



Early Years Centre

NORTHEAST VANCOUVER

Newsletter

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- ▶ Early Years Centres help families access the services and information they need to help their children grow and develop
- ▶ Northeast Vancouver Early Years Centre (NVEYC) focuses on families living in Hastings Sunrise and Grandview Woodland neighbourhoods
- ▶ NVEYC builds stronger relationships with health, schools, MCFD, and community agencies so we can all better support families with young children
- ▶ Watch for improved information tools that make it easy for families and service providers to know what resources are available
- ▶ Look for our quarterly newsletters and monthly programs and activities calendars at our host agency and satellite locations

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Welcome to our Early Years Centre Spring Edition

As we come to the end of winter and those dark mornings start to disappear, our thoughts turn to the start of spring and how we can engage our younger children with the joys of spring and new beginnings.

Spring is a great time to explore nature with your children and there are many different spring activities for children that will make learning fun. It's an ideal time for all to see and understand the changes that take place in nature as well as a great opportunity for children to become familiar with the joys and wonder of the new season.

The benefits of learning outside are endless. Being outside allows children to express themselves freely and unlike an indoor classroom, there aren't space constraints meaning children can jump, shout and explore to their hearts content. The sense of freedom playing outdoors brings is fantastic for a child's development, both physically and mentally.

The importance of outside play in early years can't be underestimated and below are just some of the many benefits it offers to children:

Encourages an Active Lifestyle

Children who learn to play outdoors are much more likely to continue to enjoy outdoor activities such as walking, running and exercising as they get older. Given the number of gadgets and new technology available to us all, outdoor play is an extremely important factor in combatting an increasingly sedentary lifestyle.

Appreciation of Nature and the Environment

Learning in an outdoor environment allows children to interact with the elements around us and helps them to gain an understanding of the world we live in. They can experience animals in their own surroundings and learn about their habitats and lifecycles.

Develops Social Skills

Indoor spaces can often feel overcrowded to children and naturally, they may feel intimidated in this type of environment. More space outdoors can help children to join in and 'come out of their shells'. Giving children outdoor learning experiences offers them a chance to talk more and develop better social skills.



Encourages Independence

The extra space offered by being outdoors will give children the sense of freedom to make discoveries by themselves. They can develop their own ideas or create games and activities to take part in with their friends without feeling like they're being directly supervised. They'll begin to understand what they can do by themselves and develop an "I can do" attitude, which will act as a solid foundation for future learning.

Understanding Risk

Being outdoors provides children with more opportunities to experience risk-taking. They have the chance to take part in tasks on a much bigger scale and complete them in ways they might not when they're indoors. They can learn to make calculated decisions such as "should I jump off this log?" or "can I climb this tree?"

The Importance of Imaginative Play in Child Development



What is Role Play?

Effective role play gives children the opportunity to try out risky ideas in a safe environment. It allows them to explore boundaries, make sense of the world and develop their own identities. Through role play, children are learning to understand the basic principles of society and how it functions, and the important rules and routines of everyday life. Role play is vital because it allows children to revisit familiar and unfamiliar events, whilst also supporting the development of their imagination, through real and familiar, to complete fantasy.

Role play gives children the opportunity to:

- ▶ Develop confidence and self-esteem
- ▶ Show initiative
- ▶ Express their personality
- ▶ Develop communication and language skills
- ▶ Cultivate friendships
- ▶ Investigate real life situations
- ▶ Learn cooperation and develop teamwork skills
- ▶ Use their imagination

- ▶ Express themselves freely
- ▶ Develop decision making skills

Stages of Development in Early Years Imaginative Play

- ▶ From 18 to 24 months, children will be engaged in simple pretend play such as talking on the phone or using keys
- ▶ Between the ages of two and three, children's symbolic thinking will become more complex, and they will engage in the sequential pretend play of familiar and unfamiliar events. Toys will play their part but other children will create imaginary objects to support their play.
- ▶ By the age of three, skills are more developed and children are fully immersed in familiar role play scenarios. Now is the time for afternoon tea parties, visiting the doctors and going to the shops.
- ▶ Between four and five, role play is at its peak. Scenarios are more complex and play is more elaborate. Children can create scenarios with others, where they all have a different role to play (real or fictional).

(Excerpts from various Internet online Parenting sources)

Spring craft ideas for you and your little ones



Craft stick Flowers

Supplies:

- ▶ 8 colored Popsicle sticks
- ▶ 1 or 2 green Popsicle sticks for the stem
- ▶ glue (either craft glue or hot-glue)

Directions:

- ▶ arrange the sticks in a layered circular pattern
- ▶ glue the sticks together
- ▶ the green popsicle stick (the stem) goes in the middle of the floral design so the flowers look 3D

Cherry Blossom Craft

Supplies:

- ▶ brown construction paper
- ▶ tissue paper (pink or white)
- ▶ scissors
- ▶ glue

Directions:

- ▶ First, fold brown construction paper in half length wise to make a fold to use as a cutting guide. Cut strips into the paper along the long edge, stopping at the folded line. My 4 year-old's lines were not perfectly straight, but I think that adds to the charm of the tree and actually looks more like tree branches.
- ▶ Roll the paper to make a tree shape. Add glue along the short edge up to the fold. Continue rolling and press along the edge to glue shut. You may need to pinch and hold the end for a bit for the glue to stick.
- ▶ Bend and curl the "branches" down to spread them out to look more like a tree

- ▶ Add dots of glue on the branches. Tear off small pieces of tissue paper, pinch them to scrunch them up, and then stick them onto the glue dots.
- ▶ After the glue dries, your cherry blossom tree is ready for display! These should be able to stand on their own, but the bottom is uneven, just trim it to make it flat and they should stand up.

Happy Spring!

