

Parent Resource

Drawing Outdoors

Learning to Appreciate the Outdoors

by Rae Pica

We can't underestimate the value of the aesthetic development promoted by being outside. Aesthetic awareness refers to a heightened sensitivity to the beauty around us. Because the natural world is filled with beautiful sights, sounds, and textures it's the perfect resource for the development of aesthetics in young children.

Preschoolers learn much through their senses. Outside there are different and wonderful things for them to see (animals, birds, green leafy plants) to hear (the wind rustling through the leaves, a robin's song) to smell fragrant flowers and the rain-soaked ground, to touch (a fuzzy caterpillar or the bark of a tree), and even to taste (newly fallen snow or a raindrop on the tongue).

A nature walk is a great way to enhance children's appreciation of the natural environment. Ask them to tell you what they are seeing, hearing, smelling. Encourage them to touch – to discover the smoothness of a rock, the roughness of bark, and the fragility of a dried leaf. For young children, these are science experiences.

We enjoy taking the children on campus walks. We pack a notebook and crayons so we can draw while sitting in some of our favorite places.



In these photos we are drawing near the ice cream cone – art building statue, in the arboretum, and on our backyard playground! Take your child outside with some supplies for drawing time!

