

Early Years Activity: Connecting with nature

Potential Learning

Direct association with nature has both mental and physical benefits:

Mentally - children have reduced depression, eliminates stress, improves mood and develops self-confidence

Physically - children have increased flexibility, develop gross motor skills, good co-ordination and reduced obesity

What you do:

Give your time

Prompt curiosity questions – What does it look like? How does it move? What can you do with it? How does it grow?

Encourage problem solving

Add tools to enhance exploration- magnifiers; shovels; trowels

Provide opportunities to care for nature – water plants, grow a seed

Use technology to take a photo, zoom in and explore, develop recall

Encourage children to appreciate the beauty around them

More ideas:

- Treasure hunts -create your own map and pictures of significant things in the garden
- Making daisy chains
- Bug collecting - a jam jar and a magnifying glass
- Take off shoes and socks and feel different textures and discuss
- Listen and identify the different sounds
- Create objects that make different noises – plastic bottles filled with water at different levels, pipes etc.
- Have your own sports day
- Make your own streamers or kites – watch the way the wind blows and discuss
- Chalk to draw around shadows or puddles and observe what happens
- Go on a nature hunt – replicate the story – On a Bear hunt
- Make 3 d models using cardboard boxes encouraging the development of size, shape, height, weight and position
- Create play boxes for a windy day, a rainy day and a sunny day
- Paint brushes and a bucket of water to paint the fence

These are only a few ideas.