



## **Bookworm Gardens Nature School Recommended Reading**

Bookworm Gardens Nature School staff is dedicated to researching what is best practice in both early childhood education and nature-based education. We strive to create an environment that provides all persons involved in the nature school the best experience possible and are committed to continuing to expand our knowledge of both early childhood education and nature education. Just like the children, we are always learning! We are happy to discuss some of these topics with you and work together as a team to figure out ways you can support your child at home.

### **Why Nature Education?**

#### **Books:**

“Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder.” by Richard Louv

#### **Articles:**

Nature Play: A Prescription for Healthier Children

<https://www.contemporarypediatrics.com/view/nature-play-prescription-healthier-children>

Why Environmental Education is Important for Kids

<https://www.rubicon.com/blog/environmental-education-for-kids/>

Nurturing Nature in School for Enhanced Learning

<https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articles/nurturing-nature-in-schools-for-enhanced-learning>

Is a Nature-Based School Right for Your Child?

<https://www.childhoodbynature.com/is-a-nature-based-school-right-for-your-child/>

#### **Websites:**

Natural Start Alliance

<https://naturalstart.org/>

### **Risky Play**

What is the difference between a risk and a hazard? A risk is a situation that provides a challenge, in which the child has some control. A hazard is a situation in which there is no control.

Risks Include:

- Climbing a log
- Handling sticks
- Rolling down a grassy hill

Hazards Include:

- Dangerous Weather
- Unstable Ice
- A sharp branch at eye-level

At Bookworm Gardens Nature Preschool, our goal is to eliminate hazards as much as we can. However, we do believe in the value of age-appropriate risk. Learning to take appropriate risks can help children develop confidence and improve executive function as they learn to consider and assess challenging situations. Although we strive to keep our outdoor classrooms safe, we do intentionally provide age-appropriate risks, such as sledding down hills, playing in and around deep puddles, balancing on logs, climbing small trees, and even taking social risks, such as asking other people to play. We feel that learning to address these sorts of risks is a valuable skill that will serve children well, years after they leave our program.

**Articles:**

The Guarantees of Risky Play

<https://www.childhoodbynature.com/the-guarantees-of-risky-play/>

Supporting Young Children's Risky Play

<https://www.bu.edu/childrens-center/files/2020/07/Risky-Play.pdf>

How to Introduce More Risky Play in the Early Years

<https://www.famly.co/blog/risky-play-early-years>

### **Independency, Growth Mindset & Curriculum**

**Articles:**

Children Developing Independence : What is the Right Balance?

<https://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/children-developing-independence-right-balance>

How to Help Children Develop a Growth Mindset

<https://www.kaplanco.com/ii/help-children-develop-a-growth-mindset>

Pedagogy Profile: The Montessori Method

<https://www.supplydesk.co.uk/resource/pedagogy-profile-montessori-method/>

## Tick Information

Keep in mind that in our area ticks have been an increased problem in recent years. Check your child DAILY for ticks during tick season (tick season goes from after the last hard frost in the spring until the first hard frost in fall/winter). Read the following about ticks, borrowed from Schlitz Audubon Nature Preschool:

Ticks are a part of nature and until there is a hard frost, ticks are often found on our property. The most common tick is the Wood Tick, which is large enough to be easily spotted: it may resemble a small spider at first glance (although ticks have six legs, not eight). Deer Ticks are more difficult to spot. When not engorged, they may be the size of a poppy seed. A certain percentage of Deer Ticks carry Lyme Disease.

Ticks tend to crawl up from the ground, especially in wooded, brushy areas, but they can also fall from overhead branches and grasses. To help prevent access to skin, shirts should be tucked into pants, and pants should be tucked into socks. Boots are always preferable to sandals. Hats are also a good idea.

If possible, have your preschooler take a bath after preschool, and use this time to conduct a thorough tick check. Adults and older children may wish to take a shower as soon as possible after hiking, with the strongest jet of water your shower has, directing it to all skin areas, especially if there are areas you can't examine well. Many ticks will not actually embed themselves into the skin for 24 hours. You may want to consider tossing their clothing into the dryer after a day outside and turn it to the hottest cycle. Ticks thrive in damp, humid places and generally cannot withstand extremely dry conditions.

If you find a tick: Remove the tick with tweezers or "tick keys" (often used for pets), as close to the skin as possible to avoid pushing fluids from the tick into the body. Pull the tick straight out, rather than wiggling it from side to side—wiggling it may cause the head to break off and remain in the skin. Be patient with your pulling; you want to "tent" the skin but not break off mouthparts. It can easily take 5 minutes of constant pulling force to remove the tick, since the deer tick has longer mouthparts than most other ticks. Wash the area with soap and water. Do not flush the tick. The current recommendation is to place the tick in a sealed baggie in order to identify it and have it tested.

Deer ticks are the only known vectors for Lyme disease, but other ticks may carry different diseases. We have a number of people on staff who can help you to identify what kind of tick it may be, or you can refer to one of the many new phone apps for tick identification. Some people report the appearance of a bull's eye rash following a bite from a deer tick. Know that not everyone will get a rash. For that reason, it is important to see a doctor even when no rash appears. (This is another reason why tick checks are so important. Lyme is often hard to diagnose.) Lyme disease is serious, and we do not take the risk lightly. But by being aware and by checking for ticks on a daily basis, it is possible to spend plenty of time outdoors, enjoying all the fun, warm weather activities nature has to offer!

**Find tick information here:**

- [https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing\\_a\\_tick.html](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/removing_a_tick.html)
- <https://wisconsin-ticks.russell.wisc.edu/tick-identification-for-public-health-and-medical-professionals/>

**Find poison ivy information here:**

- <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/articles/poison-ivy/>