

SPROUT-able Quarterly



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The [SPROUT-able Project](#) is a four-year project led by the [Canadian Centre for Outdoor Play \(CCOP\)](#). It builds off the [SPROUT study](#), a three-year research initiative led by the [Healthy Active Living and Obesity \(HALO\) Research Group](#) - and the [University of Ottawa](#), as part of the CCOP. SPROUT-able is a research-practice-policy project that explores **how children with disabilities engage in outdoor play and learning**. Through this exploration, our team aims to enhance the physical and social environments of outdoor-focused childcare programs, support professional development for early childhood educators, and design evidence-based strategies to promote inclusive outdoor play. These project initiatives are led by [Outdoor Play Canada's](#) Project Coordinator, **Cécile Tang**, and Project Assistant **Hannah Raudssus**, RECE, to integrate a strong practice-based perspective into the research. The research arm of SPROUT-able is spearheaded by **Dr. Maeghan James**, Assistant Professor at the [University of Ottawa](#) and Investigator, [CHEO Research Institute](#), in collaboration with **Dr. Kelly Arbour-Nicitopoulos** and the [ADAPT Lab](#) at the [University of Toronto](#).

Each quarter, we'll bring you project milestones, opportunities to get involved, and highlights from our team!





Project Updates

Welcome Devon!

In May, the SPROUT-able team welcomed Devon Robertson, a BELCD (Bachelor of Early Learning and Community Development) student at Algonquin College. Devon is completing his summer work term with us from May to August. Devon is a Registered Early Childhood Educator and a third-year student. He has diverse experiences working within the sector, both in practical hands-on roles and research-intensive positions. Devon's interest in outdoor learning and nature-based play was inspired by his sense of environmental stewardship: a value he has held since childhood. This interest and passion guides his commitment to furthering the practice, policy, and research that promotes equitable access to the outdoors for all people.



Take Me Outside Conference



In May, several members of the SPROUT-able team attended the annual Take Me Outside Outdoor Learning Conference in Banff, Alberta. Paula and Brianna led a workshop titled *The Sending PReschoolers OUTside Study: How Early Childhood Education Settings Influence Parental Attitudes and Educator Well-Being*. Through an interactive exploration and facilitated discussion of the SPROUT Study, meaningful dialogue explored how parental attitudes, educator knowledge, and confidence shape children's experiences in both nature-based and traditional childcare programs.

Take Me Outside Conference

At the Take Me Outside Conference, Amy Jo and Alessia also led a "mini" World Café workshop focused on the physical and social barriers and facilitators to outdoor play and learning. Participants shared their experiences as educators, parents of children with disabilities, and individuals drawing on their own lived experiences. One participant reminded us that "Nothing about us, without us" should be embedded in the work we do. The discussion also highlighted that there is not always a single "right" answer. Instead, by asking thoughtful questions and exploring possibilities together, we can create change.





Project Updates

OCOF Early Years Outdoor Conference

In May, two SPROUT-able team members, Cécile and Hannah, had the opportunity to attend and lead two workshops at the Early Years Outdoor Play Conference 2026 hosted by Our Children, Our Future in Espanola, ON. The first, titled *Exploring Active Outdoor Play and Learning for Children with Disabilities through Case Studies*, engaged educators in exploring two case studies on supporting children with disabilities. The second workshop titled *Supporting Children with Disabilities in Active Outdoor Learning and Play* focused on loose parts and how they can be used as a tool for inclusion.



Playful Bites & Insights



At the end of May, the SPROUT-able team facilitated an opportunity for collective reflection among educators and staff at Forest Explorers. A meaningful conversation on compassion, empathy, and care sparked beautiful artistic creations, joyful connection, and deep reflection. Playful Bites & Insights is a space we hope to continue to facilitate, fostering a continued sense of community and culture of reflective practice.

Vanier Hub Community Event

In June, the SPROUT-able team attended an Outdoor Safety event hosted by the Centre des Services Communautaires Vanier. This event brought together families from across the Vanier community. SPROUT-able had the opportunity to share several of our resources and discuss the importance of outdoor play for all children. As part of our goal to expand our reach over the next year, we look forward to the opportunity to share our work with new populations and groups.





Project Updates

Lots More to Come... Stay Tuned...



AIMPA Project

SPROUT-able is participating in the CDPP 2.0 AIMPA (Assisting, Informing and Motivating Physical Activity) Project. The project aims to develop inclusive physical activity (active play) information for families of children and youth living with a disability. As part of this project, we are creating a reference guide to key terms and concepts in Inclusive Active Play. Stay tuned to see this resource on our website soon!



Outdoor Play Kits

This summer, Inclusion facilitators through CISS have been trained and are facilitating the sharing of Outdoor Play Kits designed by SPROUT-able to support educators in providing engaging outdoor play experiences for children in a variety of settings. The kits are designed as a 'model' with materials to spark educators' own ideas for inclusive programming, as well as share information and resources on outdoor play, risky play, and inclusive play.



Reflective Companion Guide

Our team is putting together a Reflective Companion Guide to accompany the [video modules](#) on our website. This companion guide will support educators in thinking practically about advancing inclusive outdoor play in their own contexts. The guide will encourage critical thinking, support reflective practice, and inspire practical change. The guide can also act as a valuable tool for collaborative professional learning among educators and colleagues.



Upcoming Fall Webinars

This fall the SPROUT-able team has several upcoming webinars! In September, we have an inclusive outdoor webinar with the Canadian Child Care Federation (CCCCF). In October, we have a 4-part webinar series with the Outdoor Learning School & Store (OLSS). Stay tuned for more information on both webinars coming soon!



Outdoor Play Canada Resource Library

Check out our [resource library](#) full of useful content for your outdoor play efforts and initiatives. Our resource library is helpful for policy, practice, research and knowledge mobilization. Keep an eye out for our new category on accessibility and disability coming soon!





Out and About

Check out this list for our latest presentations, workshops, publications, and knowledge translation tools

> Conference Presentations, Community Presentations and Workshops

- Smith, A.J., Capone, A.M. (May 2026). **SPROUT & SPROUT-able , World Cafe Workshop.** (Workshop). Take Me Outside, Outdoor Learning Conference, Banff, Alberta, Canada.
- Nasrallah, B., ter Huurne, P. (May 2026). **The Sending PReschoolers OUTside Study: How Early Childhood Education Setting Influences Parental Attitudes and Educator Well-Being.** (Workshop). Take Me Outside Outdoor Learning Conference, Banff, Alberta, Canada.
- Tang, C., Raudssus, H. (May 2026). **Exploring Active Outdoor Play and Learning for Children with Disabilities Through Case Studies.** (Workshop). Our Children, Our Future Early Years Outdoor Play Conference, Espanola, Ontario, Canada.
- Tang, C., Raudssus, H. (May 2026). **Supporting Children with Disabilities in Active Outdoor Learning and Play.** (Workshop). Our Children, Our Future Early Years Outdoor Play Conference, Espanola, Ontario, Canada.
- Smith, A.J., ter Huurne, P. (Mar 2026). **Supporting Children with Disabilities in Active Outdoor Learning and Play.** (Workshop). BC North Region Child Care Resource and Referral Workshops, Prince George, British Columbia, Canada.
- ter Huurne, P. (Nov. 2025). **Visible and Invisible Disabilities in Outdoor Early Learning Environments.** (Presentation). BELCD Algonquin College, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- Smith, A.J., ter Huurne, P. (Nov. 2025). **Inclusion Outdoors: Engagement, Connection, and Making Learning Visible.** (Workshop). CHEO School, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- Smith, A.J., ter Huurne, P. (Oct. 2025). **Inclusive Outdoor ECE Packs: For Children with Disabilities in the Early Years.** (Webinar). Outdoor Learning in the Early Years. Outdoor Learning School & Store, Canada.
- James, M., ter Huurne, P. (Oct 2025). **Fostering Inclusive Outdoor Play and Learning Experiences in Early Learning Settings.** (Presentation). Rooted in Hope - Child Care and EarlyON Conference, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada.
- James, M., ter Huurne, P. (Oct 2025). **Supporting Educators' and Children's Access to Outdoor Play.** (Workshop). Rooted in Hope - Child Care and EarlyON Conference, Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada.





> Conference Presentations, Community Presentations and Workshops

- Capone, A.M., James, M. E., de Lannoy, L., ter Huurne, P., Smith, A.J., and Arbour-Nicitopoulos, K. (Oct 2025). **Nature in Motion – Physical activity levels of children with disabilities at an outdoor childcare center.** (Oral Presentation) Canadian Society for Psychomotor Learning and Sport Psychology, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada.
- Arbour-Nicitopoulos, K., Leo, J., de Lannoy, L. (Sep 2025). **CDPP Symposium: Bridging Research-to-Practice on Quality Participation in Active Play for Children and Young Persons with Disabilities Across Different Contexts.** (Symposium). Breath of Fresh Air Summit, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- Capone, A.M., ter Huurne, P., James, M., Smith, A.J., Arbour-Nicitopoulos, K., and de Lannoy, L. (Sep 2025). **Strategic Planning for Inclusive Outdoor Play.** (Oral Presentation) Breath of Fresh Air Outdoor Play Summit, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- Smith, A.J., ter Huurne, P. (Sep 2025). **Learning Kits for Inclusive Outdoor Play.** (Workshop). Breath of Fresh Air Outdoor Play Summit, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- ter Huurne, P., Smith, A.J. (Jul 2025). **One-Year Later: A Reflection of Your Journey.** (Facilitated Discussion). Forest Explorers, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- Smith, A.J., ter Huurne, P., Clement, D. (Jun 2025). **Inclusion Outdoors: Engagement, Connection, and Making Learning Visible.** (Workshop). CHEO School, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- Lalonde, L. Smith, A.J., Sletcher, J. (Apr 2025). **The SPROUT-able Project and Discussion on Inclusion.** (Facilitated Discussion). Canadian Centre for Outdoor Play Community of Practice, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- ter Huurne, P., Smith, A.J., Sletcher, L. (Mar 2025). **Connecting with the Land: Creating Calming Spaces for Children and Educators.** (Workshop). Forest Explorers, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- Smith, A.J., Sletcher, L. (Mar 2025). **Responding with Intention: Building Positive Connections.** (Workshop). Forest Explorers, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- Capone, A.M., James, M.E., de Lannoy, L., Arbour-Nicitopoulos, K., Tremblay, M. (2025). **Forging Paths: Understanding Outdoor Play for Children with Disabilities in Early Childhood.** (Poster Presentation) International Symposium of Adapted Physical Activity, Kerry, Ireland.
- James, M., de Lannoy, L., Præstholt, S., Bøiling, M., Stahlhut, M. (Nov 2024). **Supporting Outdoor Play and Learning for Children with Disabilities: Insights from Canada and Denmark.** (Webinar). Outdoor Play Canada and Children & Nature Denmark, Canada.
- ter Huurne, P., de Lannoy, L., James, M., Lalonde, L., Sletcher, L., Smith, A.J. (Jun 2024). **Preparation and Connection Days.** (Workshops and Facilitated Discussions). Forest Explorers, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.





Out and About

> Conference Presentations, Community Presentations and Workshops

- Capone, A. M., Arbour-Nicitopoulos, K., de Lannoy, L., Deliscar, S., Taylor, L. G., Tucker, P., Vanderloo, L. M., & James, M. E. (2024). **Active Play Among Young Children (0-4 years) with Disabilities: A Scoping Review.** (Oral Presentation) International Symposium of Adapted Physical Activity, Kerry, Ireland.
- Arbour-Nicitopoulos KA, Capone A, James ME, Odorico N. (Sep 2023). **CDPP Symposium: Promoting Accessible and Inclusive Outdoor Play in Early Childhood Education.** (Symposium). Breath of Fresh Air Summit, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
- Glossip, E., James, M., Reece, X. (Sep 2023). **Reducing Barriers to Accessing Outdoor Opportunities.** (Presentation). Breath of Fresh Air Summit, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

> Papers and Publications

- James, M.E., de Lannoy, L., Arbour-Nicitopoulos, K.P., Capone, A., Belton, L., Hiscott, K., Lalonde, L., Potter, T., Tremblay, M. (In Prep). **Sending PReschoolers OUTside (SPROUT) Prospective Cohort Study: Study Protocol**
- Capone, A.M., James, M.E., ter Huurne, P., de Lannoy, L., Tremblay, M., Arbour-Nicitopoulos, K. (In Prep). **Forging Paths: Understanding Outdoor Play for Children with Disabilities in the Early Years.**

> Knowledge Translation Tools

- [Communicating with Families: Health Concerns Video Module and Tip Sheet](#)
- [Communicating with Families: Physical Safety Video Module and Tip Sheet](#)
- [Sensory Needs: Dressing for Outdoor Play Video Module and Tip Sheet](#)
- [Risky Play: Video Module and Tip Sheet](#)
- [Supporting Inclusion Outside with Puppets Tip Sheet](#)
- [World Cafe Graphic Recording](#)

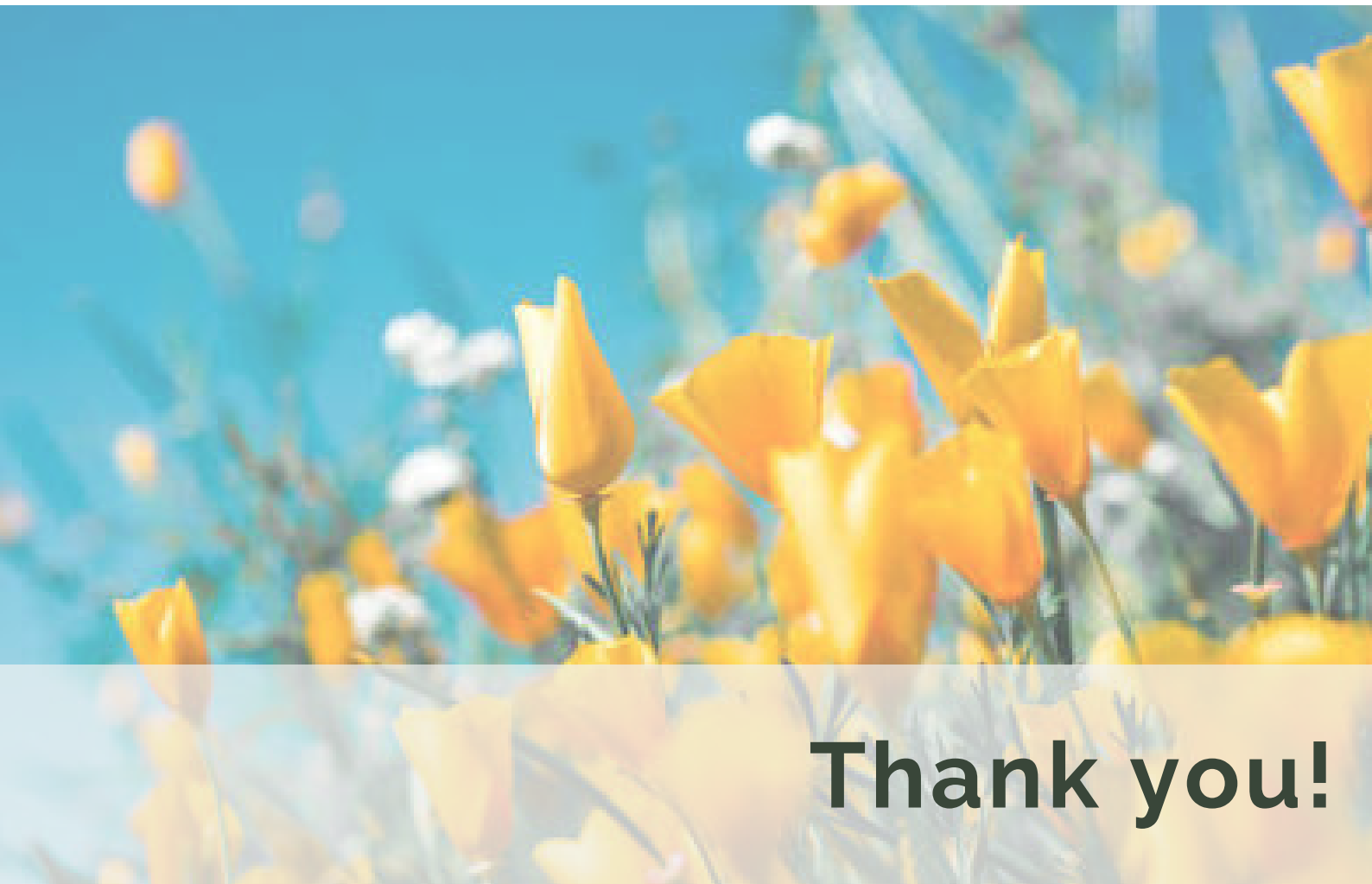


Access these
tools and
additional
resources on
[our website](#)



This work would not be possible without our partners!

Thank you to the SPROUT-able
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Thank you!

