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Top tips: Winter warriors - supporting outdoor provision all year round

Encouraging the continuation of outdoor provision during the shorter, darker days of the winter months can be challenging.

Here are some practical tips to help your support staff deliver outdoor provision and foster a team culture that values and enjoys time outdoors, whatever the season.

- Create a positive mindset around outdoor play all year round. Remind staff of the benefits, for example, improving motor skills, supporting emotional regulation, inspiring curiosity and creativity, problem-solving in different weather conditions etc.
- Facilitate staff discussions about any concerns or challenges they have with outdoor provision in winter. This validates their concerns and gives them space to problem-solve as a team
- Provide adequate training. Offer training focussing on winter outdoor activities, creative play ideas such as exploring ice formations or wildlife patterns, keeping children warm, and managing low light or snowy conditions
- Ensure children and staff have appropriate clothing, for example, waterproofs, boots, gloves, warm coats, hats etc. This helps with any reluctance to venture outside when it's cold and/or wet
- Provide sufficient outdoor lighting where necessary
- Promote safety and comfort. Establish safety guidelines, such as temperature limits and proper clothing standards. Provide ways for children and staff to warm-up after they've been outside by creating cosy corners with warm drinks and blankets



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- Lead by example. Your participation in outdoor play will send a strong message that it is valued and a priority. Recognise and praise staff who engage enthusiastically, highlighting their creativity or ability to motivate others.

NDNA products to support you with these tips

- [Developing Quality Outdoor Provision](#) – face to face training.

And more resources at www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna