field about how nature-based learning supports growth in all areas of development to help children thrive.

[Safety First! Addressing Outdoor Safety and Outdoor Learning Policies in Early Care and Education Settings](#)

Consider your outdoor policies and examine other appropriate policies, grow in your confidence in bringing children outdoors in all weather, and reflect on risk reduction plans related to the outdoors.

[Curriculum Is Sprouting Up All Over: Hands-on Activities to Do in the Spring](#)

Learn about hands-on activities that you can do right away with young children in the spring no matter what your outdoor space looks like.



Publications

[Early Childhood Outdoor Learning Booklet](#)

An early childhood educator's go-to for outdoor learning.

[Outdoor Learning Ideas Guide](#)

Features ideas for outdoor and nature-based learning activities that can be done in a variety of different types of outdoor spaces or "playscapes" typically found in most early learning program areas.

[Nature-Based Learning Programs Case Studies](#)

Early learning programs that deliver nature-based learning to young children in Minnesota share their experience in their own words. Examples demonstrate that nature can be explored in any outdoor environment, in any program type—rural, urban, suburban, and for infants and toddlers.

Videos

Created in partnership with the [Minnesota Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights](#).

[Supporting Outdoor Learning Opportunities for Young Children](#)

[Supporting Outdoor Learning Opportunities as an Early Educator](#)