



Plan for Outdoor Play Weather Considerations

Make it a goal to take children outdoors as often as possible to support their physical health and mental well-being. Outdoor play encourages curiosity and exploration and allows children to be more energetic than indoor play.

Children can go outdoors in all types of weather—windy, sunny, snowy, and even a light misty rain. Different types of weather can provide different learning and exploration experiences for children. For children to have the best experience outdoors, it's important to dress children appropriately. Develop a plan to ensure children have appropriate clothing in all types of weather.

Our program will use



to stay informed about
local weather.

(app or news source)

There are times when the weather may be a health or safety threat to children.

HOW DO YOU KNOW?

1. **REVIEW** your program's policies on weather and outdoor play.
2. **STAY INFORMED** about current weather-related alerts for your area. When it is unsafe to go outdoors, alerts will advise people to stay inside or seek shelter. Use local news sources, the National Weather Service, a weather radio or weather apps such as Alert Iowa, Smart911, EPA Sunwise UV, or AirNow for current alerts.
3. **BE FLEXIBLE** and offer an alternative if it is unsafe to go outdoors or if outdoor time needs to be shortened. For example, if children show signs of being too hot or too cold, it may be time to take a break in the shade and offer a drink of water or take children back inside.

WEATHER	CONSIDER	WATCH FOR	
COLD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress in layers • Wear a hat and mittens • Waterproof boots • Communicate with parents about the need for appropriate clothing • Check equipment for safety (i.e., ice) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paleness • Cold hands and feet • Sneezing more than usual 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very still and quiet • Crying or fussing more than usual • Shivering
HOT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lightweight loose-fitting clothing • Go outside during cooler periods of the day • Shade protection • Drinking water available and offered frequently • Sunscreen SPF 15+ (children 6 months and older) • Offer plenty of breaks in the shade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skin is warm to touch • Sweating • Flushed cheeks • Rapid breathing • Damp hair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heat rash • Lethargic • Red skin • Headache



Use the QR code for more information on frequently used weather terms (i.e., heat advisory, extreme cold warning). <https://go.iastate.edu/SSU0AR>

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