

Families are
Children's
First
Teachers

Go outside with your child every day! Explore nature together. Enjoy changes in the weather and seasons. Run, jump, play ball, and expend energy!

Your child will be healthier, more active, and learn to appreciate the living world around her.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has found that children are healthier when they play outside regularly. With television, computers, and video games so common, many children are not as active as they should be. Obesity is a serious problem, along with asthma and other health conditions. *Go out in your yard with your children or take them to the park. Encourage them to run and jump and swing and climb. Join them for your own exercise! You'll all have more fun.*

Explore nature together when you're outside. Your toddler will be fascinated by sand and dirt – let him touch it, feel it (but probably not eat it!). Talk with him about flowers and grass. Point out the clouds. Together, feel the wind blowing through your hair. Splash together in puddles. Collect leaves, sticks, and feathers.

Your preschooler will have many questions about what you see and hear outside. Answer as best you can. He is trying to learn more about his world. Together, you can figure out where the sun goes at night, why the squirrels are digging in the dirt, and when the leaves will come back on the trees. Your child is a scientist and explorer when outdoors! Ask questions. Talk about colors and shapes. Count together.



Download the **"Families are Children's First Teachers"** materials and related documents at www.newmexicokids.org under the *Caregivers & Educators* tab.

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When You and Your Child Are Outdoors Together

Learning Opportunities Include:

- Developing large muscles, balance and strength
- Using senses to explore the natural world