



Child Care *Hot Topics*

Topic 6 : Play

Hello Child Care Providers,

Summer has definitely arrived and outside play is something all kids love, as do many providers. Here is information about the importance of outside play, about public playground safety during COVID and some suggested fun outdoor activities that you and the children would enjoy!!

We are grateful for you and are here to support you. Please reach out to your licenser with any questions, and keep up to date on all things child care in Minnesota by visiting: <https://mn.gov/childcare/>.

-- Child Care Licensing Team

Importance of outdoor play:

- ✓ Important for growth, physical development and coordination.
- ✓ Increases their ability to balance, jump, climb, throw, run and skip.
- ✓ Increases imagination.
- ✓ Gives them the chance to run off energy!!!

Public playgrounds:

- ✓ It is recommended that you go to parks close to your home.
- ✓ Before going to the playground, talk with the children about the importance of staying with their friends from your day care if there are other kids at the playground.
- ✓ Try to go the park at a time of the day when you notice it is less busy.
- ✓ If the playground is crowded when you get there, consider coming back another day.
- ✓ If multiple groups are in the same play area, try to keep six feet of open space between the groups of children. One way this can be done is by rotating play time on the different play equipment.
- ✓ Wash hands after using playground equipment. Hand sanitizer is an option if there is not soap and water near the playground equipment.
- ✓ When back inside the day care, wash everyone's hands with soap and water.

Other outdoor ideas:

- ✓ Make a target on a sheet. Use water balloons to hit the target.
- ✓ Fill a bag with items from your backyard (pine cones, leaves, rocks, flowers, etc.). You take an item out of the bag and have the children search your yard for a similar item.
- ✓ Go on a penny walk. When you come to an intersection, flip the penny. If heads, go right; if tails go left. See where that leads you!!
- ✓ Play red light, green light.
- ✓ Play Simon says in include active things (jumping up and down, running in place, running to the tree and back, pretend you are a dog, dance, fly like a bird, etc.)
- ✓ Play hop scotch.
- ✓ Make a chalk obstacle course on your driveway or sidewalk.
- ✓ Make paper airplanes and fly them outside.