

What to Bring to Nature School: Winter

Things to keep in mind! Go for functional rather than cute/stylish clothing. The easier your child's clothes are to get on/off, the quicker they can go to the bathroom! Winter weather in Creston can change quickly between cold/rainy/wet, so enjoy keeping tabs on the weather with your kids to decide what's best to wear! Dressing your child in several layers is a great idea, as kids tend to play hard and get hot, taking layers on and off as needed throughout the day. Ask us if you have questions about good ways to find outdoor clothing. We have a few items we can lend out.

***A well-fitting backpack:** it's important that this pack fit your child comfortably so it isn't wiggling around and falling off (you can improvise this with some elastic and a clip if it doesn't have a chest strap). We work on hard on having the kids carry their own packs to 'basecamp,' so best if it's comfortable and not packed too heavy!

***Inside the pack:** please pack a small water bottle, extra pair of warm socks, extra pants (in case of pee accident), extra warm shirt/sweater and food for the day. If your child's mitts aren't quite waterproof, send an extra pair.

***Snacks:** try to aim for a low-garbage or garbage-less snack, so the kids don't have messy items to take home. We don't have a garbage can at our basecamp.

***Snowpants or rain pants:** if there's no snow, please make sure your child still has rain pants on every day.

***Warm hat:** ideally snug fitting, as kids run/jump/slide and loose hats will fall off. Please try to find a hat that doesn't have long dangling strings!

***Warm mitts:**

- best if these can shed water (soft cottony ones will get wet quickly)
- mitts that are long, so they can pull over a child's coat sleeve great
- mitts with zippers on the side are even better (easy to slide on)
- finger mitts are ok for *inside* a warmer pair, but are not warm/dry enough for outer layers.



***Boots:** make sure you have a pair of rain boots as well as warm winter boots (the ones with insulated liners are warmest). Bogs boots are great if the weather is wet/warm, but for cold winter days might not be sufficient (although the rating is to -30c, in our experience they usually aren't warm enough in cold temps). Also boots shouldn't be too tight fitting, or circulation will be restricted (resulting in cold toes).

***Coats:** warm winter coat or rain coat depending on the day. Make sure rain coats have hoods.

***Neck/face warmer:** please avoid scarves, as children are often playing in brush/trees and scarves pose a risk for getting caught on branches. Neck warmers or balaclavas are best. We will have Creston-made fleece neck warmers that you can purchase for \$6.00.

Please keep your child's toys at home! We have intentionally designed our program so the children play with items from the forest, rather than toys. We have a few minimal items like buckets, shovels, and magnifying glasses. If your child finds a special thing from nature (ie: a rock, feather or other thing they treasure) they're welcome to share it in our morning circle!