

Let's Build a Snowman (EI-TVI Version)



It's imperative that children with a visual impairment use their senses to learn about the world around them, including nature and the outdoors. When it's too cold and snowy to go outside, you can bring the snow inside and build a snowman with your child who is blind or visually impaired. Your child can still experience snow with all their senses while learning important concepts like "cold" and "wet," sequencing skills while you build a snowman, and predicting what happens when the snow melts. Put a towel on the floor just in case your floor gets wet!

Objectives

- Explore snow with your senses. What do you hear, see, smell, feel, and touch?
- Develop vocabulary to describe the snow, e.g., white, cold, wet, powdery, fresh.
- Develop important concepts, e.g., wet vs. dry, cold vs. warm, big vs. small, on vs. off.
- Learn sequencing skills while you put one snowball on top of another and count the number of balls you make. Predict what will happen if you leave your snowman inside your house.

- Enjoy playing with snow!

Expanded Core Curriculum Areas Supported

- **Sensory Efficiency:** Use senses to explore the snow. What do you hear, see, smell, feel, and touch?
- **Recreation and Leisure:** Playing in the snow – building a snowman, making a snow angel, throwing snowballs -- is a common leisure activity. This also includes sports like skiing, sledding, and walking in the snow.
- **Orientation and Mobility:** Purposeful movement – rolling and stacking snowballs, spatial relational concepts – on top of, size – big, medium, small, same/different. Learning the body parts of a snowman and where they go on the body.
- **Self-Determination:** The child will participate in choice making by picking up or looking at the snow. How many balls of snow will they make? Will the snow fit in a cup? What happens when the snow begins to melt?
- **Independent Living Skills:** Learning about weather and appropriate clothes to wear during the winter. Bundle up!
- **Social Skills:** Bonding and communicating with caregiver during the activity.
- **Compensatory Skills:** Learning to use alternative techniques to promote engagement, exploration, and movement while simulating the outside experience. Does the child need to touch the object to identify it? Do they need braille in their experience book or books about snow? Does the child have low vision and would enjoy painting the snow so there's more contrast?

Everyday Routines Supported

This activity supports outside time and play time. It also supports getting dressed for a winter activity.

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.