



Where will your imagination take you today?

Top tips to get children outdoors

Research has shown that getting outdoors helps children to be healthier, happier and they can do better at school.

Looking for outdoor activities to take on with your children?

Indoors or outdoors, with a focus on nature and the environment Suntrap Forest Centre has something for all ages using household objects or just your imagination.

Not everyone is brought up with a love of nature and getting outside. To help you we've put together our top tips to encourage outdoor learning.

Tip 1 Stay local



At first it can be helpful to stay close to home and only head out for short times. This builds your confidence and helps your child feel secure. But in time, and when rules allow, explore further afield in Epping Forest.

Tip 2 Ask



Ask them for their ideas and what they would like to do, it might be making bird feeders, jump in puddles, scavenger hunts or cycle through the forest. It'll help them feel more in control and take some pressure off you.

Tip 3 Try and use interests



If it's letters can they find all the letters of the alphabet in nature? For bugs can they build a bug hotel? Do they love the Stickman – then make a Stickman family. If they love crafting what can they make?

Tip 4 Reassurance



Let your kids know it's OK to get wet or muddy. Make going out be part of your daily routine, rain or shine. After all there's no such thing as bad weather just the wrong clothing!

Tip 5 Use of language



Words can make a big difference to how children can enjoy the outdoors.

Instead of *'Don't get wet'* try *'We're not wearing the right gear for water play today but next time we'll bring it'*.

Instead of *'That's not for climbing on'* try *'Let's go explore and find something different to climb on'*.

Our favourite - instead of *'Keep your shoes on'* try *'Let's look together to see if it's safe to be barefoot'*.

Tip 6 Enthusiasm



Join in and be enthusiastic – enthusiasm can be contagious.

If you lead by example, they are more likely to follow you.

Time outdoors is a great way to make memories and we all need some great family memories.