

# ADVENTUROUS PLAY

## Blazing a Trail Through Pre Primary and Beyond

### Physical Benefits

A child's physical literacy is their ability to move in their space and environment with competence, coordination and confidence. When children understand how their bodies move, feel confident in their abilities and enjoy movement; the likelihood of serious injury decreases and the likelihood of children remaining active as the age increases..

### Social Benefits

Children develop social skills through play where they navigate and solve conflict with peers, build positive relationships and self confidence. They learn to understand social expectations for appropriate behaviours in various settings. These skills are important for their academic setting in the future, where learning takes place in a group setting and children need to be able to exhibit quiet sitting with others as well as active participation and cooperation in their lessons (also known as self regulation).



## Outdoor play as a Value

The Pre Primary Program is dedicated to promoting the development of the whole child. Through play, children are building skills and knowledge that will be the foundation for future success academically and empower them in their social, emotional and physical abilities.

The environment plays a large role in how educators facilitate experiences and learning opportunities for the children that attend the Pre Primary Program both indoors and outdoors. We value the opportunities that children encounter when playing outside.

**Adventurous Play:** running, jumping, climbing, rough and tumble, sliding, splashing, climbing, heights, speed, risky tools and throwing.

## Emotional Benefits

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Play of all types develops children's emotional intelligence; children can practice empathy and caring for others, as well as working through difficult emotions and situations such as frustration with a peer or impulsive actions (grabbing, screaming, etc)

Development of these skills will mean successful working relationships between the child and their peers, their teachers and future workplace colleagues. Play opportunities provide support for development of communication skills such as increasing vocabulary and how to have different types of conversations with others.

## Mental Health Benefits

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Outdoor adventurous play reduces anxiety, aggression, sleep problems and promotes mental health in children. Play in natural environments promotes their curiosity and self-exploration which fosters independence and a happy sense of self. It enhances a child's quality of life and supports them in attaining success and happiness as they continue on their journey through life. This is a mutual goal shared by families, educators and school staff alike

## *Skill building through Adventurous Play*

Many academic skills are developed through opportunities for adventurous play. Skills such as creativity, problem solving and perseverance are practiced when engaged in outdoor free play. These are key skills in mathematical themes throughout grade levels. Skills such as planning, organizing, sequencing and decision making all require practice and are the foundation of academic success. Adventures in outdoor natural spaces provide this practice in a way that engages and excites the learner so that the skill is acquired through self motivated experience. These exciting learning opportunities develop the child's ability to focus their attention on their tasks as well as complete them.

## *Learning to Take Risks in a Safe Environment*

Adventurous play gives children the opportunity to learn to recognize, navigate and manage risks in their own lives. This important skill is paramount in their ability to later recognize safe or unsafe activities and avoid injuries on their own. Without the practice of this skill, children will not learn to recognize the risks in any given situation and then make decisions accordingly to work on solving the challenge they face. Research shows that when children are not allowed to engage in risk taking in safe settings as a child they are less able to assess real risks in adolescents and their young adult life.

## *Learning Injury and Educator's Role in Risk Management*

A learning injury is one that does not result in a serious injury and acts as a learning experience for recognizing their own boundaries and abilities. It provides hands on practice for cause-and-effect relationships and self-regulation skills. The Educators role in minimizing risk and injury is to support children by clearly defining the expectations for their play; this would include pre teaching skills and rules, discussing and modelling safety guidelines and maintaining up to date first aid training.

