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*Supporting Essex, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean and Somerset Counties*

A Newsletter from your Technical Assistance Center, PCA-NJ

## Summer is here. Now what?!

Summer time is a great time to enjoy the outdoors. **Think of the outdoors as an extension of your classroom.** Did you know that learning through nature fosters the development of children's executive functioning skills like the ability to reason, plan, remember, develop self-control, and solve problems? Here are a few examples of activities that both support the development of executive functioning and meet the **GNJK Standard 2.5.1**.

### Infants: Birth to 18 Months

- ♦ Make animal movements or sounds for children to copy; use natural materials to build simple structures to knock down and rebuild; and demonstrate ways to play with natural materials (e.g., pretending a leaf is a bird).
- ♦ Take babies on a walk outside and help them touch pieces of nature (tree bark, grass, stones, water). Talk about what they are and what they feel like (rough, bendable, smooth, cold) and enjoy the opportunity for shared attention.

Nature-based activities, such as those suggested here, are perfectly positioned to address children's emotional, social, physical, and cognitive development in an integrated way that fosters the growth of executive functioning skills.

### Toddlers: 18 to 36 Months

- ♦ Visit any body of water and make a game of throwing materials (pebbles, sticks, leaves) into the water.
- ♦ Invite children to move like different animals while on a walk. Bears walk slowly on all fours, cats stalk, rabbits hop, etc. Encourage the children to come up with their own ideas for animals and demonstrate how each moves.
- ♦ Go outside and collect natural materials such as leaves, flowers, sticks, seeds, etc. Look through the collection and talk about what they have found. Are there matching leaves? Do they have many of one kind of object? Are there common colors? Special items can be brought indoors to make a display of natural wonders that they collect throughout the seasons.

Remember to also refer to the NJ Birth to Three Early Learning Standards and/or the NJ Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards when planning activities, which satisfies **GNJK Standard 2.3.1**. Intentional outdoor activities benefit children as they begin to associate the beauty, peace and wonder of nature with play.

### Preschoolers: 36 to 60 Months

- ♦ Encouraging relationships with animals, both real and imagined, is one of the best ways to foster empathy during early childhood (Sobel, 2008). Telling stories, singing songs, and moving like animals are all activities that can be done outdoors with preschoolers. Choose related books to share with children and encourage them to create and share their own story books.
- ♦ Go on a hike! Child-led hikes build independence, decision-making, flexibility, and team work—all of which are part of the inter-related set of skills associated with executive functioning.
- ♦ Invite children to create a house or habitat for fairies, elves, or other mythical creatures of their choosing. Encourage them to use sticks, rocks, and leaves to build structures and decorate them with flowers and other natural objects.
- ♦ Take a "listening walk" to different areas and stop and listen for a few seconds so you can compare and contrast the different sounds heard at the different places.

### References:

Diamond, A., & Lee, K. (2011). Interventions shown to aid executive function development in children 4 to 12 years old. *Science*, 333, 959–964. doi:10.1126/science.1204529  
Sobel, D. (2008). *Childhood and Nature: Design principles for educators*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.



# Tips and Tricks for Safe Fun in the Sun

## Shared Water Play

Be sure that:

- children wash their hands before they play in a water table.
- the container and toys used in the activity are disinfected before each use of the water table or wading pool.
- staff members supervise water play closely to ensure no child drinks the water or has any contact between bodily fluids (from the child's nose, mouth, or eyes) and the water.

To guarantee that these health practices are being implemented daily, it is recommended that a system is put into place for the summer, which is embedded in daily practice **GNJK standard 1.2.2**. One example may be having the teachers who open for the day make sure that all of the pools or water play toys get sprayed down with a bleach and water solution in the morning before the children go out to play. If this is not realistic because of staffing and scheduling issues, an alternative would be to give each child a personal basin of water for play or allow children to play in a sprinkler.



## Sun Safety

- Shade is made available for children to escape the heat of the sun, especially between the hours of 10am-2pm.
- Teachers apply sunscreen of SPF 50 no less than 15 to 30 minutes prior to sun exposure on skin that is not protected by clothing.
- Sunscreen is reapplied approximately every 2 hours if children continue to be exposed to sun \*(Caring for our Children (CFOC) Std. 3.4.5.1).
- All children are dressed in cool, comfortable, lightweight, tightly woven clothing that covers the body but allows evaporation of sweat.
- Infants under six months of age should be kept out of direct sunlight (CFOC Std. 3.4.5.1).
- Parents/legal guardians are asked to provide shatter resistant sunglasses that block 99% to 100% of UV light for children to wear when exposed to the sun.
- Director checks the UV index provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on their website at [www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html](http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html) to guide the teachers in planning sun-safe activities.



## Field Trip Safety

Summer and field trips usually go hand in hand. Centers need to take precautions to ensure accountability and supervision before, during and after the trip. According to CFOC, Standard 1.1.1.4: Ratios and Supervision During Transportation, ratios must always be maintained whether the center provides or arranges transportation. Here are a few safety tips to keep in mind pertaining to ratios.

- The driver is not included in ratio
- No child of any age should be left alone in or around a vehicle, even if the child requires the use of a car seat.
- A name-to-face count should be conducted prior to leaving for the destination, when the destination is reached, before departing to return to the center and upon return.

*\*Caring for Our Children is a collection of national best practices for children in early child care and education settings. Many of these practices are embedded within Grow New Jersey Kids standards.*

# Weather Watch

## ERS Tip

When assessing your program using The Environmental Rating Scales (ERS), children are expected to play outdoors daily, weather permitting. The Childcare Weather Watch Chart removes the guess work and can help you easily determine whether to go out or not.

Click [here](#) to see and print a copy for your center!

## Understand the Weather

### Wind-Chill

- 30° is *chilly* and generally uncomfortable
- 15° to 30° is *cold*
- 0° to 15° is *very cold*
- 32° to 0° is *bitter cold* with significant risk of frostbite
- -20° to -60° is *extreme cold* and *frostbite* is likely
- -60° is *frigid* and exposed skin will freeze in 1 minute

### Heat Index

- 80° or below is considered *comfortable*
- 90° beginning to feel *uncomfortable*
- 100° *uncomfortable* and may be *hazardous*
- 110° considered *dangerous*

All temperatures are in degrees Fahrenheit

## Child Care Weather Watch

		Wind-Chill Factor Chart (in Fahrenheit)															
		Wind Speed in mph															
		Calm	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40							
Air Temperature	40	40	36	34	32	30	29	28	28	27							
	30	30	25	21	19	17	16	15	14	13							
	20	20	13	9	6	4	3	1	0	-1							
	10	10	-1	-4	-7	-9	-11	-12	-14	-16							
	0	0	-6	-11	-16	-22	-24	-26	-27	-28							
	-10	-10	-22	-28	-32	-35	-37	-39	-41	-43							
	-20	-20	-34	-41	-45	-48	-51	-53	-55	-57							
	-30	-30	-46	-53	-58	-61	-64	-67	-69	-71							

Comfortable for outdoor play      Caution      Danger

		Heat Index Chart (in Fahrenheit %)															
		Relative Humidity (Percent)															
		40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100			
Temperature (°F)	80	80	80	80	81	81	82	82	83	84	84	85	86	86	87		
	84	83	84	85	86	86	88	89	90	92	94	96	98	100	103		
	90	91	93	95	97	100	103	106	109	113	117	122	127	132			
	94	97	100	102	106	110	114	119	124	129	135						
	100	108	114	118	124	128	136										
	104	119	124	131	137												
	110	126															

# Center Spotlight: Essex County

## Sandy Lane Nursery Summer Program Submitted by Jenny Cabrera-Grande, Assistant Director

Sandy Lane Nursery School acknowledges how essential it is for our children to have a fun, active, educational summer experience. Our summer program is filled with wonderful activities based on weekly themes. We go on field trips and provide "On-Site" field trips for our younger students. Our weekly themes encourage our children's curiosity and give them the opportunity to be creative, engage in outdoor water play and have a fun-filled summer.

Maintaining a positive relationship with our community is important to Sandy Lane. During "Superhero Theme Week," our children prepare and serve breakfast to our local "superheroes." The Belleville Police and Fire Departments are our special guests during this week.

The teachers and staff at Sandy Lane Nursery School are highly trained educators who provide guidance and care while always respecting the child's individual needs, whether during the school year or the summer months.



### HONORING HEROES

The Belleville police and fire departments join Sandy Lane Nursery School students for breakfast during the school's Heroes Week.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SANDY LANE NURSERY SCHOOL



## Need to Know!

*Save the date for these upcoming opportunities...*



### Webinars

*Open to all GNJK programs*

Date	Time	Topic	Presenter(s)	Description
8/30/16	1:00	<b>Quality Interactions</b> <a href="https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7100618979991644419">Registration Link: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7100618979991644419</a>	Wanda Medina and Brianni Isaac	This webinar will provide participants with an overview of how to provide quality interactions in the classroom.

### GNJK Peer Learning Communities (PLC) *County– specific*

Date	Time	Location	County
7/13/16	1:30pm-3:30	DCF Training Academy, New Brunswick	Middlesex, Somerset
7/21/16	1pm-3pm	Child Care Resources of Monmouth County	Monmouth
7/26/16	6:30pm-9pm	Children's Home Society, Tom's River	Ocean- <b>Group B Directors</b>
9/14/16	1pm-3pm	Child Care Connection, Trenton	Mercer
9/14/16	12pm-2pm	Union City Public Library	Hudson
9/21/16	1:30pm-3:30	DCF Training Academy, New Brunswick	Middlesex, Somerset
9/21/16	12pm-2pm	Prevent Child Abuse NJ-Newark	Essex



### Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey™

PCA-NJ operates a broad range of preventative services designed to support the improvement and quality of professional workforces and programming, resulting in significant positive impacts on family functioning and health in all 21 counties. ***PCA-NJ programs include:***

- ◆ Grow NJ Kids TAC
- ◆ Middlesex County Council for Young Children
- ◆ Healthy Families
- ◆ Human Trafficking
- ◆ Parents as Teachers
- ◆ Essex Pregnancy & Parenting Connection
- ◆ Parent Linking Program
- ◆ Parent Education & Technical Assistance
- ◆ Enough Abuse
- ◆ The Period of Purple Crying

### *Needs Assessment Survey*

Please help us cater to YOUR needs by completing our Needs Assessment survey. Follow this link and share your thoughts about PLCs.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/gnjneedsassessment>



### *Training*

Click on the link provided below to view all currently offered professional development opportunities specifically designed for GNJK centers.

[Trainings](#)

**Central Region TA Center** 103 Church Street, Suite 210 New Brunswick, NJ 08901 732.246.8060

**Northeast Region TA Center** 550 Broad Street, Suite 1105 Newark, NJ 07102 973.371.5301

[www.preventchildabusenj.org/programs/growtac](http://www.preventchildabusenj.org/programs/growtac)