

Welcome to the Preschool Nature Trail

Playing in nature helps build a healthy brain! From birth, young brains develop like muscles, getting bigger and stronger the more you interact together.

Enjoy applying The Basics Principles — five fun, simple, and powerful ways to help all children learn!

Visit the five signs next to the benches along the trail and try The Basics Principles in nature together!



1

Maximize Love, Manage Stress

Children thrive when their world feels loving and safe.

Spending time in nature together is proven to relieve stress and support a strong family bond.

NATURE ACTIVITY:

Find a big tree! Wrap your arms around the trunk from opposite sides to give the tree a big hug. Play “peek-a-boo” by peering around the trunk. End the game with a giant hug of your own!



2

Count, Group, and Compare

Learning math begins with play and exploration. Playing with found items supports an understanding of numbers and patterns.

Numbers, shapes and patterns are all around us — even in nature!

NATURE ACTIVITY:

Find a leaf together! Go on a hunt to find one that looks the same and one that looks different. Ask questions: Does the leaf feel rough or smooth? Is it bigger or smaller than your hand? Throw a handful of leaves in the air and collect them, counting as you go!



3

Explore Through Movement and Play

Young children are like scientists — curious and excited to learn about their surroundings.

See where children’s curiosity takes them and follow along.

Moving the body helps the brain learn!

NATURE ACTIVITY:

Play “follow the leader” pretending to be your favorite animal. Travel through the entire playground running, jumping, spinning, climbing, crawling and rolling! Play is the best way for children to learn. Let your imaginations loose!



4

Read and Discuss Stories

Reading and talking about stories builds language skills and creates a special time to snuggle up and connect.

Making up stories together in nature helps build readers!

NATURE ACTIVITY:

Look for an animal running around the park. Do you see a squirrel? Make up a story together. “Once upon a time there was a little squirrel who had a funny game to play...”



5

Talk, Sing, Point

Children are learning language from the moment they are born.

When you chat with children about all that they see around them, you’re building understanding and supporting deep learning.

NATURE ACTIVITY:

Go on an adventure! Journey to the bog garden at the end of the sidewalk path. Read the sign to discover what makes a bog such a special place. Point to plants, sing to the birds, and talk, talk, talk about all you see and experience!