



Leelanau Children's Center Monthly Newsletter - January 2020

5 Benefits of Outdoor Play!

• Health

Children who play outdoors, in general, experience lower body weights, better muscle tone, less symptoms of depression, better social relations with other children, and an increased ability to concentrate.

• Physical Development

When children play outdoors, their development in all areas gets a significant boost. They learn when to challenge themselves and when to be cautious.

• Social Development

Children practice social relations and engage their powers of initiative in a dynamic way while playing outside.

• Self-Regulation

Outdoor play significantly increases children's ability to concentrate, regulate emotions, and decreases bullying-type behaviors.

• Environmental Awareness

As we become more aware of our place in the natural world and our affect on it for good or ill, modern children require knowledge of natural processes in order to someday cope with the challenges humanity and the natural world face. Children, given the chance to have lots of unsupervised or loosely supervised outdoor play, develop deep knowing and feelings of affection for the natural world.



More Outdoor Play = Healthier Kids

*“Sixty minutes of daily unstructured free play is essential to children’s physical and mental health”
- American Academy of Pediatrics*

Outdoor play is vital for the development of the whole child. Children who play outside are physically, socially, and emotionally healthier. Children learn that they are connected to each other and the natural world. They have the opportunity to try out their ideas, negotiate these ideas with others, and move their bodies in new and exciting ways. Many adults' fondest childhood memories are of playing outside. Let's give our children the same chance for rich, lifelong skills and memories by giving them the chance to play outside every day!

Outdoor Play at LCC

We see our outdoor environment as an extension of the classroom, providing children with the opportunity to appreciate and explore the natural environment while engaging in the process of inquiry. Some of the experiences children have in our outdoor playscape include utilizing loose parts, building materials and large motor equipment, discovering natural items and critters, observing changing weather and environment, and participating in growing food and flowers in our garden beds. We go outside every day in all kinds of weather and for long periods of time. Our Northern Michigan weather gives kids a lot of practice in selecting and putting on the appropriate gear for the day.



LCC Leland • (231) 256-7841
111 N. Fifth St., PO Box 317 • Leland, MI 49654
www.leelanauchildrencenter.org



Follow us!



Getting Out There: LCC Advice for Winter Activities

“When we go outside, my kids become their best selves. Gone are the petty arguments about whose turn it is or what to do next. Suddenly the kids are creative - digging in the dirt, picking up worms, jumping and laughing.” - **Renee Limon, co-founder of Environmom.com**



“Young children are inherently sensory learners and the great outdoors supplies all the goods! Feel the cold snow/taste it? Listen to the winter birds, the wind blowing through the dried oak leaves and spruce needles. Play a seasonal “5 senses” game with your child; name and describe what you see, feel, hear, taste, and smell! It is amazing how much Michigan varies from month to month, and no screens are required.” - **Rachael**

“I really think that good gear is the key. Staying warm means longer fun! A good hike in the woods with snacks and cocoa is the best!” - **Sara M.**

“I love the opportunities for creative play that snowy days give us. The imagination adventures you can have with ice and snow on a beautiful winter day are totally different from any other time of year! I love a good snow fort. My one piece of gear-related advice is to make sure kids’ hats fit over ponytails and buns! - **Nora**



Save the Date

- April 2020 is the Month of the Young Child!
- May 20, 2020 - LCC Annual Golf Scramble
- June 17, 2020 - Leelanau Grown

Interested in the LCC Sustainer Program?

Sustaining members give us a dependable base of support for the high-quality early childhood programs you, your family, and the community counts on. Interested? Click here: <http://bit.ly/37qxAXk>