Grow
Early Education

The importance of outdoors in the early years

WHY IS THE OUTDOORS IMPORTANT?

The outdoors helps children to explore, play, and respond to an ever-changing environment while developing their physical and emotional well-being. The outdoors also plays a vital part in enabling children to connect, respect, and care for their environment.

BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN

Outdoor play helps to increase children's:

- *Confidence and self-esteem;*
- *Social skills and cooperative play;*
- *Ability to take risks and learn by trial and error;*
- *Levels of involvement, well-being, and energy;*
- *Concentration for extended periods;*
- *Persistence when challenges occur;*
- *Sense of belonging and responsibility;*
- *Body strength, balance, coordination and agility;*
- *Resilience;*
- *Language development and much more.*

SUPPORTING OUTDOOR PLAY

Early years practitioners play a central role in supporting children's play, curiosity, and engagement with the outdoors.

Early years practitioners can support out play by:

- *Being a Nature Play Partner*
- *Encouraging Adventure and Challenge*
- *Being an Active Observer*
- *Modelling Taking Care of the Environment*

OUTDOOR PLAY THEORISTS

Friedrich Froebel - Froebel, a German educationalist, considered the outdoors to be essential for children's well-being and development.

Maria Montessori - Montessori believes that children should not be restricted from the outdoor environment and that the outdoors and indoors should be viewed as one, with seamless transition and access at all times.

Reference: Twinkl for Private Early Years