



Infant/Toddler Science & Nature Tip Sheet

Teachers should provide children with indoor and outdoor nature experiences. Outdoor experiences should include hands-on activities with living plants or animals. This could include nature walks, exploring grass on the playground, observing worms, smelling flowers, etc. This is not just going outside and being near nature, but the children should have the access and ability to safely experience nature.

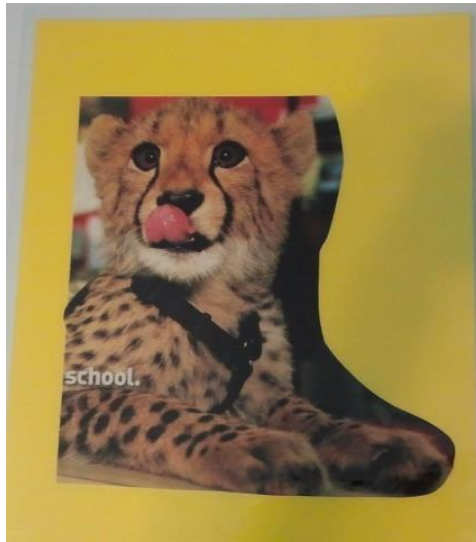
Sand and/or water play should be accessible to children two year olds with adequate space, materials, and close supervision.



Teachers should talk to the children daily about nature or science (i.e. point out and observe the rain/snow/wind/sunshine). Teachers should model respect for nature. This could include helping to care for plants and animals or preserving things in nature.

Children should have daily experiences with living plants or animals. The plants or animals can be inside the classroom or easily visible from the classroom. This is more than having a plant or animal in the classroom or seeing one outside. Teachers should point out and talk to the children about nature.

Children should have access to materials that represent nature in a realistic way. Examples can include play animals that are realistic looking, puzzles with realistic animal images, and books with realistic animal pictures (i.e. The Very Hungry Caterpillar would not be considered a nature/science material since the caterpillar is not realistic looking). Nature items that are given human features (smiles, clothes, etc.) are not considered to be realistic.



Realistic animal pictures in books and on posters represent nature accurately.



Older toddlers can be given hands-on experiences with larger and safe nature items. This gives the children the chance to see, touch, and experience nature/science.



An example of a science\nature material could include discovery bottles with real nature items (sand and shells, flowers, leaves, etc.).

For two year olds science\nature materials should be organized in an interest center.