

INFANTS AND TODDLERS AT NATURE PLAY

All children benefit greatly from taking reasonable risks, feeling free to play, and moving away from you to explore.

Benefits include:

- ☺ Sensory – helps with speech, eye movement tracking and connection with the world.
- ☺ Social and Emotional – including resilience, regulation, self-esteem, cooperation, teamwork, kindness and trust.
- ☺ Cognitive – including problem solving, creative thinking, focus and concentration.
- ☺ Motor Skills – such as balance, climbing, lifting, swinging, holding, grasping, pushing and pulling and skills that support writing.
- ☺ Being outside calms the nervous system and improves health and immunity.
- ☺ Provides a variety of sensory inputs e.g. different weather, rough and smooth bark, grass and rocky areas.
- ☺ Engage with different natural places, e.g. bush, beach, backyard.



Do what you can. Can you find time to...

- ☺ Nap outdoors?
- ☺ Eat outdoors?
- ☺ Play outdoors?



Image courtesy of Nature. Be in it.

**Nature
Be in It**
Connect. Grow. Belong.


Tasmanian
Government

healthy
Tasmania
A Tasmanian Government
and Community Partnership

**Move
well
eat
well**

Follow your child's lead:

- ☞ Watch your child. Follow their eyes, hands and body direction to see what they want to explore next?
- ☞ Carry your infant directly, not in a pram.
- ☞ Vary the position you walk with your infant or toddler, switch from one side to the other, high and low.
- ☞ Let them walk, balance, crawl independently from you.
- ☞ Let go of their hand for balance on uneven ground or slopes.
- ☞ Be nearby if they need you, let them come to you.
- ☞ Ask questions to point out your concerns nearby e.g. can you see that rock?



Image courtesy of Nature. Be in it.



Ideas to get you started:

- ☞ Make shelters and cubbies.
- ☞ Mix colours and nature potions.
- ☞ Balance on logs, trees or branches.
- ☞ Play with water and mud using bowls, buckets and measuring jugs.
- ☞ Sing songs and tell stories.
- ☞ Learn about Aboriginal culture through stories.
- ☞ Do tummy time under the trees.
- ☞ Lie down at the base of a tree or in long grass and look up at the tree and clouds.
- ☞ Make marks with charcoal, rocks, dirt and leaves on paper and bark.
- ☞ Dig with a stick.
- ☞ Smell the leaves, dirt, bark and flowers.

