



A Shared Vision

Partners in Pediatric Blindness and Visual Impairment

Exploring the Seasons With Our Senses (EI-TVI Version)



Let's learn outside! It's imperative that children with visual impairments use their senses to learn about the world around them. This includes learning about nature and the outdoors. In this learning experience we go outside with our child and go on a hands-on nature walk. What does the grass feel like? What does it smell like? What does it look like? What does it sound like? How does nature change depending on the season?

Objectives

- Explore nature with our senses. What do you hear, see, smell, feel, and touch outside?
- Develop vocabulary to describe the environment, e.g., windy, sunny, cloudy, quiet, noisy, warm, chilly, fresh, stinky, smoky, etc.
- Develop important concepts, e.g., big versus little, short versus long, light versus heavy, bumpy versus smooth, etc.

- Learn to navigate outside.
- Enjoy the great outdoors!

Expanded Core Curriculum Areas Supported

- **Sensory Efficiency:** Use senses to explore outside. What do you hear, see, smell, feel, and touch?
- **Recreation and Leisure:** Walking and hiking are common leisure activities for people of all ages. Enjoying nature and learning about trees, plants, birds, etc. is also a common leisure activity for people of all ages.
- **Orientation and Mobility:** Move around outside by walking, getting carried, or getting pushed in a stroller or wagon. Experiencing and maneuvering over new terrain and possibly uneven terrain.
- **Self-Determination:** The child will participate in choice making by picking up or looking at an item of interest in nature. The child will make decisions and solve problems. Will this pinecone fit in my container? Can I pick up this stick? Where will I put this rock?
- **Independent Living Skills:** Learning about weather and appropriate clothes to wear during the various seasons.
- **Social Skills:** Bonding and communicating with caregiver during the activity.
- **Compensatory Skills:** Learning to use alternative techniques to promote engagement, exploration, and movement while outside. Does the child need to touch the object to identify it? Do they need braille in their experience book or books about the seasons/nature? Does the child have low vision and need an iPad or phone to take pictures of things in nature in order to see them up close?

Everyday Routines Supported

This activity supports outside time and play time.

Suggested Next Steps to Use This Activity With Caregiver and Child

1. Discuss activity with caregiver to determine appropriateness and relevancy to family.
2. Forward the caregiver version of the activity to the caregiver.
3. Remind the primary caregiver one to two days before the home/virtual visit to gather the materials required.

4. Introduce the activity, discuss the objectives, and provide an overview of the possible steps.
5. Be prepared to break down the activities into a smaller subset as the child and family may not have the time or tolerance to complete all activities.
6. After completing this activity, consider extension activities that may be appropriate and relevant to the family.