



Children, Nature and You

THE BENEFITS OF PLAY*

*(Outdoor "free range" play, preferably in a natural setting)

- Develops dexterity, and physical strength
- Is important to healthy brain development
- Encourages children to engage and interact in the world around them
- Enhances learning readiness, learning behaviors, and problem-solving skills
- Develops cognitive and emotional strength
- Allows children to use their creativity while developing their imagination
- Allows children to create and explore a world they can master, conquering their fears while practicing adult roles
- Helps children develop new competencies that lead to enhanced confidence and the resiliency they will need to face future challenges
- Allows children to learn how to work in groups, to share, to negotiate, to resolve conflicts and to learn self-advocacy skills
- Allows children to practice decision-making skills, move at their own pace, discover their own areas of interest, and ultimately engage fully in the passions they wish to pursue
- Builds active, healthy bodies. (It is possible that play may be an exceptional way to increase physical activity levels in children, which is one important strategy in the resolution of the obesity epidemic.)
- Is a simple joy and should be a cherished part of childhood
- Offers parents an opportunity to engage in new ways with their children

Summarized by Children, Nature and You from
[*The Importance of Play in Promoting Healthy Child Development and Maintaining Strong Parent-Child Bonds*](#)
American Academy of Pediatrics 2007