

COVID-19: Encouraging Outdoor Play for Children

Children use play to explore their environment, grow their imagination and discover new opportunities. Playing outside is fun, exciting and important for healthy child development. Here are some strategies to reduce the risk of COVID-19 while encouraging outdoor play.

When children play outside they:

- move more, sit less and play longer
- build muscle strength, coordination and confidence
- learn better, sleep better and feel better physically and emotionally
- think creatively and problem solve
- learn skills that help them cope with stress

Prevent the spread

- Stay home if you or your child are feeling sick.
- Teach children to wash their hands often, and to avoid touching their face.
- Supervise children under the age of 6 when using hand sanitizer. Rub hands until dry.
- Explain to children why they need to stay six feet apart from people they don't live with.
- Do not have playdates with other families.
- Do not play in crowded areas.

Stay safe

- Bring your own toys or sports equipment. Wash toys after play with hot soapy water.
- Clean hands after touching surfaces such as park benches and playgrounds.
- Teach children how to stay safe around potential dangers, such as streets.
- Use bike paths and helmets when using tricycles, scooters and bicycles.

Have fun

- Schedule in time and a place for children to play.
- Find parks with grass, slopes and hills for children to run, crawl, roll and climb on.
- Choose nature trails for children to explore.
- Play with your children and have fun together!
- See [Outdoor Play Canada](#) and [ParticipACTION](#) for more play ideas.

More information

For more information, visit our website at toronto.ca/COVID19 or call us at 416-338-7600.