

CREATE AN OUTDOOR PLAY AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AT HOME



As the weather gets warmer, and with the children home from school or child care during the COVID-19 pandemic, consider playing and learning outdoors at home.

An outdoor classroom is a place for our children to connect with nature. It can also spark creativity, curiosity, engagement, belonging and a sense of well-being. With school and child care closures, many parents are teaching their children at home. If you want to engage your child to play and learn in outdoor space, here are some ideas to get you started:

- 1.** Take a look at what you already have. Repurpose household items that can be used as loose parts for outdoor play
- 2.** Create different spaces in your outdoor environment that meet the needs of your child(ren). Some may be interested in a quieter activity so ensure that you include one, such as a book corner
- 3.** Incorporate a paint easel using outdoor materials to make prints. Or hang some paper onto the fence using clothes pins
- 4.** Create a music wall on the fence with instruments that are secured so children can play for an impromptu concert
- 5.** Add elements that may not necessarily be in your outdoor space, including branches, logs, rocks, wood slices, water features, rocks, scarves, tree trunks, drift wood, large bottle lids, shells, glass stones, tiles, tubes, Velcro rollers, pine cones, different sizes of boxes, acorns, carpet squares, wood frames, piping, corks, balls, pillows, plastic animals, dolls, blankets, plastic foods, plates, cups, dress up clothing, flower pots, buttons, cups, branches, geodes, flowers and empty water bottles

Plant a garden that the children can attend and care for, such as a couple of tomato plants (or beans or peas as they grow quickly) that they can water and pick

