

Catching Water

Playing with water creates many opportunities to wonder about the natural world. What does it feel like? How can I hold it? Where has it gone?

It can build understanding of concepts such as temperature and properties of the physical world such as gravity. Exploring outdoor environments supports children to develop dispositions such as curiosity, persistence, enthusiasm and creativity. These become attitudes towards life. When children play outside, with natural materials, they learn about the properties of those materials. A rock may feel rough and hard, water is cold and wet, sand is soft but sticks to me!

How to Do It

Secure the hose either on top of a shade sail, over a washing line or hanging from a tree branch. Turn the water on a little - a steady dripping action is what you want. Have the containers close at hand for your child to catch the water. Let your child explore the feel of dripping water, catch it in their containers and transfer it from one container to another.

What Learning is Occurring?

- Making sense of the **natural world**
- **Science** concepts – weight, movement, gravity, properties of liquid, sunlight and shadow
- **Maths** concepts – volume, measurement
- **Sensory exploration** promoting relaxation and attention
- **Language learning**, expanding vocabulary
- **Problem solving** skills

Age Considerations

- **Baby:** always stay with baby when playing with water. Your baby will enjoy watching the water drip and collect in containers. Let baby swish the water around and collect and tip it out of containers.
- **For Toddlers:** set up a larger container or baby bath under the hose and add dolls or toys to the bath. Add a few soapy bubbles and some towels to dry the toys and encourage your toddler bath the toys.
- **Kinder:** create a water world for your toys. Get your dinosaurs, Lego or other plastic toys and add sticks, dirt, flowers sand, whatever you can find to your little water world. Notice how getting wet changes things. Pale stones become darker, sturdy cardboard becomes soggy and tears.
- **Transition to school:** make a waterslide – what can you find around the house and the backyard to make a waterslide? Slide small toys down the waterslide or see how many ways you can make the water change direction. What slides faster or slower? Wonder with your child why this might be?

Tips

- This experience needs to be supervised by an adult. Never leave a child unsupervised around water.
- Extend this experience with plastic animals or other waterproof toys to create an underwater adventure.
- Even on chilly days this can be a great experience. Dress in a raincoat and gum boots, jump in the puddles and encourage and support your child to practice undressing and dressing in warm dry clothes when you're finished.
- Think about where best to place the hose so that any precious water could also drain on to the lawn if possible.

Things you will need

- A hose
- Different-sized/shaped containers
- Tree/clothesline/shade sail to hang the hose from

