NATURE-BASED ELC AND CHILDREN'S PHYSICAL, COGNITIVE AND SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A systematic literature review

About the eligible studies

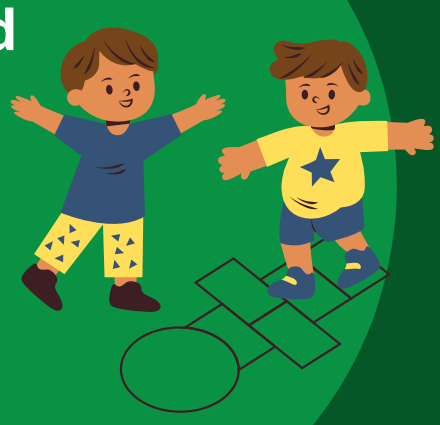
59 eligible studies

10,067 children aged 2-7 years attending ELC

Most studies were conducted in USA (n=13), Australia (n=9) and Norway (n=8)

Key Findings

Playgrounds with **grass, vegetation, natural elements, rocks, hills** or **shaded areas** were linked with **increased physical activity levels** and **decreased sedentary time**



Nature-based ELC was linked to improved **balance, self-regulation, nature relatedess** and **play interactions**

Nature-based ELC was linked to lower **speed and agility**

It was unclear whether nature-based ELC was linked to object control skills, attention, social skills, social and emotional development, attachment, initiative, awareness of nature, environmentally responsible behaviour, illnesses, behavioural problems, play disruption or play disconnection

About the evidence and conclusions

Findings are based on very low, low and moderate quality evidence and therefore should be interpreted with caution. The evidence generally favours nature-based ELC, but more robust evidence is required to fully understand the impact on children's physical, cognitive, and social and emotional development

Infographic prepared by A. Johnstone, P. McCrorie and A. Martin for the Scottish Government Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Directorate.

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