

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.



Autumn Play

Autumn is a great time to take your baby outside to enjoy new experiences and learn more about their world. Autumn is a chance for babies to learn about the way nature changes - cooler weather, leaves falling etc.

Did you know?

Spending time in nature can have a calming effect on babies, children and adults.

Add language

Watch what captures your baby's attention. Talk about what they can see, hear and smell in the natural environment. This gives your baby words to go with each new experience.

You can sing songs about what you are seeing and experiencing while you are outside e.g. "I can sing a rainbow". The rhythm of songs captures your baby's attention and can also be very calming.

Other development

Enjoy some quiet time together as you watch clouds and trees move. Listen to the birds and chirping crickets.

Draw your baby's attention to falling autumn leaves or a tree blowing in the breeze. This helps develop their eye movements (known as visual tracking).



Variations

Babies delight in exploring and discovering using all their senses. You can make simple "discovery bottles" for your baby to explore. To make one of these bottles you can put pebbles, gumnuts, petals, or leaves into a tightly sealed clear plastic bottle. You can add water to the bottle or leave it dry. These make a safe sensory play activity that engages several senses at once including sight, touch and sound.

Safety

Always use sun protection when exploring outside. Some plants are not safe to touch or taste. KidSafe WA have a fact sheet on toxic plants which you can find on their website.

- 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 or visit www.facebook.com/playgroupwa

