

What causes a cold?

A cold is not caused by exposure to cold air, dampness or being outside.

A cold is a viral infection.

How is a cold spread?

When a child coughs, the virus in their saliva is sprayed into the air and breathed in by other children. Colds are also spread by touching - the virus goes from skin to skin.

Why are colds common in the winter time?

The cold weather means that children spend more time indoors with the windows shut. Germs spread more easily in the cosy, warm environment. **Research shows that children are more likely to catch a cold if the heat is turned up.**

How can we prevent the spread of colds?

- Wash hands frequently, especially before eating food and after going to the toilet
- Kissing on the mouth spreads germs. Kissing on the forehead or on the cheek will not spread as many germs.
- Children should be taught to cough or sneeze into their elbow not their hands
- Children must have access to fresh air. **Sunlight is known to kill viruses.**
- **Children should be going outside even in cold, damp weather.**
Research shows that winter weather will not worsen any cold symptoms. It is harder for germs to travel in fresh air.

- Fun and relaxation! Stress makes everybody more vulnerable to infections. *Research shows that people under stress are more likely to experience a cold than people who are stress free.*
- ***SMOKING - BABIES AND CHILDREN LIVING WITH SMOKERS ARE MORE PRONE TO CATCH COLDS AND HAVE MORE DIFFICULTY GETTING BETTER. SMOKING IN THE CAR IS VERY BAD FOR YOU AND YOUR PASSENGERS.***

Other benefits of playing outside

Physical activity and energetic play provides exercise, encourages co-ordination and helps children develop physical skills.

The Children's Play Council has done some research that shows that children who have easy, regular access to outdoor, energetic play:

- Are better at physical tasks e.g. doing up a coat, neat hand writing and so on
- Are fitter and are more able to keep up with their friends in the playground at school
- Are less likely to become stressed and anxious

RESEARCH ON BRAIN DEVELOPMENT AND CHILDREN'S LEARNING HAS PROVED WITHOUT ANY DOUBT THAT PHYSICALLY ACTIVITY INCREASES THE FLOW OF BLOOD TO THE BRAIN, THIS HELPS THE CONNECTIONS IN CHILDREN'S BRAINS TO GROW AND MULTIPLY AND TO WORK MORE EFFECTIVELY.

It has been proved that children learn better as a direct result of physical exercise. Physical exercise has been proven to help children concentrate, to be more alert and to have improved scores in their school tests.

In order to keep warm outside children need:

- Layers of clothing - vest, t-shirt, fleece, hat, socks and/or tights
- Waterproof boots or shoes
- Waterproof, warm coat
- Scarf and Gloves
- *Clothing that is labelled with their name*

Where has this information come from?

The National Children's Bureau highlights number 195
Colds: How they're spread and How to Prevent Them
by Dr Karen Sokal-Gutierrez M.D., M.P.H.
Infections in Medicine 11: 235-242 1994

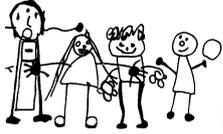
www.medic-palnet.com

The Family Encyclopaedia of Disease

www.kidsmatter.co.uk

I hope all this information helps you to understand why we expect, and encourage, your children to play outside whenever possible!

Rachel and Margaret McMillan knew all this was true back in 1914 when the nursery was first open - we are just following in their footsteps!



Rachel McMillan Nursery School and Children's Centre

Colds and Outdoor Play

Fact Sheet

November 2009

