

# OUTDOOR LEARNING IN HOT WEATHER

Outdoor learning in early education settings is critical for whole child development. Learning how to adapt to a variety of weather conditions can ensure that children and adults are safe and protected from direct sun and excess heat.

## Design Considerations for Outdoor Learning:

**"Green" your outdoor space** by adding trees and different types of vegetation. This can help reduce heat and deflect radiation from the sun!



**Incorporate a diversity of shade**, including larger and smaller pockets of shade. Ensure that your space has adequate seating structures in shaded areas for both adults and children.



**Consider using lighter surfacing materials** to reduce the amount of heat that is absorbed and retained in a space. Try to avoid large areas of pavement and consider adding grasses and plants to break up the space!



**The orientation of settings and structures is important!** Try to orient play equipment so that large surfaces, like slides, face North.



# TIPS & TRICKS FOR OUTDOOR LEARNING:

Ensure that children have weather appropriate clothing and sun protection (sunscreen, hats, sunglasses).

Consider what time you will be outside. Aim to avoid the hottest part of the day (between 12pm-3pm) if possible.

Ensure that children have access to a water source or water bottles outside. Remind them to take frequent water breaks to rehydrate!

## ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR HOT DAYS:

Plan designated days for cooling activities, such as water and messy play.

Sensory and loose parts, art and music (instruments, crafts, reading) in a shady area.

Dive into water play! Consider incorporating misters, sprinklers, water toys or a water table to your space.



### RESOURCES

United States Environmental Protection Agency, Institute for Childhood Preparedness