



Outdoor Nature-Based Licensing/Certification

IPEL Presentation
January 10, 2022

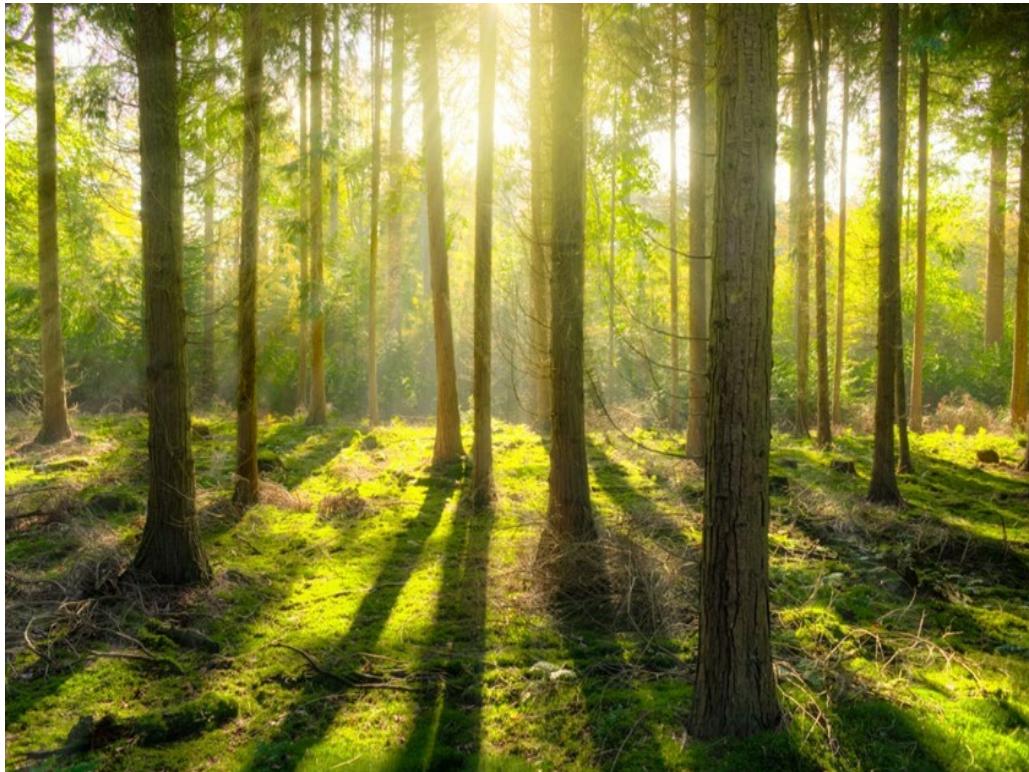
www.dcyf.wa.gov



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SB 5151 Passed – What does that mean?



- Washington first in nation to permanently license outdoor, nature-based child care for preschool and school age children
- Aligns with DCYF's Strategic and Racial Equity Plan



Outdoor Preschool Pilot





What did we learn?



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Approach to Risk, Risky Play and Protecting Children

- **Hazard** = a source of harm that is not obvious to the child, such that the potential for injury is hidden; or a source of harm that is greater than a child can manage to avoid.
- **Risk** = a situation in which a child can recognize and evaluate a challenge and decide on a course of action, although there is the potential for injury. In this context, risk can be necessary to support healthy child development.
- **Risky Play** = play that is thrilling, exciting and where there is a risk of physical injury. This includes play involving heights, speed, dangerous tools or near dangerous elements (e.g., fall into something).
- **Benefit-Risk Assessment** = a process of identifying hazards and risky play elements in early childhood outdoor play and making plans to mitigate children's risk of injury while maintaining the developmental benefits for children.





Myth-Busting

Don't go outside in
the cold,
you'll get sick.

Better instruction
happens indoors.

Children have more
injuries outside.



Benefits of Outdoor, Nature-Based Programs



Better physical development

- Strength, eyesight, hearing, bone structure, immune system and lifelong interest in physical activities.

Better cognitive development

- Executive functioning, self-regulation, self-esteem, observation and problem-solving, abstract reasoning and focus.

Better social-emotional development

- Independence, collaboration, reduced anxiety/depression, empathy and care for nature.

STEM learning

Educator/adult well-being

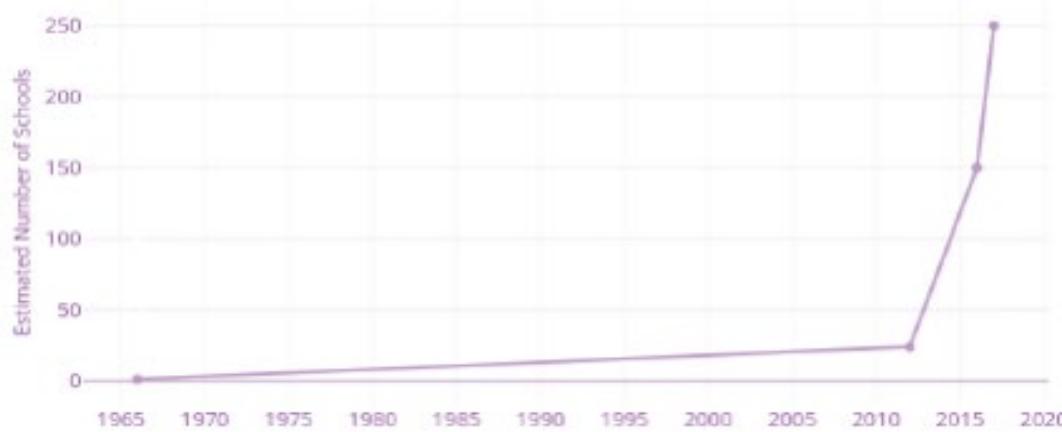


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Nature-Based ECE National Context (Natural Start Alliance Survey)

Estimated number of nature-based preschools and forest kindergartens in the U.S. by year



As of 2017, at least 250 nature preschools and forest kindergartens operate in 43 states. Many are concentrated in the Pacific Northwest, California, the Upper Midwest, the Mid-Atlantic and New England.

Children enrolled in nature preschools or kindergarten programs by race, ethnicity or origin (some children belong to more than one category)

Race, Ethnicity or Origin	Average (Mean) Reported Percentage
White	83%
Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origin	7%
Asian	6%
Black or African American	3%
Middle Eastern or North African	1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<1%
Other Race, Ethnicity or Origin	1%

<http://naturalstart.org/bright-ideas/nature-preschools-and-kindergartens-record-numbers-us>



Social Responsibility

By licensing/certifying outdoor programs,
we can:

1. Increase options for all families.
2. Increase access for families that need subsidies, regulated or full-day care.
3. Promote connections to nature for more children.
4. Honor tribal relations through partnership and curriculum.





Where do we go from here?

5151 in effect since July 25, 2021

Send interested folks to:

<https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/services/early-learning-providers/licensed-provider/onb>

Outdoor nature-based orientation scheduled
Application process following orientation
ONB licensing/certification process begins!





Licensing/Certification Process



OPP Licensors will continue to support ONB

Will contract to standards as we work with stakeholders to write, review and file ONB WACs



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Questions | Feedback



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Thanks



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