



Outdoor Play Canada November 2023 Newsletter

OPC projects and activities encompass all traditional territories of the Indigenous Nations of Turtle Island, within the land we now call Canada.

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That's a Wrap! Celebrating the 2023 Breath of Fresh Air Outdoor Play Summit!

The biennial 2023 Breath of Fresh Air Outdoor Play Summit held in Ottawa, Canada was a massive success, selling out over a month beforehand, and bringing researchers, practitioners, policymakers and stakeholders together over three days to connect and share best practices in the outdoors (the warm and sunny weather didn't hurt!). The theme for the 2023 summit was 'Research, policy, and practice – their intersections for the promotion of outdoor play'.

Watch the [summary slideshow of the event here](#), [read a summary of the event here](#), and checkout the [Future of Outdoor Play Collaborative Poster](#) here! If you missed this year's Summit, stay tuned for announcements on the 2025 Breath of Fresh Air Summit - we've already started planning big things, including the launch of the [10-year anniversary of the Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play!](#)

Announcing the 2023 Outdoor Play Canada Award Winners!

The 2023 Outdoor Play Canada Awards were presented at the biennial Breath of Fresh Air Outdoor Play Summit on Thursday, September 28th, 2023, at Wesley Clover Parks in Ottawa, ON. The award winners were: Beverlie Dietze (Honour Award), Megan Zeni (Dr. Mariana Brussoni Award), Laura Molyneux and Cloudberry Forest and Nature School (Policy Award), Dorothy Penner (Practice Award), Mariana Brussoni (Research Award), and Xandria Reece (Youth Award). Congratulations!

[Read more about the winners here.](#)

New publication: Outdoor learning experiences of young children and educators

A new publication by Donison and Halsall explored student and educator experiences learning outdoors in Canada. The study was designed to capture lessons learned within public K-8 schools to support greater uptake of outdoor learning and more equitable access. This paper centres children's voice and highlights experiential child-led processes within outdoor learning.

[Read the paper here.](#)

Study Recruitment: Policy-Maker Perspectives on Outdoor Learning

Carleton University is looking for volunteers for an outdoor learning study. They are recruiting policymakers with knowledge/experience of outdoor learning to explore the factors that influence success and identify ways to help others become involved in outdoor learning.

[Learn more here!](#)

Nature Activities for Learners Winter Course

Registration closes on November 30th for the 'Nature Activities for Learners' winter course, hosted by the [Outdoor Learning Store](#) from January 17th to February 21st. The course will include guided conversations, practical activities, community building with other educators, and discussions with Jacob Rodenburg, course host and author of The Big Book of Nature Activities. Co-hosted by Jade Berrill, Director of Learning for the Outdoor Learning Store.

[Learn more here!](#)

Autism Outdoors: Neuro-Inclusion in Outdoor Play and Forest School Workshop

[Giant Steps Montreal](#) is hosting a workshop on December 7th that explores the transformative potential of Forest School and outdoor play for autistic and neurodiverse youth. Entitled "Autism Outdoors: Neuro-Inclusion in Outdoor Play and Forest School" the workshop will be delivered by Seiun Thomas Henderson and aims to equip attendees with practical tools and a profound understanding of how the forest can empower and inspire neurodiverse youth, creating a space where they can truly thrive.

[Learn more here!](#)

World Children's Day

November 20th was World Children's Day, UNICEF's annual day of action for children, by children, marking the adoption of the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#). Today and everyday, make space for children and youth to raise their voices on the issues that matter to them.

[Learn more here!](#)

Teacher.OutsidePlay.Org

Dr. Mariana Brussoni and her research team at the University of British Columbia are excited to share <https://teacher.outsideplay.org>, a free online tool designed to help teachers support outdoor play and learning in

elementary schools. Designed by teachers for teachers, the tool aims to transform approaches to learning by offering virtual support to educators seeking to integrate the natural world into their curriculum. This comprehensive guide offers practical videos, invaluable advice and hands-on examples from teachers themselves on navigating the challenges of outdoor play and learning, with discussion prompts and further reading provided as additional resources.

[Watch the webinar on this new tool, hosted by the Outdoor Learning Store, here!](#)

The Nature of Play – Helen Schuler Nature Centre

The Helen Schuler Nature Centre in Lethbridge, Alberta is showcasing an exhibit called the Nature of Play about play amongst human and animals. It discusses the benefits of play and includes a small climbing wall and lots of loose materials that children can play with. The exhibit is on until March 31, 2024.

[Learn more here!](#)

Join Our Outdoor Early Childhood Education Community of Practice!

The Outdoor Early Childhood Education Community of Practice, led by the [Canadian Centre for Outdoor Play partnership](#), is geared towards early childhood educators across Canada that are interested in and/or already in support of regularly bringing children outdoors!

The overarching ethos is to promote collaboration, empower practitioners to promote outdoor play opportunities across a variety of settings, and ensure outdoor early childhood education programming is culturally appropriate and place-based. [Learn more and sign up here!](#)

MSc/PhD Studentship on Outdoor Play

Dr. Mark Tremblay, president of Outdoor Play Canada, is looking for an outstanding MSc/PhD Student to work on research related to outdoor play and healthy growth and development in young children. The research will examine the relationships among outdoor play/outdoor exposure (e.g., Forest School type environment) and movement behaviours, physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development of 1–5-year-olds, their parents and care providers.

[Learn more here.](#)

10-Year Anniversary of the Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play

In 2025, it will be 10 years since the release of the [Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play](#). To mark this milestone, an initial group of researchers from the [CHEO Research Institute](#), [Outdoor Play Canada](#), [Queen's University](#), [ParticipACTION](#), [the Alana Institute](#), the [National Taiwan University of Physical Education and Sport](#), [University of Ghana](#), [Auckland University of Technology](#), [International Play Association](#), and the [Copenhagen University Hospital](#) have come together to begin developing an update to the Position Statement, to describe its impact, make it global in reach and relevance, and draw on insights gained from the past decade, including the global COVID-19 pandemic.

We are looking for insightful and energetic individuals who share our passion for outdoor play to join us in this endeavour! [Learn more about how to join, here.](#)

Join Us!

Join the movement, become an OPC member! Show your support of our effort to promote, protect, and preserve access to play in nature and the outdoors for all people living in Canada.

Membership benefits include being highlighted in this newsletter, discounts at Outdoor Play Canada endorsed events, access to resources to support your outdoor-play related work, as well as many professional engagement & development opportunities.

[Learn more here.](#)

We welcome blog posts and summaries of relevant research studies for publication on the [OPC website](#). If you have any items that you think would be of interest to fellow OPC members, please contact info@outdoorplaycanada.ca. We respect the amount of unnecessary emails you receive so the plan is for a maximum of one OPC newsletter every other month. Your feedback and comments are always welcome.