



EDEN DAYCARE NEWSLETTER WINTER - SPRING 2026

Eden Newsletter – Board's message

Hello Parents of Eden Daycare,

As we make our way through the final stretch of winter, we wanted to share a moment to look back on everything the past few months have brought.

This winter gave us no shortage of surprises, especially with the incredible amount of snow we experienced. Our playground often looked like it had been dipped in marshmallow fluff! Although the weather kept us on our (frozen) toes, it also offered the children new experiences and exciting opportunities to learn through play. We're grateful to our dedicated staff, who worked diligently to ensure safe, happy days both indoors and out.

Whenever the weather cooperated, the children bundled up and headed outside to explore the snow in all its forms. They delighted in making snow angels and footprints, and observing how winter changes the world around them. On days when it was too cold to be outdoors, the children enjoyed a variety of activities, from storytelling and dancing to building, painting, and imaginative play. These indoor moments were just as special and helped keep spirits bright through the colder weeks.

Now, with the sun lingering a bit longer each afternoon, we're beginning to welcome the subtle hints of spring. Soon, our playground will reveal budding branches and returning birds, and the children will trade snow gear for rain boots to embrace the muddy days ahead. Thank you for sharing this winter with us and here's to a cheerful, refreshing start to spring.

Best wishes for the season ahead,

Board of Directors, Eden Daycare Inc.

Infants

Sleep Training in Infants and How to Build Emotional Regulation

Sleep training in its simplest form, is the practice of teaching your baby to fall asleep by themselves- whether that's at the very beginning of the night when they first put in their crib or when they wake up in the middle of the night and need to fall back to sleep. There are a few popular methods and techniques for sleep training your babies. You may want to stick with one or pull from a few of them. It's all about figuring out what your infant responds to and what works best for you as a parent.

The Ferber Method: is a sleep training technique when parents put their baby down but awake and leave, returning at progressively longer intervals to offer brief, verbal comfort (without picking up feeding) to teach the child to self- soothe and fall asleep independently.

The cry-it-out method: involves putting your baby to bed when they're tired but still awake, helping them learn the skill of putting themselves asleep on their own.

The Chair Method: Put your baby in their crib while they're drowsy, and then sit in a chair next to them. Stay there until they fall asleep and then quietly leave the room- but if they begin to cry, come back and sit in the chair nearby.

Building emotional regulation in babies during sleep involves consistent, calm routines, responding to cues with gentle co-regulation (calm voice, touch), allowing brief self-soothing pauses, and gradually reducing intense interventions to help them develop internal calming skills, fostering security and independence.

During Awake Time (Building Foundations)- Practice putting your baby down when content so they learn independence in a positive way.

Bedtime and Naptime (The Routine)- A consistent ritual such as predictable bath, book and lullaby routine signals sleep and provides security. A calm environment is very important.

During Settling and Waking (Responsive Settling)

1. Pause before responding- allow brief moments of fussing before intervening as they might resettle.

2. Calm check ins- if they cry, offer calm reassurance with a gentle voice, soft shushing or a hand on their belly without picking them up immediately.
3. Gradual Reduction- slowly decrease rocking or patting to sleep over time to give them space to learn to soothe themselves.
4. Natural Comfort- Allow pacifiers or finger sucking as self- soothing tools.

In conclusion, the key principles are consistency, your calm is their calm and meet their needs first (hunger, comfort) for success.





Junior Toddlers

You can do activities with your toddler at home when there is a snow day and they can't go to school.

Snow days are wonderful opportunities for Junior toddlers to explore, play and learn with their families. Through simple indoor and outdoor activities, children can build their motor skills, language, and confidence while enjoying special bonding time with their parents. These fun winter experiences help make learning exciting even during the cold season.

Indoor Snow- Day Activities:

- 1 Ice Treasure Hunt: Freeze small toys in ice and let children touch or pour warm water to melt it. Skills: sensory exploration, problem solving, patience.
2. Snow Sorting Game: Use white cotton balls as “snow” and sort by size or place into cups. Skills: early math, fine motor, focus.
3. Winter Pretend Play: Use scarves, hats and mittens to dress dolls or teddies. Skills: self-help, imagination, language.

4. Chalk on Blackboard/ Paper: Draw snowflakes or winter shapes. Skills: hand eye-coordination, creativity.

5. Quiet Time with Books: Read winter stories and name pictures together. Skills: vocabulary, listening, bonding.

Outdoor Snow- Day Activities:

1. Shovel with Parent: Give toddlers a small shovel and let them help shovel the snow on the driveway. Skills: gross motor, confidence.
2. Snow Bucket Fill: Fill cups or buckets with snow together and let dump them out and refill it over and over again. Skills: Co-ordination and counting and spatial awareness.
3. Touch and Talk: Let children touch snow and say “cold,” “soft,” “wet,” Skills: sensory and language development.
4. Roll and Push Snowballs: Roll small snowballs on the ground. Skills: Strength, teamwork.
5. Look for Nature: Find trees, footprints, or birds in the snow. Skills: Observation, curiosity.
6. Sledding With Parents: Parents pull the sled while toddlers sit safely. Skills: Balance, trust, family bonding.

These simple activities make snow days fun, safe and full of learning with families.



Senior Toddlers



Why being outside in the winter is good for children.

1. **Build strong Bodies:** Wintry weather play encourages children to move like running, climbing, pulling sleds and balancing on snow or icy ground. This helps develop.
 - Gross motor skills
 - Balance and coordination
 - Muscle strength and endurance
2. **Supports Immune Health:** Fresh air and outdoor activity can help strengthen children's immune system. Being outdoors also reduces exposure to indoor germs that spread more easily in closed spaces.
3. **Encourages Sensory Exploration:** Winter offers rich sensory experiences, for example feeling snow, ice and frigid air. Hearing crunching footsteps. Seeing changes in maturity. These experiences support brain development and curiosity.

4. Boots mental health and mood: Outside time helps reduce stress, improves mood, and supports emotional regulation. Natural light, even in winter-can improve sleep patterns and overall wellbeing.
5. Build Resilience and Confidence: Learning to dress for weather and play in different conditions help children: Develop independence, confidence and learn adaptability and problem solving.
6. Support Social Skills: Outdoor winter play often encourages cooperation by sharing sleds, building snow structures, or exploring together which strengthens communication and teamwork.
7. Fosters a Love of Nature: Spending time outdoors year-round helps children appreciate nature in all seasons, creating healthy life long habits.

With proper winter clothing and supervision, cold weather is not a barrier, its an opportunity for learning, growth and fun.



Preschool



The importance of consistency and Routines

As we move into 2026, we would like to highlight the importance of consistency and daily routines for children across all age groups. A predictable daily rhythm helps children feel secure, confident, and ready to engage in their environment. When routines are consistent, transitions become smoother and children are better able to focus, participate and enjoy their day. Throughout the day, consistent routines such as arrival, meals, play experiences, learning stability. These routines support children at every developmental stage by creating a calm, safe and nurturing environment.

What is Consistency and Routine? Consistency and routine refer to having a familiar flow to the day where activities occur in a predictable order and expectation remain the same. While each day may include new experiences and learning opportunities, the structure stays consistent, helping children understand what comes next.

Benefits of Consistency and Routine for Children: Children learn and grow through repetition and experience. Consistent routines support their development by helping them feel safe, supported, and confident as they build new skills.

Here's how consistency and routine benefit children:

Emotional Security: Predictable routines help children feel safe and supported.

Self-Regulation: Clear expectations help children manage emotions and behaviours.

Independence: Repeated routines encourage confidence and independence.

Listening and Co-operation: Familiar routines support smoother transitions and cooperation.

Memory and Understanding: Repetition strengthens learning and understanding of daily expectations.

Social Development: Consistency supports positive interactions and cooperation with peers.

In addition to emotional and social development, consistent routines also support:

Positive behaviors, improved focus and engagement and smooth transitions throughout the day.

At Eden, our daily routines are thoughtfully designed to balance structure with play, creativity, and exploration, supporting children's overall growth and well-being.



Intermediate

Winter sickness myths: what really makes children sick

Winter brings snow days, cozy sweaters... and lots of sniffles. With so many children getting sick this time of year, it's easy to believe common winter health myths. Let's clear up what doesn't cause illness—and what really does—so families can focus on what truly helps keep kids healthy.

Myth: Cold weather causes colds

Truth: Viruses cause colds, not cold temperatures. Illness spreads more easily in winter because children spend more time indoors, in close contact with others, and viruses survive longer in cold, dry air and germs can spread more easily between friends.

Myth: Not wearing a coat makes kids sick

Truth: Being cold may be uncomfortable, but it doesn't cause infections. A child still needs exposure to a virus to become ill. Dressing warmly helps with comfort—not prevention of illness, and a shiver won't summon a sniffle.

Myth: Playing in the snow makes children sick

Truth: Although illnesses like colds and the flu occur more frequently during the winter months, the reasons are not always straightforward. Outdoor play in winter is actually beneficial. Being cold itself does not cause illness, instead, fresh air and movement help overall health. Illness spreads more often indoors, especially when children share toys, touch their faces, or forget to wash hands.

Myth: Extra vitamins prevent illness

Truth: Vitamins support general health, but they don't prevent viral infections. Moreover, there's no evidence that supplements boost immunity or prevent serious illnesses. The most effective immune support includes balanced nutrition, enough sleep, good hygiene, and recommended vaccinations.

Myth: Green mucus means antibiotics are needed

Truth: Thick or green mucus usually means the immune system is fighting an infection. It is normal for mucus from the nose to get thick and to change from clear to yellow or green. It does not mean children need antibiotics. Most winter illnesses are viral, and antibiotics are only helpful for bacterial infections.

What Really Causes Winter Illness in Children

- Exposure to viruses (such as colds, flu, RSV, and stomach bugs)
- Close contact with other children
- Infrequent handwashing
- Touching shared surfaces and then the face
- Less sleep and increased stress
- Dry air: Heated indoor air dries out tiny noses, making it easier for germs to settle in.

- Fewer outdoor adventures

Our Daycare defense plan

- Clean and disinfect toys and surfaces daily
- Ventilate classroom when weather and safety allow
- Use HEPA filter
- Provide Outdoor play when weather allows
- Encourage frequent handwashing
- Teach children to avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth
- Frequent Handwashing
- Monitor children for signs of illness during the day

How parents can do at home

- Keep sick kids home: Rest helps children recover faster and protects classmates and friends.
- Layer up: Dress your child in layers for daycare. We adjust throughout the day as they move between active play and quiet time.
- Serve balanced meals: Fruits, vegetables, protein, and water help support growing bodies. No special supplements needed.
- Lead by example: show your child how to cough/sneeze into their elbow.
- Stick to sleep routines: Well-rested children have stronger immune systems. Try to keep bedtimes consistent, even on busy days.

Remember: It's normal for young children to build their immune systems and have several minor illnesses a year, especially in a group setting. Our goal is not to create a bubble, but to use smart, simple habits to reduce the spread so everyone can spend more time playing and learning, and less time feeling under the weather.



Kindergarten

❄️ Snow Day Fun for Kindergarten Families ❄️

Learning, Playing, and Growing Together — Ontario Style!

Snow days are a special part of winter in Ontario. They give families time to slow down, stay safe at home, and enjoy meaningful moments together. Children learn best when adults play, talk, and explore alongside them. Below are fun, simple activities parents can **do together with their kindergarten child**, both outdoors and indoors.



Outdoor Snow Fun (With a Grown-Up!)

Outdoor play supports physical development, confidence, and curiosity. Short play times with warm-up breaks work best for young children.

Build Together

Parents can help roll snowballs and work as a team to build a snowman or snow animal. Talk about size, shape, and texture: *big/small, round, cold, soft*. Let your child choose decorations and name their creation.



Move and Explore Side by Side

Make snow angels together, walk carefully through the snow, or gently pull your child on a sled. Take turns leading and following to build cooperation and trust.



Snow Science Moments

Parents can ask simple questions like, *“What happens if we pack the snow?”* or *“Is*

this snow crunchy or soft?" Scoop snow into containers and compare how it looks inside versus outside.

Nature Walk & Talk

Take a short winter walk together. Point out animal tracks, trees without leaves, icy patches, or snowflakes on mittens. Share observations and encourage your child to describe what they notice.



Cozy Indoor Activities to Do Together

When it's too cold outside, indoor time becomes a chance for connection and creativity.

Build & Pretend Together

Create a blanket fort with your child. Parents can help set it up, then join in pretend play, reading, or storytelling inside the fort.

Create Side by Side

Sit with your child during winter crafts. Cut paper snowflakes together, paint winter scenes, or build snowmen with cotton balls. Talk about colours, shapes, and patterns as you work.

Play-Dough & Hands-On Fun

Parents can model rolling, pinching, and shaping play-dough. Take turns making winter objects and describing them.

Move and Dance Together

Put on music and move like winter animals, skaters, or falling snow. Follow your child's ideas and copy their movements—it builds confidence and joy.

Calm Learning Time with Parents

Quiet moments are powerful when shared with caring adults.

Read and Talk

Cuddle up and read winter stories together. Pause to ask questions, talk about pictures, or relate the story to your child's own snow day experiences.

Draw and Share

Encourage your child to draw a snow day picture. Parents can listen as the child explains their drawing and help label it with words or simple sentences.

Play Simple Games Together

Work on puzzles, matching games, or counting games. Take turns, celebrate effort, and keep the focus on fun rather than winning.

Kitchen

Fun baking recipe to make with children on a snow day and decorating idea's.

Winter can really take a toll on parents. Aside from the additional time spent at home when you should be/wish you were working, there's nowhere for all that pent-up kid energy to go. You can't send your child outside in the backyard or to the playground to release some energy. Playdates are great, but they have their limits as well.

Snow day means you suddenly have the whole day to play in the kitchen- HURRAY! But snow days also means you can't run out of the ingredients, so if you are planning on a baking project, it needs to be based on what you already have in the pantry and fridge. Unless, of course you happen to be a plan ahead type of person, which in case you likely hit the grocery store or planned the delivery in advance.

A great snow day recipe to make with children is melted snowman cookies, as they are easy to prepare and offer a fun, creative decorating activity. You can use a simple sugar cookie recipe (or ore-made dough) and a variety of candies for decoration.

Recipe idea: Melted Snowman Cookies

This activity requires minimal baking time and focuses heavily on the fun, low mess decorating phase, perfect for young children.

Ingredients:

- Round sugar cookies (homemade or store bought)
- White frosting (store bought tub or simple homemade butter cream)
- Mini marshmallows or large marshmallows cut in half (for head/ body)
- Mini chocolate chips (for eyes, mouth and buttons)
- Orange candy or sliced gumdrops (for the carrot nose)
- Small candies, sprinkles or fruit strips (for scarves, hats or extra details)



Instructions:

1. **Bake and Cool:** Bake the round cookies as directed and let them cool completely on a wire rack.
2. **The “Melt”:** Spread a generous layer of white frosting across the top of each cookie. Let some of the frosting drip slightly over the edge to create the “melted” effect.
3. **Position the body:** place a mini marshmallow (or a half of a large one) slightly off- center on the white frosting, near the top to serve as the snowman’s head.
4. **Decorate:** While the frosting is still wet, let the children get creative with the decorations.



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