



# SPROUT-able Quarterly

The SPROUT-able Project is an extension of the SPROUT study, a three-year research initiative launched by the Healthy Active Living and Obesity (HALO) Research Group. It expands upon the SPROUT Study by investigating how children with disabilities engage in outdoor play and learning. The SPROUT-able project aims to enhance the physical and social environments of outdoor 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 Manager, Paula ter Huurne, RECE, to integrate a strong practice-based perspective into the research. The SPROUT-able research is spearheaded by Dr. Maeghan James, an Assistant Professor at the University of Ottawa, in collaboration with Dr. Kelly Arbour-Nicitopoulos and the ADAPT Lab at the University of Toronto.

**Each quarter, we'll bring you project milestones and highlights from our team!**





# Project Updates



## Inclusive Outdoor Learning Kits and Puppet Resource

We launched the Inclusive Outdoor Learning Kits in partnership with the OLSS, featuring tools to support outdoor learning for children with disabilities, and a new tip sheet, Supporting Inclusion Outside with Puppets!



## The SPROUT-able Inclusive Library at Forest Explorers

Our team has launched a new resource library at Forest Explorers, which contains books curated specifically to support inclusive and diverse storytelling in natural settings.



## Video Modules, Tip sheets, and Resources for Educators

We've released four video modules with tip sheets and resources to help educators support inclusive outdoor play, addressing health, safety, sensory needs, and risky play. Our new resource page will make all materials easy to access.



## Forest Explorers Active Outdoor Play Toolkit

U of T students are co-developing an evidence-informed toolkit to help educators promote active outdoor play at Forest Explorers, grounded in occupational and rehabilitation science.



## Assessing the Impact of Time Outside

We completed year one of the SPROUT Study, with 86 participants (56 from Forest Explorers). Among them, 17 children took part in SPROUT-able, including those with diagnosed or functional difficulties and those supported by inclusion staff.



## Capturing Diverse Play Experiences Outdoors

To capture outdoor play from children's perspectives, we're using GoPro cameras with SPROUT-able participants each season. We've collected our first set of winter footage and continue gathering data across the year.



## Accessibility and Inclusion Strategic Plan

We hosted a World Café with educators and SPROUT-able partners to explore barriers and facilitators of inclusion at Forest Explorers. Insights from these discussions informed the creation of our Accessibility and Inclusion Strategic Plan.



## Interviews with Parents and Educators

We are in the process of developing a qualitative study using interviews to explore the barriers and facilitators to outdoor play in childcare settings (both at Forest Explorers and the control sites)



## Want to get involved? Reach out!

We're always looking to form new partnerships and expand our work.  
[Info@OutdoorPlayCanada.ca](mailto:Info@OutdoorPlayCanada.ca)





# Out and About

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

## > Conference Presentations

- Capone, A.M., James, M. E., de Lannoy, L., ter Huurne, P., Smith, A.J., and Arbour-Nicitopoulos, K. (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. (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. (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.
- 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.
- 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. (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

- 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.**





# Out and About



## Community Presentations and Workshops

- 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.
- 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.
- James, M., de Lannoy, L., Præsthholm, 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.



## 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



# **This work would not be possible without our partners!**

Thank you to the SPROUT-able  
Educator Partners, Community  
Partners, Advisory Panel members,  
and our Funders!



**Thank you!**

