



# Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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## 10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ Provide a safe environment
- ★ Provide positive guidance
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ Foster curiosity and development through play
- ★ Individualize care and learning activities
- ★ Partner with parents
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

## This Month's Hallmark of Quality Child Care

Foster Curiosity and Development through Play

### Indoor Movement and Nature Activities

Wouldn't you love to bottle up the benefits of playing outdoors and bring it indoors on rainy days? There is strong evidence shared by the American Academy of Pediatrics that young children experience significant benefits from spending time outdoors. These include:

- **Overall fitness level and defense against childhood obesity.** Regularly spending time outdoors increases opportunities for children to crawl, walk, climb, and run, which improves large motor skills as well as exposure to vitamin D that helps their bodies stay healthy and strong.
- **Enhanced engagement in learning.** Playing outside promotes curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking. Studies have found that children who spent more time in nature exploration had improved learning outcomes.
- **Connection to nature.** As children learn about nature, they begin to develop a connection with, and appreciation for, the natural world.

Because of these benefits, it is encouraged to take children outside daily. According to "Caring for Our Children,"

- Infants should be taken outside two to three times per day, for as long as they can tolerate it.
- Toddlers should be allowed 60 to 90 minutes per 8-hour day of moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- Preschoolers should be allowed 90 to 120 minutes per 8-hour day of moderate to vigorous physical activity, including running.

However, you may have limitations on taking the keiki outside daily (e.g., physical challenges, weather, or your environment doesn't have a safe area that protects keiki from vehicle traffic). There are ways to bring some of the elements of outdoor play to keiki through intentional planning and creativity. This newsletter will provide you with indoor active movement and nature-based play activity ideas for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.



# Indoor Space and Equipment Considerations

To mirror some of the benefits of outdoor play in an indoor space, think about space, materials/equipment, and time.

- **Space** – Think about having a large area for children to be physically active with floor space that is clean and free of obstacles. This will allow infants to crawl and climb and older children to freely move, dance, and practice ways to move their bodies. In addition, think of incorporating a defined area for messy play that supports exploration and learning. This doesn't have to be a permanent space. For example, you could spread out a tarp before allowing children to play with a container of sand and when sand play is over, fold up the tarp for easy clean up.
- **Materials/equipment** – Incorporate materials and equipment that encourage movement such as riding toys, balls, music and props for dancing. These items can be purchased or found in your home such as yarn balls, carpet squares, and pool noodles.
- **Time** – Look at your daily schedule and carve out time for active play. This should be both in the morning and afternoon. Limit screen time and provide lots of opportunities throughout the day for children to move (e.g., acting out stories and dancing to music).



## Active Movement Activities

Active movement refers to opportunities for children to do moderate to vigorous physical activity over the course of the day in very short bursts (15-30 seconds). These short times of the day can add up to meet the recommended times of movement for toddlers and preschoolers. Here are some active movement activities:

- **Infants** – Start with supervised tummy time every day when baby is awake. Practice this by placing yourself or a toy just out of the infant's reach during playtime to get him to reach for you or the toy. As he gets older, bounce him on your lap; give him a wooden spoon to bang on a container; sit him near furniture and encourage him to pull himself up; or if he's crawling, have him crawl through cardboard boxes or over pillows.
- **Toddlers** – Incorporate short movement activities throughout the day through songs like "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" that encourage the children to stand up and row their boats; or silly games such as "Move Like an Animal" (e.g., slither like snakes and various animals). During routine tasks such as going to wash hands, incorporate movement by having the children jump in place three times then walk to the sink to wash their hands.



- **Preschoolers** – You can have them participate in games that require turn taking and following directions, and you can focus on the various locomotor skills (slide, gallop, underhand toss, balance, etc.) to ensure they know different ways to move their body. For example, teach hopping by instructing each child to take off on one foot and land on the same foot. Encourage them to hop on one foot while music is playing and when the music stops, they freeze and balance on one foot. You can also encourage hopping on the right foot then switching feet, counting how many hops they can do on each foot.

## Nature-based play Activities

Nature-based play is allowing children to explore, play, and interact with the natural world. Here are some nature-based play activities:

- **Infants** – Seek out a variety of safe, interesting natural objects and make a sensory activity. For example, create a leaf sensory bin by washing and drying leaves from outdoors and putting all of them into a large plastic bin. For a younger infant, take one leaf and let him hold it in his hand. He can feel the different textures and shapes. For an older infant, he can try crumpling the leaf and may explore pulling the leaves off the stems. Talk to the infant about the leaves, using new vocabulary to describe each item (e.g., green, pokey, crunchy, wet).



- **Toddlers** – Toddlers may enjoy messy play such as digging in a sand box/bin with shovels and spoons, playing with ice cubes on a food tray (you can even make ice cubes of different colors by adding 2-3 drops of food coloring to the water in the ice cube tray before freezing), exploring their food such as discovering seeds in fruits and vegetables, or doing art projects such as finger painting with mud, leaf rubbings, or a collage using grass, leaves, and twigs.
- **Preschoolers** – Create an area where they can learn about a specific topic and supplement it with books. For example, create an egg-carton garden by placing soil into an old egg carton and planting seeds. The children can help with watering it daily and watching the seeds turn into small shoots. Or start an insect box by collecting caterpillars and observing them as they turn into butterflies.

## Training Opportunity

*I Am Moving, I Am Learning – Active Play Every Day!*

This lesson explores the importance of moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA) in order to promote healthy habits in children.

<https://extension.psu.edu/programs/betterkidcare/lessons/imil-active-play>

## Featured Activity

### Bubble Wrap Jumping

Adapted from: *Active Play! Fun Physical Activities for Young Children* by Diane Craft



#### What You Need:

- Bubble wrap, at least 10 ft. length, 24" wide
- Clear packing tape

#### What to Do:

1. Tape the bubble wrap to the floor, making sure the wrap is securely on the floor.
2. Give instructions that include:
  - Move in only one direction when jumping the length of the wrap.
  - No return trips if more than one child is jumping at the same time.
3. Demonstrate how to jump, instructing the child to bend his knees and lift his arms when he jumps, landing on both feet at the same time.
4. Encourage the child to jump along the path.
5. You can hold the child's hands for extra balance or you can tape squares along the wrap and have him jump from square to square to make the activity harder.

## Suggested Books

Discover these books and more at the Hawai'i State Public Library [www.librarieshawaii.org](http://www.librarieshawaii.org)

### **My Big Animal Book**

by Roger Priddy

This big sturdy board book showcases bright photographs of all different kinds of animals. Each animal picture has their name written underneath so that children can learn what they are called and start to match the word and their picture.



### **Clap Your Hands**

by Lorinda Bryan Cauley

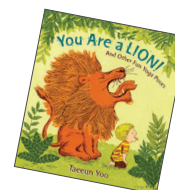
This rhyming book provides fun instructions to have keiki join the group of animals and children as they stomp, wiggle, roar, and spin their way through the day.



### **You Are a Lion! And Other Fun Yoga Poses**

by Taeun Yoo

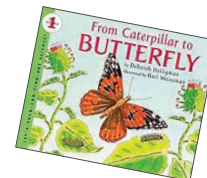
This book invites keiki to enjoy yoga by assuming playful animal poses. Yoga is great for kids because it promotes flexibility and focus.



### **From Caterpillar to Butterfly**

by Deborah Heiligman

This nonfiction picture book introduces new words about the caterpillar's life cycle and is a great tool to use as keiki explore how a caterpillar becomes a butterfly.



## Citations

American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. *Caring for our children*. 4th edition (2019). American Academy of Pediatrics.

Glassy, D. & Tandon, P. (2023). *Playing outside: Why it's important for kids*. Retrieved from <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/power-of-play/Pages/playing-outside-why-its-important-for-kids.aspx>



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