



Safety and Healthy Risk Taking in Nature-Based Education

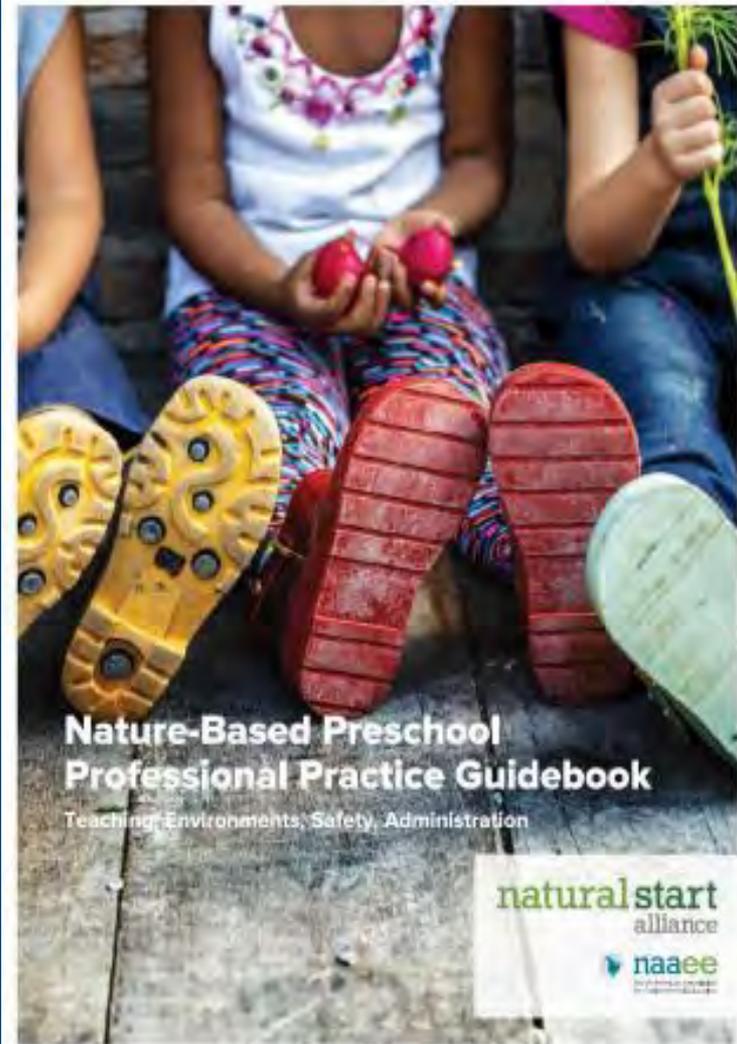
Hosted by the Natural Start Alliance
with guest speakers

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natural start alliance





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ECO
Educating Children Outdoors

Part 1:

Safety is the Heartwood of Nature-Based Programs

To Risk We Must - *The Benefits of Healthy Risk Taking*

Developing Your WHY - *I Can Teach Outdoors, but Why?*

Start Here - *Training for Teachers and Your Community*

Pre-Program Planning - *Creating Routines of Safety and Awareness*

Reflect and Respond - *Can We Go Outside Yet?*

TO RISK WE MUST

To risk we must.

To risk is to risk appearing the fool. To weep is to risk appearing sentimental. To expose feelings is to risk exposing our true self. To place your ideas, your dreams before the crowd, is to risk loss. To love is to risk not being loved in return. To live is to risk dying. To try at all is to risk failure. But to risk we must. Because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing. [Those] who risk nothing, do nothing, have nothing, are nothing.”

~Ralph Waldo Emerson



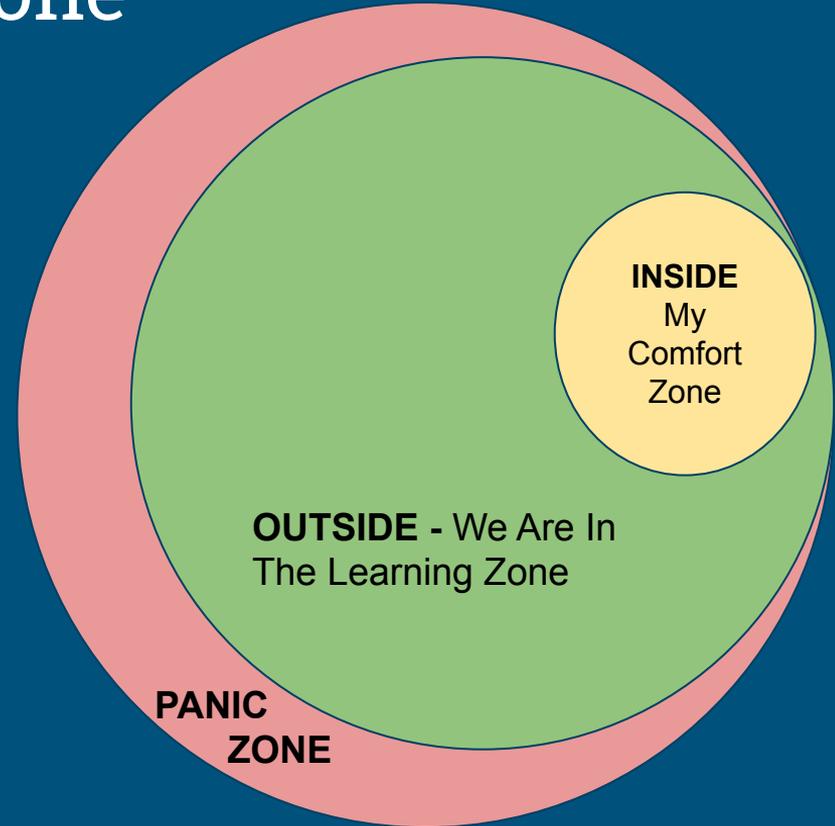
It is Natural: *Children seek learning that is challenging and adventurous*



I Can Teach Outdoors...but, *WHY?*



Outside in the Learning Zone



Who is in the learning zone?



The Responsibility of WHY



High Quality Risk Management Training is Imperative



RISK

HAZARD

Easily identifiable (children notice)

Difficult to assess (for children)

Yields growth

Causes harm / is dangerous

Children can approach with a base of knowledge

No knowledge

There is an element of control - Children have a choice

Lack of Control - children can not see to make a choice



Medical Training: CPR, First Aid, Wilderness Medicine

Training for Teachers: “One Risk, One Teacher”





Pre-Program Planning: *Creating Routines of Safety and Awareness*

- **Informing Parents and Caregivers**
- **Appropriate Clothing for Outdoors**
- **Assessing the Outdoor Site**
- **Safety Policies, Health and Hygiene**



Informing Parents & Caregivers: Meetups and Gatherings



Introducing Policies and Procedures: Teaching Families about Safety and Risk



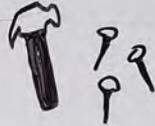
Community Work and Signage: Helps Adults Understand the Safety Protocols for Students

SAWING



1. Ask a teacher.
"May I please SAW?"
2. Choose a location.
"Where were you hoping to SAW?"
3. Gather tools:
 - 1 saw
 - 1 pair gloves
4. Place sheath on SAW
5. Return SAW.

A teacher always watches!



HAMMERING

1. Ask a teacher
"May I please HAMMER?"
2. Choose a location.
"Where were you hoping to HAMMER?"
3. Gather tools:
 - 1 Hammer
 - 1 pair of safety glasses
 - 3 nails.
4. Return tools
5. Check work for nails that may have gone through. Bend for safety.



Engaging Emergency Personnel: First Responders Visit the Site and Students



Gear and Clothing:

Student-Centered Assessment and Management





Gear Needs to be Place-Based and Accessible:

- ~Gear closet at the school or center
- ~Clothing swaps throughout the year
- ~Tailored to the seasons in your region
- ~Assess weather, high heat/extreme cold
- ~Local considerations in rural areas (hunting)





Site Assessments of Outdoor Environments





Developing a Site Assessment

- Landscape Features (water, steep hills, visual obstructions)
- Flora (poison ivy or wild parsnip)
- Fauna (ticks, animal dens, poisonous snakes)
- Tree Hazards (lose overhanging branches)
- Biohazards (hypodermic needles, feces)
- Human Interface (unleashed dogs, homeless encampment)

These all can be HAZARDS as they can not be seen or approached with a base of knowledge by young children.

Conducting the Site Assessment



- **Staff, teachers and the CHILDREN!**
- **Seasonally and after severe weather events**
- **Daily sweeps need to be made**
- **Outside experts such as arborists, park officials, botanists or wildlife biologists**

Safety Policies: Health and Hygiene Routine





Toileting in Nature-Based Programs:

~Vary site to site & within the state regulatory state agencies

~Examples include--nearby facilities, portable toilets, five gallon buckets, composting toilets, privacy tents



Even before COVID-19...Handwashing was Regulated





Are We Ready? Let's Go...

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...*OUTSIDE!*



Now that you made it this far, stay tuned for *Part 2: Safety..Outside!*

