

No Child Left Inside!

Extending the Curriculum Outdoors



Playing is Learning!

DESCRIPTION:

Ask a child what their favorite part of the school day is and they will most likely say OUTSIDE! Open the door and turn your learning environment inside out. Discover how to maximize outdoor play by moving interest centers outdoors, opening up new possibilities for stimulating children's creativity, self-discovery, and imagination. Share the wonders of nature and the environment with children even with limited outdoor spaces and resources.

OBJECTIVES/LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Discuss the importance and beneficial effects of connecting children with nature, animals, the community, and caring for the Earth.

Learn how to plan and implement outdoor learning center activities that sharpen children's cognitive abilities as well as build physical and social skills.

Understand the value of unstructured outdoor play in promoting children's observation, exploration, experimentation in the natural environment.

BENEFIT TO CONFEREES & CHILDREN:

When outdoor learning centers are provided, children's play and learning opportunities are greatly expanded. In addition to practicing their gross motor skills, young children can participate in a wide variety of other child-centered activities: painting, stories, dress-up, snacks, etc. Children also need to go outdoors to learn how the natural world works. Early childhood is the time to plant the seeds of wonder. When regular activities are done in a different setting, a new dimension is added to the experience that can be wonderful and promote the child's development. The teacher's ability to structure the environment, allowing for the free flow of learning through play and to intervene verbally or with appropriate supplementary materials to extend the learning is the basis of an outdoor curriculum.

SUMMARY:

The outdoor playground is a natural extension of the classroom. Children can do virtually anything outside that they do inside. The same learning centers children use indoors can be set up outdoors including arts and crafts, easel painting, water play, sand play, dramatic play, reading and writing, block building, and other forms of construction. It seems that the outdoor area in the preschool curriculum is the last to be planned, if it is planned at all. In this workshop, I hope to remind teachers of the innumerable natural and structured learning situations that can take place in the outdoor play environment. Such environments should also help children understand and appreciate the natural world exploring worms and dirt and leaves and sticks and rocks and bugs, and the endless wondrous classroom that is the outdoors. If early childhood educators make the time to plan and implement a variety of play activities and change them frequently, they will see their children become more constructively involved during outside play time. The outdoor play area will become a challenging and stimulating environment for children of all levels and interests.

AUDIO/VISUAL: Overhead projector/screen CD player

FORMAT: Lecture/Discussion Demonstration/Involvement

Sharron Krull

Teacher • Trainer • Author •
Play Guru • Consultant

2831 Lakeview Drive
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Office: (831) 713-5323
Mobile: (925) 980-8353
Fax: (831) 713-5324

Sharron@SharronKrull.com

www.SharronKrull.com

