

## Outdoor Play and Learning Curriculum

### Pre-Assessment Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We want to learn about your current outdoor play and learning practices before we begin the training. Please circle the answer that reflects your current practices.

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1. On average, how much time does your class spend outdoors/day?
  - a. 0 or None
  - b. 1- 30 minutes
  - c. 31-60 minutes
  - d. 61 – 90 minutes
  - e. 90 + minutes
2. On average, how many times per day does your class go outdoors?
  - a. 0 or None
  - b. 1 time/day
  - c. 2 times / day
  - d. 3 or more times/day
3. How many types of portable toys are available for children, and when are they available?

Portable toys include toys children can carry throw, push, ride, or twirl, e.g. ride on toys or tumbling equipment

- a. None
  - b. Few: 1-2, children take turns
  - c. Some: 3-4, children take turns
  - d. Many: 5+, 1 toy per child
4. Is there a garden for children to grow herbs, fruits, or vegetables?
    - a. Yes
    - b. No, Skip to Question #6
  5. If there is a garden, how do you link the garden activities into child's play and learning?

6. How many times per year do you complete professional development for teachers on outdoor play?
  - a. None, Skip to Question #9
  - b. 1 time/year
  - c. 2 times/year
  - d. 3 or more times/year

7. If one or more per year, what type of information is provided in these trainings? Circle all that apply.
- a. Recommended amount of outdoor playtime for children
  - b. Using the outdoors to encourage children's physically active play
  - c. Communicating with families about the benefits of outdoor play and learning
  - d. Our program's policy on outdoor play and learning
  - e. The importance of gardening for healthy eating
  - f. None of the above
8. How many times per year do you give parents resources on outdoor activity?
- a. None, Skip to Question #10
  - b. 1
  - c. 2
  - d. 3 or more
9. If one or more per year, what type of information is provided to parents? Circle all that apply.
- a. Recommended amount of outdoor playtime for children
  - b. Using the outdoors to encourage children's physically active play
  - c. The importance of gardening for healthy eating
  - d. Our program's policy on outdoor play and learning
  - e. I don't know
  - f. None of the above
10. Does your program have a written policy on outdoor play and learning?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Not Sure
11. Which of the following topics are included in your written policy on outdoor play and learning? Circle all that apply.
- a. Amount of outdoor play time provided each day
  - b. Ensuring adequate outdoor play time on inclement weather days
  - c. Shoes and clothes that allow children and teachers to play outdoors in all seasons
  - d. Safe sun exposure and protection for children, teachers, and staff
  - e. Not taking away outdoor playtime to manage challenging behaviors
  - f. Professional development on outdoor play and learning, and gardening
  - g. Education for families on outdoor play and learning, and gardening for healthy eating.
  - h. None of the above/I'm not sure

# LET'S GET ACTIVE

- Getting children to play outdoors can improve their **cognitive, social, and physical wellbeing**
- One of the biggest benefits of playing outdoors is **increased physical activity**
- Increasing your child's physical activity can help promote **motor skills** along with healthy **development of bones and muscles**

## HOW CAN YOU MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD IS GETTING ENOUGH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

Here are a few ideas to get your child active outdoors:

### Weekdays

- Take a bike ride when you get home
- Create fun challenges to do outside (“How far can you...” or “How fast can you...”)
- Plant a garden and have kids help maintain it each day
- Dance! Encourage kids to develop dance/jump rope routines to favorite songs



## Weekends

- Have a family game day where everyone competes in activities like running, jumping, hula hooping, etc.
- Make a scavenger hunt around the yard
- Take a trip to the park
- Play sports! Set up goals (cones, sticks, etc.) and provide balls, Frisbees, etc.



## Special Occasion

- Create an obstacle course with spare material around the house or yard
- Go camping in the backyard with tents and sleeping bags
- Move indoors outside by having meals or learning time outdoors
- Make a fort! Set up a fort in the yard with old sheets and play imagination with your kids



## References:

- Jaksic, D. et al. (2020). Effects of a Nine-Month Physical Activity Intervention on Morphological Characteristics and Motor and Cognitive Skills of Preschool Children. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 17(18), 6609. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17186609>.
- Ansari, A., et. al. (2015). Combating Obesity in Head Start: Outdoor Play and Change in Children's Body Mass Index. *Journal of developmental and behavioral pediatrics* : *JDBP*, 36(8), 605–612. <https://doi.org/10.1097/DBP.0000000000000215>.
- Playworld. 2019. Getting Kids Outdoors and Active . *Playworld*. <https://playworld.com/blog/getting-kids-outdoors-active/>
- Le, P. 2020. Ideas for Keeping Kids Active During Social Distancing. *Reicoop*. <https://www.rei.com/blog/fitness/ideas-for-keeping-kids-active-when-home>

# Let's Go Outside!

Ensuring your child spends regular time outdoors is important for many reasons. Here are just a few:

- Outdoor play can improve **motor skills** and promote **physical health**
- Outdoor play may have **cognitive and social** benefits
- Outdoor play promotes greater **physical activity**

The amount of outdoor time recommended for children depends on their age:

Age	Frequency	Total Time
Infants (<1 year)	2+ times/day	No standard
Toddlers (1-2 years)	3+ times/day	60+ minutes
Preschoolers (3-4 years)	3+ times/day	90+ minutes

## Did you know??

The World Health Organization recently recognized the importance of an adequate balance of activity throughout the day, including physical activity, sitting, and sleep.

When children play outdoors, they come closer to meeting these guidelines by reducing screen time and increasing physical activity.

Outdoor light helps reset the body's clock and promote sleep at night.

## World Health Organization 24-Hour Movement Guidelines

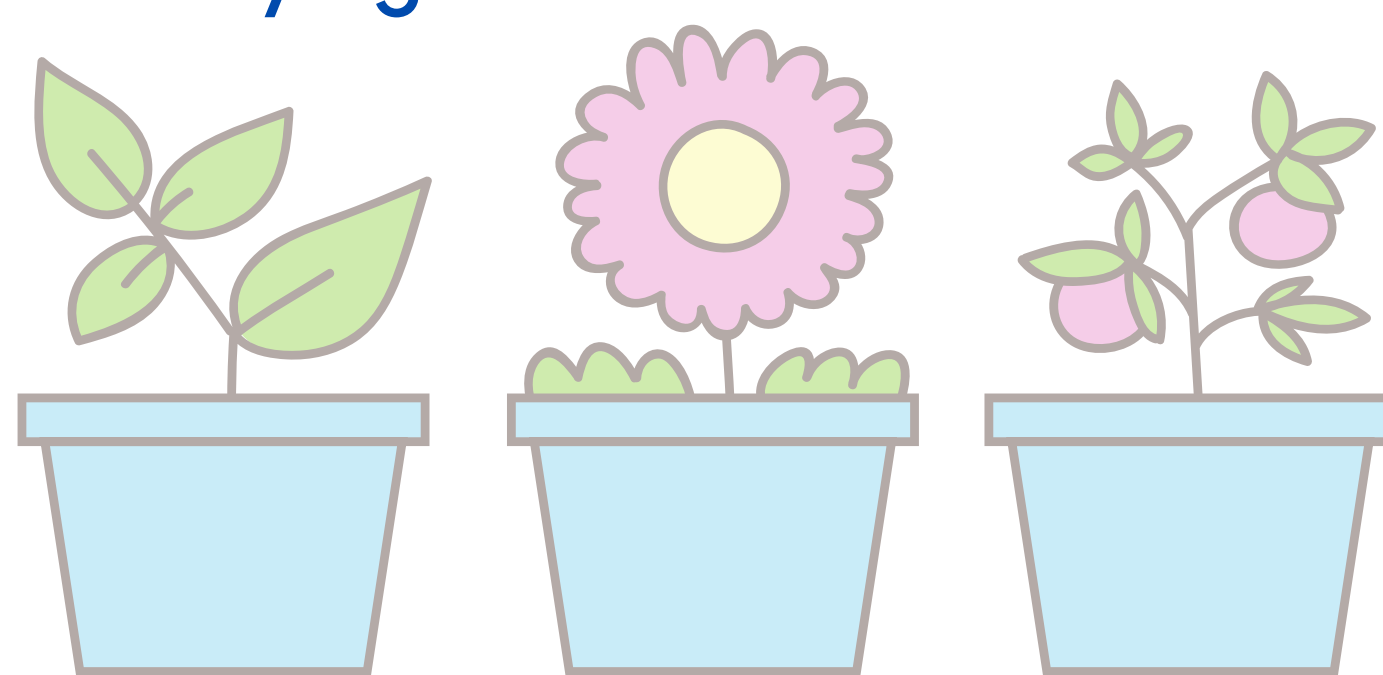
Age	Physical Activity	Sitting/Screen Time	Good Quality Sleep
0-3 months	30 minutes	0 minutes	14-17 hours
4-12 months	30 minutes	0 minutes	12-16 hours
1 year	180 minutes	0 minutes	11-14 hours
2 years	180 minutes	60 minutes	11-14 hours
3-4 years	180 minutes	60 minutes	10-13 hours

## What can you do to get your children playing outdoors?

As a caregiver, you play a **unique and important** role in promoting your child's health. Here are a few ideas to get your child spending more time outdoors:

- **Build it into a routine.** Go for a walk or play in the backyard before or after dinner each day.
- **Send children on scavenger hunts around the yard or in a park.** This is an exciting way to engage your child outdoors.
- **Provide some portable or loose toys,** like balls, tricycles, and buckets that your child can play with while outdoors
- **Provide outdoor tummy time for infants,** such as laying on a blanket in the backyard or park.

This is a great way to provide physical activity and outdoor time at the same time.



# References:

Herrington, S. (2015). Beyond Physical Activity: The Importance of Play and Nature-Based Play Spaces for Children's Health and Development. *Current obesity reports*, 4(4), 477–483. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13679-015-0179-2>.

Jaksic, D. (2020). Effects of a Nine-Month Physical Activity Intervention on Morphological Characteristics and Motor and Cognitive Skills of Preschool Children. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 17(18), 6609. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17186609>.

Ansari, A. (2015). Combating Obesity in Head Start: Outdoor Play and Change in Children's Body Mass Index. *Journal of developmental and behavioral pediatrics : JDBP*, 36(8), 605–612. <https://doi.org/10.1097/DBP.0000000000000215>.

Coe D. P. (2018). Means of Optimizing Physical Activity in the Preschool Environment. *American journal of lifestyle medicine*, 14(1), 16–23. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1559827618818419>.

Lin, Y. (2018). Bi-directional association between sleep and outdoor active play among 10-13 year olds. *BMC public health*, 18(1), 224. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-018-5122-5>

Sporer, T. 18 ways to get kids to go outside. *Active for life*. <https://activeforlife.com/18-ways-to-get-kids-outside/>

Outdoor nature experiences for your baby. *Montessori Moms*. <https://montessorimoms.wordpress.com/tag/tummy-time/>

GO NAPSACC. <https://gonapsacc.org/>

World Health Organization. <https://www.who.int/>



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- Playworld. 2019. Getting Kids Outdoors and Active . *Playworld*. <https://playworld.com/blog/getting-kids-outdoors-active/>
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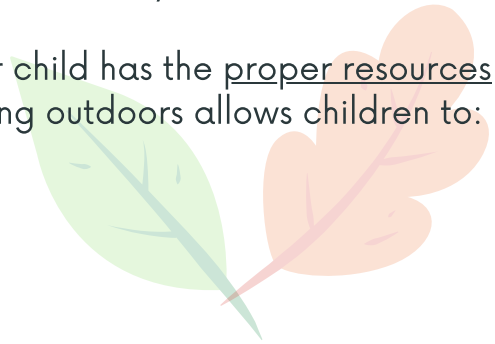
# OUTDOOR PLAY AND LEARNING POLICY

Ensuring your child spends regular time outdoors is important for many reasons. Here are just a few:

- Improve motor skills and promote physical health
- Cognitive and social benefits
- Promotes greater physical activity

We want to make sure your child has the proper resources to safely play everyday! Playing outdoors allows children to:

- Engage in active play
- Explore nature
- Work with others
- Learn the curriculum



## KEEPING KIDS ACTIVE ALL YEAR ROUND!

Young children can be outdoors between 30–89°F safely with the proper precautions. Here are some less ideal environmental or weather conditions that can engage kids:

- **Hot:** kids can still be active when it's hot! They can be active in the shade, or they can participate in water activities!
- **Cold:** cold weather is a great time for children to see changes in nature and explore a different environment.
- **Rain:** rainy days are a great time for children to experience a new and fun environment, and cause and effect.
- **Dirt:** playing in the dirt helps build children's immune system, and it helps them explore their environment.

Help support our efforts to help children be active outdoors.

The following clothes and equipment can help them be active any day of the year:

## ALL YEAR (RAIN AND DIRT)

- Rain jacket
- Boots
- Extra pair of clothes
- Extra socks and shoes

## HOT DAYS (SUMMER/SPRING)

- Swimsuit
- Towel
- Swim diaper (if applicable)

Please check with your childcare teacher or director about your child's clothes for weather and setting. We are happy to help!

## COLD DAYS (WINTER)

- Warm jacket
- Mittens/gloves
- Snow boots (if applicable)
- Change of clothes

### Reference:

- Bulletin 137: Louisiana's Early Learning Site Licensing Regulation  
<https://www.doa.la.gov/media/iuzgjape/28v161.doc>
- Extreme Temperatures: Heat and Cold. *American Academy of Pediatrics*.  
<https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Children-and-Disasters/Pages/Extreme-Temperatures-Heat-and-Cold.aspx>
- Sauer, M. Winter Outdoor Play Guidelines and Safety. *Boys Town Pediatrics*.  
<https://www.boystownpediatrics.org/knowledge-center/winter-outdoor-play-safety-guidelines>

## Outdoor Play and Learning Curriculum 3-2-1 Action Plan

**Step 1: Review:** Revisit your pre-assessment responses and compare them to your responses to the vignettes and post-assessment.

**Step 2: Reflect:** List up to 3 areas that could be improved to meet best practices. Use this list to help complete your 3-2-1 action plan.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3: Choose:** Which best practice are you choosing to address?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 4: Action:** What are 3 things that you learned during this training?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What are 2 things that you will share with a colleague and/or parent?

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

What is 1 thing that you will implement?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

*A little bit more about the practice you will implement:*

Who could help you implement this change?

\_\_\_\_\_

What existing resources could help you with this change?

\_\_\_\_\_

How will you measure this change?

\_\_\_\_\_

What would you expect to be different (either child, parent or staff behavior) if you made this change?

\_\_\_\_\_

What do you think is a realistic first step to implement this change?

\_\_\_\_\_

## Outdoor Play and Learning Curriculum

### Post-Assessment Worksheet

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We want to know what you learned in the training and how it applies to your current practices. Please answer these questions for the best practices, and reflect upon your current practices.

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1. What is the best practice for time preschool children should spend outdoors/day?
- a. 0 or None
  - b. 1- 30 minutes
  - c. 31-60 minutes
  - d. 61 – 90 minutes
  - e. 90 + minutes

2. What is the best practice for how frequently infants should go outdoors?
- a. 0 or None
  - b. 1 time/day
  - c. 2 or more times/day
  - d. 3 or more times/day

3. What is the best practice for the amount and availability of portable toys available outdoors?

Portable toys include toys children can carry throw, push, ride, or twirl, e.g. ride on toys or tumbling equipment

- a. None
  - b. Few: 1-2, children take turns
  - c. Some 3-4, children take turns
  - d. Many: 5+, 1 toy per child
4. What is the best practice for having a garden for children to grow herbs or fruits?
- a. No garden is required
  - b. Yes, a garden with options to serve herbs, fruits, and vegetables
5. What is the best practice for how many times per year teacher should complete professional development on outdoor play?
- a. None
  - b. 1 time/year
  - c. 2 or more times/year
  - d. 3 or more times/year

6. What type of information should be provided in these teacher/professional development trainings? Circle all that apply.
  - a. Recommended amount of outdoor playtime for children
  - b. Using the outdoors to encourage children's physically active play
  - c. Communicating with families about outdoor play and learning
  - d. Our program's policy on outdoor play and learning
  - e. Gardening for healthy eating/physical activity to support child development
  - f. Techniques for teaching children how to play different sports
  - g. All of the above
  
7. What is the best practice for how many times per year parents receive resources on outdoor activity?
  - a. None
  - b. 1
  - c. 2 or more
  - d. 3 or more
  
8. What type of information should be provided to parents? Circle all that apply
  - a. Recommended amount of outdoor playtime for children
  - b. Using the outdoors to encourage children's physically active play
  - c. Color of children's shirt for outdoor play activities
  - d. The importance of gardening for healthy eating
  - e. Our program's policy on outdoor play and learning
  - f. All of the above
  
9. What is the best practice for outdoor play and learning policies?
  - a. A written policy is not required
  - b. A written policy is required
  
10. What topics should be included in a written policy on outdoor play and learning? Circle all that apply.
  - a. Amount of outdoor play time provided each day
  - b. Ensuring adequate outdoor play time on inclement weather days
  - c. Shoes and clothes that allow children and teachers to play outdoors in all seasons
  - d. Safe sun exposure and protection for children, teachers, and staff
  - e. Not taking away outdoor playtime to manage challenging behaviors
  - f. Professional development on outdoor play and learning
  - g. Colors for fall decorations
  - h. Education for families on outdoor play and learning, and gardening for healthy eating
  - i. All of the above

## Outdoor Play and Learning Curriculum Post-Assessment Worksheet Answer Key

Question	Answer and Description
1. What is the best practice for time <u>preschool children</u> should spend outdoors each day?	The best practice is 90+ minutes per day ( <b>Answer E</b> ). Children need at least 3 hours of physical activity per day, including 60 minutes in very active play. Additional time outdoors allows children more opportunities to engage in active play and learn from the outdoor environment
2. What is the best practice for how frequently <u>infants</u> should go outdoors?	Infants should go outdoors 2 or more times per day ( <b>Answer C</b> ). It is important for infants to go outdoors to experience a new environment, and this additional time in higher light environments can help set their internal clock.
3. What is the best practice for the amount and availability of portable toys available outdoors?	The best practice is many portable toys, and one toy per child ( <b>Answer D</b> ). Portable toys are very important for helping children be active and practice their motor skills
4. What is the best practice for having a garden for children to grow herbs or fruits	A garden with options to serve herbs, fruits, and vegetables is the best practice ( <b>Answer B</b> ). First hand experiences with herbs, fruits, and vegetables can make children more familiar with these items, and more likely to try them in the future. Gardens can also serve as an opportunity for motor skill development and learning.
5. What is the best practice for how many times per year teachers should complete professional development on outdoor play?	The best practice is 2 or more times per year ( <b>Answer C</b> ). Frequent trainings can help teachers and directors stay up to date on information and promote continued best practices throughout the year.
6. What type of information should be provided in these trainings?	A variety of topics on outdoor play and learning including: recommended amount of outdoor playtime for children ( <b>Answer A</b> ), using the outdoors to encourage children's physically active play ( <b>Answer B</b> ), communicating with families about outdoor play and learning ( <b>Answer C</b> ), the program's policy on outdoor play and learning ( <b>Answer D</b> ), and gardening for healthy eating/physical activity to support child development ( <b>Answer E</b> ). Techniques for teaching children how to play different sports is not required for these trainings.
7. What is the best practice for how many times per year parents receive resources on outdoor activity?	Parents should receive resources multiple times throughout year, ideally 2 or more times ( <b>Answer C</b> ). Communicating with parents regularly about outdoor play and learning can help ensure the parents' awareness of best practices and the parents' adherence to the program's policies.
8. What type of information should be provided to parents?	A variety of topics that is related to outdoor playtime time, environment, and policy are recommended. This includes recommended amount of outdoor playtime for children ( <b>Answer A</b> ), using the outdoors to encourage children's physically active play ( <b>Answer B</b> ), the importance of gardening for healthy eating ( <b>Answer D</b> ) and the program's policy on outdoor play and learning ( <b>Answer E</b> ). The color of a child's shirt for outdoor play activities is not required.
9. What is the best practice for outdoor play and learning policies?	The best practice is to have a written policy for outdoor play and learning ( <b>Answer B</b> ). Louisiana also has stipulations for physical activity policies and procedures as well.



<p>10. What topics should be included in a written policy on outdoor play and learning?</p>	<p>The best practice is to have a written policy that address outdoor play and learning in a comprehensive manner. This includes: amount of outdoor play time provided each day (<b>Answer A</b>), ensuring adequate total play time on inclement weather days (<b>Answer B</b>), shoes and clothes that allow children and teachers to play outdoors in all seasons (<b>Answer C</b>), safe sun exposure and protection for children, teachers, and staff (<b>Answer D</b>), not taking away outdoor playtime to manage challenging behaviors (<b>Answer E</b>), professional development on outdoor play and learning (<b>Answer F</b>), and education for families on outdoor play and learning, and gardening (<b>Answer H</b>). Colors for decorations in the program are not required in this policy.</p>
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## Outdoor Play and Learning Curriculum Review and Reflect Sheet

### Module 1: Outdoor Playtime – Ms. Yonetta’s Dilemma

Review:

1. What is the best practice for the number of times infants should go outdoors each day?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the best practice for how long infants should go outdoors each day?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What are the two parts of outdoor playtime that Ms. Yonetta should consider?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Name three items that could help support her efforts to get the infants outdoors.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Reflect:

5. Looking at pre-assessment question 1 and 2, what are your current practices?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. How do your current practices compare to the best practices?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Module 2: Outdoor Play Environment - Ms. Chelsey’s Planting Puzzle

Review:

1. What are the four main components of the outdoor play environment?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What is the best practice for portable play equipment?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What is the best practice for gardening?

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Name three types of gardens Ms. Chelsey could consider starting.

\_\_\_\_\_

Reflect:

5. Looking at pre-assessment question 3, 4, 5, and 6, what are your current practices for gardening and portable play equipment?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. How do your current practices compare to the best practices?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Module 3: Education and Professional Development - Ms. Jessica's Inspired Idea**

Review:

1. What are two benefits to continued education?

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2. How frequently should teachers and staff receive training on outdoor play and learning?

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3. What topics should be included?

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4. Who else should Ms. Jessica provide information too? And on what topics?

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Reflect:

5. Looking at pre-assessment question 7, 8, 9, and 10 what is your childcare's current practice on education and professional development?

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6. How do your current practices compare to the best practices?

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**Module 4: Policy - Ms. Chantel's Change**

Review:

1. What are two benefits to having an outdoor play policy?

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2. What is the best practice for creating an outdoor play policy, written or informal?

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3. What is the Louisiana licensing standard for a physical activity policy?

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4. Name four components that should be in her outdoor play and learning policy.

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Reflect:

5. Looking at pre-assessment question 11 and 12, what is your childcare's current practice on outdoor play and learning policy?

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6. How do your current practices compare to the best practices?

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