

Let's Bundle Up and Get Outside!

The importance of outdoor play during the winter months

As winter and cold weather approaches children's play is often relegated to the indoors. Many people believe that it's important to keep children warm and inside, rather than heading out with them to play in the cold weather. This misconception is actually the OPPOSITE of what most pediatricians and childcare experts recommend. There are many good reasons to play outside.

- ❖ According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, "Cold weather does not cause colds or flu. But the viruses that do cause cold and flu tend to be more common in the winter, when children are in school and are in closer contact with each other. Frequent hand-washing and teaching your child to sneeze or cough in the bend of their elbow may help reduce the spread of the germs that cause cold and flu."
- ❖ Fresh air provides health benefits through vitamin D exposure (which boosts serotonin levels that regulate mood and emotion)
- ❖ Outside play provides children with exercise and breaks.
- ❖ Getting kids outside helps eliminate germs they carry.
- ❖ Thin layers of clothing along with hats, gloves, boots and warm winter coats provide the protection children need to participate in outdoor activities all winter long.

Each day at NIS a decision is made based on the weather and wind chill to determine if children will go outside to play.