

Topic based resource

Wellbeing

Upper Key Stage 2

Eco-Schools



Ariennir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government

3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



cadwch keep
gymru'n wales
dachus tidy

Background information

Everyone knows that fresh air and being outdoors is good for our health, but they do not always consider all the different ways it is good for us. Spending time in nature releases natural hormones such as Serotonin which helps with mood, self-esteem, and motivation. It also helps prevent short sightedness in children, promotes a connection to nature, prevents vitamin D deficiency, and increases physical activity. Time in a natural environment helps to develop a connection to nature and a feeling of 'cynefin'. This activity helps children to feel grounded in nature while using their sense of touch. Walking barefoot on uneven surfaces also develops balance and strengthens core muscles.



Climate perspective

Feeling connected to nature promotes healthy lifelong behaviours. If children have a connection to nature and all the positive benefits it brings, they will grow up with a desire to protect the planet. Feeling the earth beneath their bare feet

will allow them to see and feel the Earth they need to protect. In other topics they will discover ways they can help to protect our world but first they need to love it, and a connection to nature is the first step.

Barefoot Walking

Upper KS2

Get those shoes and socks off!

Spending time without shoes and socks on is important from a wellbeing perspective. It is a very sensory experience giving children the opportunity to feel textures and temperature in a different way to just feeling with their hands. This activity gives the opportunity for this sensory experience and then allows self-expression through painting with their feet. Using their legs and feet in this different way is also good for physical development and health.

Materials needed:

- Either use an area of the school grounds that has been checked carefully for sharp objects and prickly plants or if there is nowhere suitable construct your own using collected materials laid out in a path for children to follow.
- If constructing one you could use materials such as leaves (dried and fresh), moss, mossy bark, logs, sand, turf, mud.
- Large sheets of paper or light-coloured fabric.
- Several trays or large bowls for the mud paint.
- Warm soapy water and towels for washing after.



Step 1

If using a natural space

Check the area carefully or ask the children to check the area themselves, getting down low to look carefully at the area and rubbing their fingers lightly over the surface to check for anything sharp or prickly.

Step 2



Get the children to take off their shoes and socks and explore the area with bare feet. What does it feel like on their skin? Can they describe the different textures?

Step 3



If using a made trail

Consider what space you have available. Can you incorporate some natural areas, or does it all need to be constructed? You could place natural materials in areas on the school field and allow the children to explore the different areas in turn. If using a paved area you could lay out a tarpaulin to keep it contained and sprinkle natural materials such as leaves, moss, wet mud, and sand to make a trail for the children to follow.

Step 4



Mud painting with the feet

Mix mud and water in the bowls/trays to make lovely brown paint and lay large paper/fabric on the floor. Let the children put their whole foot in the mud (or just a toe!) and then paint with it. What shapes/patterns/textures can they make?

Step 5

Create a simple poem to capture what the trail felt like. Each line should have 3 words to describe the texture they were walking on e.g. Squashy, sploshy, mud.

Tickly, prickly, moss.

Rough, scratchy, bark.

Soft, slippy, leaves.

Curriculum Links

Area of Learning and Experience - Health and Well-being

Statement of What matters:

Developing physical health and well-being has lifelong benefits.

How we process and respond to our experiences affects our mental health and emotional well-being.

Next steps and other ideas

- Use other natural materials instead of brushes for painting e.g. moss, feathers, leaves, sticks.
- Explore other textures in nature with their fingers and discuss how it feels.
- Creative writing about the experience.
- Tree Hugging – It is not only the ground that can make us feel connected to nature, spending time with trees also has a similar effect. Hugging them, listening to them and spending time lying underneath can all help with wellbeing.
- Mud balls (Ancient art of Dorodango)

Useful Websites

<https://outdoorclassroomday.org.uk/resources/>

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/outdoor-health-and-wellbeing-activities-games/>



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