

BRING NATURE INTO YOUR SPACE!

If you can't go outside, bring nature indoors!

When you think about nature-based learning, you may envision children out exploring a wild environment with an adult expert, but children can learn about the natural world in many different ways. Even if you have limited access to the outdoors, you can begin incorporating natural elements into your own space to encourage exploration and learning.

Below are some simple ideas to get you started!



Plant your own indoor garden!

You can start plants from seeds or purchase seedlings and watch them grow. Ask children to help tend the garden to model the importance of caring for nature or grow herbs and vegetables and discuss where food comes from. Observe how plants change throughout their life cycles.



Create an indoor wildlife watching space!

Create an indoor wildlife watching space! Set up a cozy space near a window complete with a pair of child-sized binoculars and picture books or identification guides that feature local wildlife. Attract birds, butterflies and other small wildlife to visit your space with feeders or habitat-friendly plants. Encourage children to describe and identify the animals that they observe through the window.



Bring natural loose parts indoors!

Children are natural collectors and often gather natural materials like leaves, rocks, sticks and pine-cones when out on walks. Create a space to organize and store these collections indoors so that they can be used for natural construction, art projects and for counting, math and science activities.



Express yourself through a nature-based art project!

Express yourself through a nature-based art project! Help children choose a nature-based theme or topic and encourage them to create an art project about it using natural materials. Collect small objects like pine-cones, rocks, grass and leaves to incorporate into the project. Let imaginations run wild!

NATURE-PLAY IDEAS FOR SMALLER OUTDOOR SPACES:



Dive into water play!

Set up a small tub filled with water and add a variety of natural materials, tools and elements for exploration. Simply test and observe the physical properties of water or prompt discussion of topics like the water cycle, aquatic species or our cultural connections to water.



Plant a small vegetable garden in pots or other containers!

Plant a small vegetable garden in pots or other containers! This is a great way to encourage children to learn about gardening. Smaller pots are fun for children to decorate and can be easier to relocate and reuse than large garden beds. Check out your local thrift stores or gardening supply stores for affordable gardening materials!

Create a cozy corner for crafting, reading, and relaxation!

Using blankets, picture books, and crafting supplies, you can create a designated "cozy corner" to allow children to self-regulate and have some quiet time to themselves. You can also use this space for sensory or imaginative activities like making musical instruments out of natural materials (sticks, pine cones, etc.) or creating a fairy garden!



Create a nature nook!

This can be a designated area where children learn about local wildlife and plant species, identify insects, and become aware of a variety of nature-based topics. Refresh the space each week by adding different books, tools (such as magnifying glasses and binoculars), and loose materials that you collect in your neighborhood. Ask your children what topics they would like to learn about!



RESOURCES:

Advocacy Focus, Natural Learning Initiative

Si no puede salir al aire libre, traiga la naturaleza adentro!

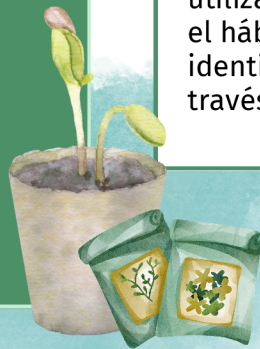
Cuando uno piensa en el aprendizaje en la naturaleza, puede imaginarse a los niños explorando un entorno silvestre con un adulto experto, pero los niños pueden aprender sobre el medio ambiente de muchas formas diversas. Aunque tenga un acceso limitado al aire libre, puede empezar a incorporar elementos naturales a su propio espacio para animar la exploración y el aprendizaje.

A continuación le ofrecemos algunas ideas simples para empezar.



Plante su propio jardín adentro!

Empieza a plantar semillas o compra plantas y observa cómo crecen. Pídeles a los niños que le ayuden a cuidar el jardín para mostrarles la importancia de cuidar la naturaleza, o cultiva hierbas y verduras y habla sobre los alimentos. Observa cómo cambian las plantas a lo largo de su vida.



Establezca un espacio adentro para la observación de la vida silvestre!

Cree un espacio adentro para observar la vida silvestre. Prepara un espacio cómodo cerca de una ventana con un par de binoculares de tamaño infantil y libros ilustrados o guías de identificación de la vida silvestre local. Para atraer a aves, mariposas y otros animales pequeños, utiliza comederos o plantas que favorezcan el hábitat. Anima a los niños a describir e identificar los animales que observan a través de la ventana.



Traiga las piezas sueltas naturales adentro!

Los niños naturalmente son recolectores y recogen materiales naturales como hojas, piedras, ramas y conos de pino cuando salen a caminar. Cree un espacio para organizar y guardar estas colecciones adentro, de modo que puedan utilizarse para construcciones naturales, proyectos de arte y para actividades de matemáticas, ciencias y para contar.



Exprésate a través de un proyecto de arte inspirado por la naturaleza!

¡Exprésate a través de un proyecto de arte inspirado por la naturaleza! Ayuda a los niños a elegir un tema o una idea sobre la naturaleza y animales a crear un proyecto de arte utilizando materiales naturales. Recoge pequeños objetos como conos de pino, piedras, pasto y hojas para incorporarlos al proyecto. Deja que la imaginación vuele!

