

Outdoor play helps children develop skills and have opportunities in areas that are important for child development. This booklet gives you information and ideas on how outdoor play can help children develop in the following ways:

## SOCIAL

- More opportunities for social interactions
- The chance to build relationship skills
- More time to share, cooperate, help, and communicate
- More chances to show positive behaviours

## EMOTIONAL

- Options for self-regulation and self-soothing when they have big emotions or energy
- More calmness (it reduces feelings of loneliness and stress)
- Personal satisfaction and confidence
- Awareness of self and an appreciation for the world around them
- A sense of freedom and ability to rely on themselves (self-reliance)

## THINKING

- More chances to make decisions and problem solve
- Space for creative thinking and curiosity
- The chance to develop better language, concentration, and reasoning skills
- The chance to build confidence as they learn from their successes and failures
- Opportunities to learn how to assess and manage risk

## PHYSICAL

- More movement
- Physical literacy and sensory skills (taste, touch, hearing, smell, sight)
- Better sleep
- Sunshine, which improves sleep, mood, and helps to build a healthy response to fighting off illness and disease. Sun is a good source of Vitamin D.
- Where the body is in space (proprioception)
- How it feels internally to be in different spaces (interoception)
- How to judge balance, gravity and movement in a space (vestibular sense)

## SPIRITUAL

- A respectful relationship with the natural world
- A sense of freedom, self-reliance, and responsibility