

Active Solutions



Activity Ideas for the Outdoors

In Saskatchewan, one of the biggest challenges in being active outdoors is the weather.

Here are some suggestions to help you and the children you care about enjoy the outdoors and get the 60-90 minutes of physical activity needed daily for health benefits.

Be prepared: Encourage children and parents to dress appropriately for all seasons. As a leader, ensure that you are also setting a good example by dressing appropriately for every season.

Summer

- Encourage children to wear running shoes instead of flip flops; runners allow for walking and running with less tripping and hurt toes
- Slap on a hat, and slon on sun screen
- Always ensure that drinking water is available



Winter

- Encourage children to learn how to dress for the outdoors during the winter
- Always wear a toque, mittens, winter coat, snow pants and winter boots
- Dress in layers; wear warm sweaters with long sleeves and wear a t-shirt underneath the sweater



Spring & Fall

- Wear a wind and water proof jacket with a hood
- Wear 'splash pants' over top of pants to protect from water and mud
- Bring a toque and gloves; the wind can be cool and it will be more comfortable to wear a toque and mittens than be too cold

As a leader, always carry a backpack with emergency items: a small first aid kit, tissues, cell phone, garbage bag, water and emergency medications required by children in your care (examples: asthma inhaler, epi-pen for allergies).

Fun activity ideas for enjoying the outdoors...

...in spring, summer and fall:

- **Have a dinosaur dig!** Before children arrive, place plastic dinosaurs in a specific area in the dirt, and then learn about dinosaurs and paleontologists while digging for dinosaurs. Dinosaurs can be found at a dollar store.
- **Look for animal tracks.** Go for a hike and look for animal tracks in the dirt. You can pour plaster of paris over the track to make your own caste to take home.
- **Go for a feather walk.** As you walk, collect feathers that can be used for activities later, such as painting.
- **Teach children to garden.** Gardening is a great outdoor activity and a wonderful way to learn where our food comes from. If you can not plant a garden, visit a local gardener throughout the warmer months and allow children time to work in the dirt and collect vegetables.
- **Use items from indoors in the outdoor environment.** Use clipboards, painting materials, spoons and buckets to help children explore and use their imagination in the outdoor environment. Taking books and musical instruments outdoors allows children to play and learn in a new way.
- **Get messy!** Allow children to touch dirt and mix water with dirt. Children love making mud pies!
- **Check out a great Saskatchewan resource,** *Wonder of Wildlife* by Lori Milligan, for enjoying the outdoors and learning about nature: www.swf.sk.ca/7Programs/wow.html



...in winter:

- **Build a snow fort,** a snow man or make snow angels.
- **Make a track in the snow to play fox and geese.**
- **Learn how to move on ice and snow** by walking, sliding or skating.
- **Play a summer sport,** such as soccer, in the snow.
- **Freeze coloured water** in various containers and build structures with the coloured ice blocks.
- **Make winter ice ornaments:** www.escapadedirect.com/wiiceor.html.
- **Paint the snow.**
- **Have a winter picnic;** take along a warm sandwich, cookies, cocoa or soup in a thermos, and a blanket to sit on.



Create a GreenGym in your outdoor space:

ParticipACTION will provide a grant equivalent to 10 percent of the purchase price back to communities that install GreenGym outdoor fitness equipment. Go to www.greengym.ca and check out Rosthern, SK under "locations".

CHECK OUT THESE WEBSITES:

- www.earthplay.net/current
- www.soundplay.com
- www.littlegreenthumbssk.ca



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