

How (and why) You Should Spend Winter Outdoors



Why Outdoor Time Matters

Research continues to show that regular time outdoors plays an important role in children's health, development, and well-being.

Outdoor play provides opportunities for movement, sensory exploration, problem-solving, social interaction, and self-directed play. These experiences support healthy physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development.

Research also suggests that access to nature and outdoor play is associated with positive outcomes for children's health and behavior.

EXPERT TIP!

If you need the heat on in the car, you're not dressed warmly enough!



Time outdoors may also support children's attention and emotional well-being and studies increasingly point to outdoor play and nature exposure as valuable opportunities to support mental health, regulation, and overall well-being.

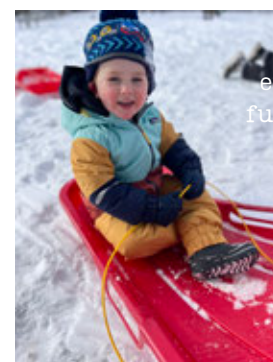
Does Cold Weather Make Children Sick?

Cold weather itself does not cause a cold or the flu—respiratory illnesses are caused by viruses. However, the conditions that often accompany colder weather can influence how respiratory viruses spread.

More Time Indoors: During colder months, people tend to spend more time indoors and in closer proximity to one another. When indoor spaces are crowded or poorly ventilated, respiratory viruses can spread more easily through the air.

The Bottom Line: Being outside in cold weather does not, by itself, make a child sick. Respiratory illnesses are caused by infectious pathogens, while factors such as indoor crowding, ventilation, temperature, and humidity can influence how easily those pathogens spread.

Spending time outdoors can be one way to reduce prolonged time in crowded indoor environments, while fresh air and movement provide additional benefits for children's overall well-being.



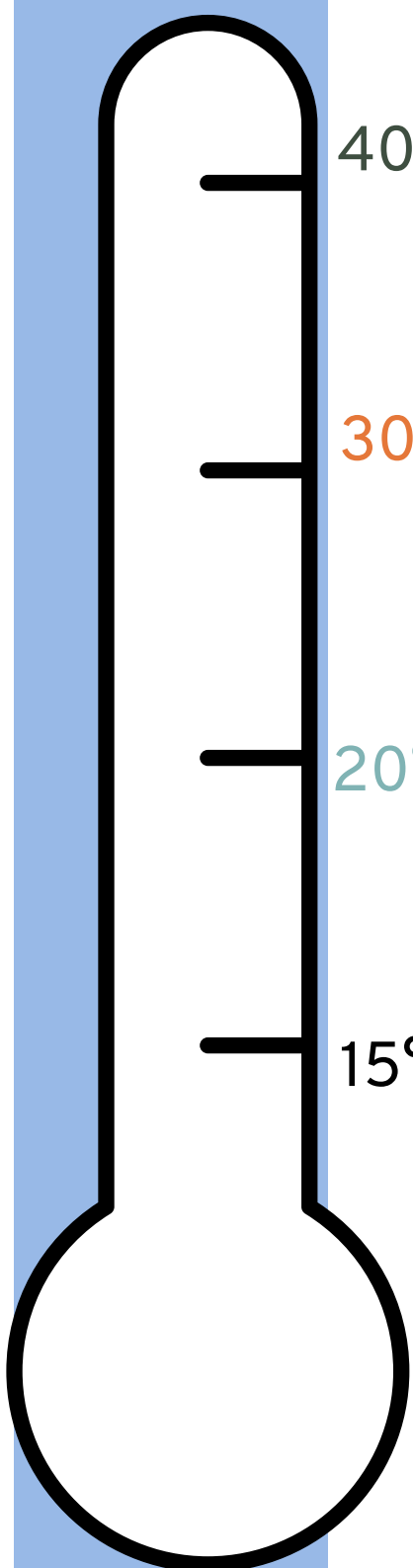
What To Wear Depending on Temperatures



This is a general guideline. May vary for every individual.

Periodically check your child's neck for sweat to see if they're too bundled!

Always check the "Real Feel" of the day!



40°F



Wool Socks
Sneakers or Boots



Pants



Base Layer Shirt
1 Additional Layer Jacket



Gloves or Mittens
(optional)



Winter Hat

30°F



Wool Socks
Insulated Shoes or Boots



Lined Pants or
2 Pairs of Pants



Base Layer Shirt
1 Additional Layer Winter Jacket



Gloves or Mittens



Balaclava or
Winter Hat

20°F



Wool Socks
Insulated Boots
Foot Warmers



Base Layer Pants
Snow Pants



Base Layer Shirt
2 Additional Layers Winter Jacket



Insulated Mittens or Gloves
Hand Warmers



Balaclava or Neck Warmer
Winter Hat

15°F



Wool Socks
Insulated Boots
Foot Warmers



Base Layer Pants
Snow Pants



Base Layer Shirt
2+ Additional Layers Winter Jacket



Insulated Mittens or Gloves
Hand Warmers



Balaclava or Neck Warmer
Winter Hat

The Top Winter Gear Picks For Kids

Socks

- Look for Merino Wool
- Stay away from cotton
- Two pairs of socks can help, but make sure there is room in the boot

Favorite Brands

Reima
Bombas
Carhartt
Woolino
Darn Tough

Base Layers

- Purpose= To keep dry and warm, wick away moisture
- Merino Wool=More Expensive, insulates when wet
- Synthetic= More durable, does not insulate when wet

Favorite Brands

Burton
Smartwool
Ella's Wool
Helly Hansen
R.E.I.

Boots

- Look for waterproof and insulated boots
- Rain Boots are NOT warm
- Make sure there is room for thick socks

Favorite Brands

Kamik
Columbia
Keen
North Face
Merrell

Pants

- Fleece and lined pants are great for milder winter temperatures
- Snow pants are versatile; there doesn't need to be snow to wear them!

Favorite Brands

R.E.I.
L.L. Bean
Columbia
Burton



The Top Winter Gear Picks For Kids

Jackets

- Waterproof
- Breathable
- Hooded
- Fits Well (not too tight, not too loose)

Hats/ Neck

- Stay away from scarves
- Neck warmers really help keep in the heat
- Balaclavas are GREAT for toddler ages (stays on and can fit under a hat)

Gloves

- Can be more difficult to get on, but allow for more diverse play
- Look for insulated or waterproof

Mittens

- Fingers often stay warmer because they are not separated
- Easier to get on than gloves

Favorite Brands

Reima
Patagonia
Marmot
Columbia
The North Face

Favorite Brands

Smart Wool
Turtle Fur
L.L. Bean
Sunday Afternoons

Favorite Brands

The North Face
Reima
Columbia
Marmot
L.L. Bean

Favorite Brands

The North Face
Reima
Columbia
Marmot
L.L. Bean

Hand and Foot Warmers

Hand and foot warmers can be a winter lifesaver; however, always use them cautiously. They should never touch the skin directly; an adult should monitor for safe temperatures.

AURO HEAT makes a highly rated hand and foot warmer that naturally uses the body's heat. These are safe for kids, with no risk of burns.

AURO HEAT
Hand and Foot
Warmers



Winter Tips For Toddlers

A one-piece snow suit (even if there isn't snow) can be great. After layering up, put the snowsuit on top. A one-piece, hooded snowsuit gives less opportunity for cold air to seep in.



Those thin mittens and gloves often don't do much in colder temperatures. Look for insulated gloves or mittens that go up and over the wrist.



Typical winter hats can be hard to keep on a toddler's head. Instead, opt for a balaclava. Not only does it stay secure, but it covers the neck, keeping in body heat.



Invest in a quality base layer. They can be used in all types of cooler weather, as the only layer for milder days or as the first of many layers on cold days.



Refusing to wear their mittens or gloves? Keep a pair in your pocket with hand warmers inside. When the tears start from cold hands, present them with some toasty mittens.



Layers are a MUST; they help to keep the heat in and also allows for your child to remove layers as they warm-up. Remember: If your child gets out of the car cold, they're more likely to stay cold. Bundle up in lots of layers, you can always remove some!

