

Kmb Project-Ashley Briand

PLAY OUTSIDE, GROW WITHIN

THE ROLE OF OUTDOOR PLAY IN SUPPORTING YOUNG
CHILDREN'S SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT
IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CONTEXTS



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WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?

Outdoor play is about
more than going outside.

It's where curiosity,
independence, and a sense
of self begin to grow.



WHY DOES IT MATTER?



Outdoor settings support children's social and emotional development by providing opportunities for interaction, engagement, and emotional regulation through real experiences.

SOCIAL- EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Being in nature creates a dynamic space where children experience relationships and emotions in real time, as they interact with others, navigate conflict, and take risks through play.



AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE



When children are given the freedom to lead their own play outdoors, they develop autonomy and confidence as they make decisions, build independence, and direct their own experiences.

ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES

Children's outdoor experiences are shaped and sometimes limited by environmental and institutional factors, including access to space, educator support, and program structures that influence these opportunities.



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR EDUCATORS?



Supporting outdoor play as an educator means working within environmental and institutional constraints by providing materials, asking open-ended questions, and encouraging children to take risks while creating space for independence and child-led exploration.

LOOKING AHEAD

Moving forward, it is essential to prioritize meaningful outdoor play experiences in early childhood education to support children's social-emotional development, autonomy, and overall well-being, while ensuring equitable access to these opportunities.



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