



Outdoor Play

During outdoor play, your child explores the world using all five senses. Playing outdoors allows children to practice and develop social skills as well as using and developing large muscles. Let your child explore at his own speed.

Infant

- Listen to and watch leaves blow.
- Watch older children playing.
- Sit/lay on a blanket on the grass.
- While walking, talk about what you see and hear (squirrels, flowers, cars).

Toddler

- Play with any size ball.
- Blow and chase bubbles.
- Explore and talk about what is in the yard.
- Have a "pretend" picnic with dolls or stuffed animals.
- Water trees/flowers or wash the car.

Preschooler

- "Paint" the sidewalk, house, fence using a bucket of water and a paintbrush
- Go on a "wiggly creature" search looking for and talking about worms, insects, caterpillars, etc.
- Collect outside treasures (small objects) and talk about how they are alike or different.



Want more ideas?
www.topekapublicschools.net, www.ercrefer.org
or, watch TPS TV (cable 14)



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Play With Me!

A child who is playing is learning to experience a new world. Playing fosters a child's separate identity from their parents. It can be observed in many forms: building with blocks, making believe, exploring the outdoors and developing fine motor skills. When there is play, there's wonderful growth and activity in the brain.

What skills do children learn while playing?

- Problem solving
- Playing with others
- Imagination
- Dealing with emotions
- Creativity
- Task completion

What questions promote thinking?

- What color is the _____?
- Do you smell the flowers?
- What does that cloud look like to you?
- Listen, what do you hear?

What positive responses promote "trying?"

- I can tell you are thinking very hard.
- You are brave to try that.
- Wow, give that another try!
- You must be very proud of yourself!

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