

Play is the key way children learn about themselves, others and the world they live in. It is essential to their learning, development, health, and physical, mental and social well-being – and it's FUN! Play provides the building blocks to be ready for school.



## Summer play

Summer is a wonderful time for babies to expand their world by exploring with you outdoors.

### Did you know?

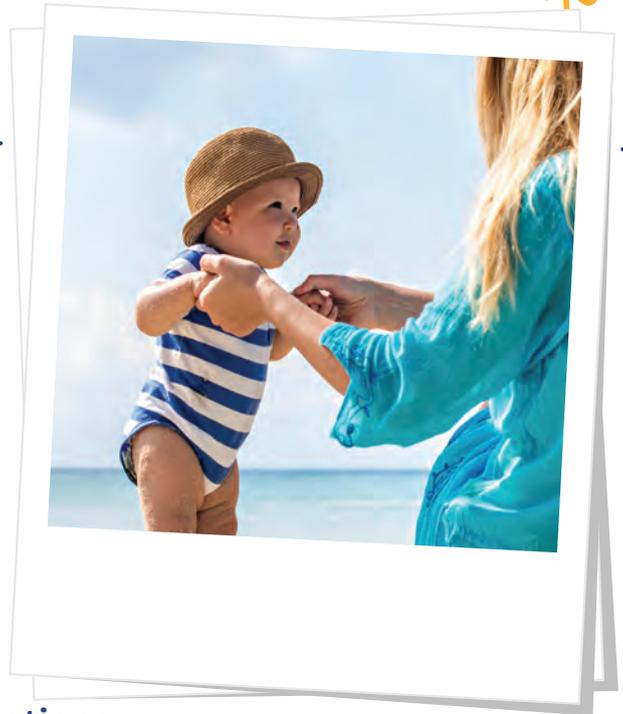
Children who often play in nature are less likely to get sick! Your baby's immune system is stimulated by exposure to different plants, soils and water – so getting out and about early is good for your baby's health as well as great fun!

### Add language

Watch what catches your baby's attention and name or describe it for them e.g. "Oh it's wet!", "There's a bird", etc. Slowing down and seeing the world through your baby's eyes can be one of the joys of parenting.

### Other Development

Babies learn by engaging their senses, and nature provides the perfect space for your baby to explore with their eyes, ears, nose, hands, feet and even through taste! The warmer weather may inspire a trip to the beach, river or watering hole – where exciting discoveries and sensations await! Putting their feet in running water, sitting on the sand or grass, or watching waves crash at the ocean are all different sensory experiences that help your baby learn about the world.



### Variations

Why not park your baby's pram under a tree? Babies eyes are first attracted to contrast between light and dark. They can be fascinated by the movement of the leaves. Try singing songs to your baby about the environment you're in e.g. "Oh Mr Sun", "Itsy Bitsy Spider", or "The Ants Go Marching in"

### Safety

Remember to always supervise babies around water and protect their delicate skin from the sun.

- Playgroup WA has a treasure trove of play activities for babies, toddlers and 3-5 year olds, for home and playgroup. These play activities cover a balanced diet of play across sensory, movement, language and thinking skill areas.

You can find them at [www.playgroupwa.com.au/playideas](http://www.playgroupwa.com.au/playideas) or visit [www.facebook.com/playgroupwa](https://www.facebook.com/playgroupwa)

