

West Coast Recess

Living in a rain forest offers many diverse weather conditions. It makes sense therefore, we are well prepared to be outside in the rain. It is important for children to get outside throughout the day for fresh air and exercise. Research has proven time and time again, the impact that physical activity has on learning. For this reason, many local schools and districts are adopting a *West Coast Recess*.

Being prepared for the weather

We know that if kids are well prepared to be outside in the rain they actually enjoy it. As long as they stay dry and warm there is a great deal of fun to be had in all kinds of weather. To be prepared to be outside in the rain it is important for your child to have appropriate clothing such as:

- A rain jacket
- Umbrella
- Rubber boots so they can enjoy the puddles
- Rain pants
- A rain hat or coat with a hood
- A change of clothes just in case. (sweatpants, sock, underwear, t-shirt)

**Please label all your child's items*

Commonly Asked Questions

I am worried that my child will get sick being out in the rain.

It is not cold that makes us sick but rather viruses. People get sick more often in the winter because they are exposed to each other more in the winter than in the summer. When it is cold outside people tend to stay inside and are more likely to spread germs to one another. Getting outdoors is more likely to protect our kids from illnesses than keeping them indoors.

My child has been sick but is now returning to school. Can he stay inside today?

We are quite reluctant to allow this for a couple of reasons. First, if your child is still not quite better it would be better to keep them at home until they are 100% ready to function fully at school. If he is too sick to go outside he is also probably too sick to get through the day's work successfully – give him another day of rest. Secondly, we have very limited supervision inside so if more than a couple of students are requesting this it becomes problematic. We do make exceptions to this based on special circumstances so if you want to chat about your child's specific health conditions please phone me and we can talk about your concerns.

Why don't you keep them in – they would be far more comfortable – it doesn't seem fair!

We are concerned that if we set things up for our kids to avoid inclement weather by staying indoors we are teaching them that they need to protect themselves from it. The habits we set up with our kids as they grow up tend to last into adulthood. Rather than feeling that they need to stay indoors we want to encourage them to find ways to enjoy the rain. Imaginative play is very healthy learning experiences for our students. Another reason why it is so important that our kids go outside is that it is extremely difficult for most of them to focus on their school work in the

afternoons when they have not had the opportunity to get some fresh air. In the past when we used to keep kids inside more routinely due to rain our students struggled through their afternoons.

Are the children ever allowed to stay inside due to the weather?

We occasionally have weather conditions that are unreasonable to expect students to stay outside in. These days include hard, driving rain with extreme cold or wind. In these situations we intend to declare it an inside day however we don't expect to have more than 2 or 3 of them a year.