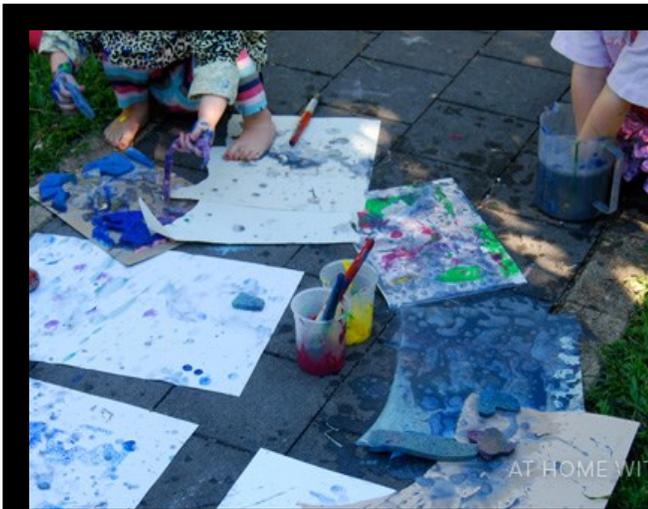


Childcare Connections

Outdoor Resources

Creative Expression

Art and music do not have to only occur indoors. Use natural materials or items around your house to make instruments. Art can include setting up clipboards and markers for children to draw what is around them, chalk, water and a paintbrush on the ground or painting with materials found in nature.



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Loose Parts Play

Loose Parts allows for children to engage in self-directed creative and imaginative play. It promotes physical activity, cognitive skills and boosts natural curiosity. Loose parts can be collected from the natural materials around you and odds and ends. Some materials include: rope, pots and pan, leaves, feathers, shells, sticks and logs, tree stump cut off's, tires, milk crates, fabrics, etc...

Make sure they are age appropriate, safe and do not pose any choking hazards.



Set up Learning Centers Outside

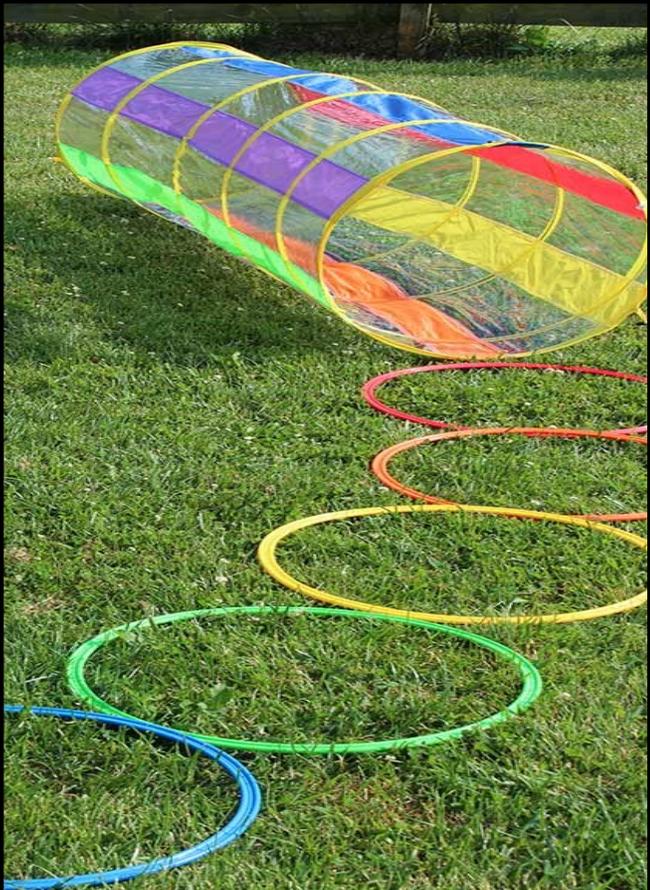
Allow children to explore real world scenarios in outside learning centers. Introduce a dramatic play center in the form of a mud kitchen, or home set up. Allow for a construction zone with trucks, blocks and a sand box.

Most experiences completed indoors can be completed outdoors as well.



Gross Motor

Gross motor isn't limited to climbing structures that require protective surfacing. Playing games that involve movement, creating an obstacle course, riding bikes and kicking balls are a few ways to engage children in gross motor play while outside.



Infants

Infants can enjoy outside play too! Place a blanket or a foam mat on the grass and bring a few of their favorite materials out to explore. Take them on a nature walk and talk about the sights, smells and sounds. Allow them to reach, grab and interact with the natural world around them.



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