

Go outside and play! Opportunities for outdoor play critical for children during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic

Lawson Foundation shares recommendations for policy makers, early learning and child care, and post secondary early childhood education programs to implement to address the immediate and longer-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on children.

Toronto, ON, July 13, 2020 - Go outside and play! That's the key message in a statement released today by the Lawson Foundation in response to growing concern about the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and related risk-mitigation measures on children in communities across Canada.

Prepared with the input of advisors from public health and the early learning and child care (ELCC) sector, the statement includes guiding principles and recommendations to support the reopening and ongoing implementation of high quality ELCC programs during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Increasing opportunities for outdoor play is within everyone's reach," says Lawson Foundation President & CEO Marcel Lauzière. "Policy makers and the early learning and child care sector have the tools to increase children's opportunities for outdoor play now and in the future. It's critical that we get it right for this generation of young children who may well spend much of their critical early childhood period influenced by COVID-19."

According to the Lawson Foundation, promoting and facilitating more opportunities for kids to play outside will have significant and immediate positive impacts for both public health COVID-19 control measures and critical child development and learning.

"The use of the outdoors is underestimated and overlooked as a significant COVID-19 mitigation strategy in children's settings," says Lawson Foundation Program Director Christine Alden. "Outdoor play experiences are also critical to high quality early learning and child care programs to support healthy child development."

Visit www.lawson.ca/op-elcc-covid19.pdf to read and share the full statement and to learn more about the Lawson Foundation's work supporting outdoor play in Canada.

About the Lawson Foundation

The Lawson Foundation is a Canadian family foundation that invests in and engages with ideas, people and organizations that contribute to the healthy development of children and youth. Learn more about us and our work at www.lawson.ca.

Media Contact

Amanda Mayer
Program Director & COO
613.292.0569
amayer@lawson.ca