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Nature Play CBR is an initiative developed to reconnect children to free play outdoors and in nature. It works to elevate the value of nature play in the minds of families, educators and community organisations through advocacy and facilitating opportunities for the Canberra community to discover the benefits of nature play first-hand.

Our mission is made urgent by the fact that modern Australian children are spending less time outside in nature than at any other time in our history. In the space of just one generation, there has been a dramatic shift in childhood activity from outdoors to indoors driven by a number of factors including the advent of new screen-based technologies and the emergence of a risk-averse culture.

Play spaces are valuable outdoor play resources for our programs and the diverse network of community organisations that provide quality experiences that attract and encourage use, exploration and appreciation of our natural areas.

These programs aim to highlight the opportunities outdoor spaces offer for recreation, education and social interaction.

**Value of play spaces:**

- Play spaces provide an opportunity for Canberra families to play outdoors in activities that support the benefits of time in nature, and connecting with other families and the community.
- The hosting of outdoor activities by community organisations in neighbourhood parks and outdoor spaces can encourage families to revisit the spots themselves and feel confident about taking play and family time outside.
- Outdoor play and interaction with spaces can allow children and parents to reconnect with nature. Parents can begin to have meaningful conversations with children around Leave No Trace, building awareness, appreciation and respect for our natural and cultural heritage, encouraging them to be responsible for their area of play, disposing of waste, using only the resources they need and ensuring that the natural environment is not harmed during play.
- They also allow kids to imagine, create, learn and be active. Having spaces that allow children to catch bugs, make cubbies, ride bikes, climb trees, get scraped and dirty, and even disturb nature a bit, on their own and without too much coaching is essential for childhood development. These experiences are at the very heart of developing a love for the natural world. Play is a powerful teacher, and children need to "mess around" a lot and do so as much as possible.

