

Using Our Senses

Outdoor Learning Environments Activity Leaflet

Setting: Classroom Setting

Activity: Sensory Activity

Focus of Activity: Activity focused on stimulating senses and cognitive development.

Curricular Areas:

- Creative Expression
- Problem-Solving
- Cognitive Development
- Sensory Stimulation

Herbs are stimulating natural elements used for children's hands-on learning. Using herbs children have the opportunity to apply their senses to explore not only the properties of the plants, but to understand the richness of the natural and physical world around them. Herbs encompass a multitude of possibilities to the approaches to learning as it relates to science, mathematics, language, and sensory development.

Materials:

Ice cube trays, variety of fragrant herbs, bowls, water, cup or pitcher.

Suggestions:

1. Using ice cube trays encourage children to fill each section with different herbs. Have children fill them with water until the herbs are completely submerged. Encourage children to count out how many herbs they put in each section of the ice trays and/or encourage them to create patterns to enhance their mathematics skills and development.
2. Place tray(s) in freezer or outdoors if temperature permits, allowing tray(s) to freeze completely.
3. Once frozen take ice cubes out of the freezer and place them in plastic bowls filled with water. Invite children to mix different herbs in one bowl or sort herbs together by their plant species.
4. Encourage children to melt iced herbs by rubbing them between their hands.
5. Within a group setting engage in open discussion. Focus questions that encourage math, science, cognitive and language skills.
 - a. "How cold are the ice cubes?"
 - b. "Do they have different smells?"
 - c. "What do you smell?"

