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PROFESSIONAL TRAINING COURSE

Outdoor Education for Wellbeing, Environment and Inclusion

18 - 25 AUGUST 2023 : VIENNA, AUSTRIA



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WHAT IS OUTDOOR EDUCATION ?

Outdoor education is a type of alternative education that opts for a methodology based on respect and care for the environment. During the last decades it has been a method that has spread throughout the world, due to the great benefits it has for boys and girls. In the same way, as a result of environmental issues and wanting to solve them, environmental education is born that wants to train both children as well as teachers.



They can play outdoors, be in contact with nature, do all types of movements, running, jumping, observing what surrounds them, asking questions about the world, etc. Outdoors is seen as an environment quality for adults and children where they come into contact with nature and the social world, a space full of shared experiences and where curiosity stimulates questions and generates a research process that will entail learning.

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

The last decades our society has experienced changes related with growing urbanization, the colonization of natural areas, the loss of biodiversity, growing technological development and an increase in the level of demands and competitiveness, also in the educational system. There are several consequences that have caused all these transformations, among them, describe that the childhood has less and less contact with nature, games are almost all structured and/or electronic and it is not always easy to access natural spaces or naturalized where they can play freely.



HOW DO YOUNG PEOPLE SPEND THEIR FREE TIME?

Currently, children live most of the time locked up in space interiors, protected from the “dangers” of the outside world, many go and come home from school by car and spend most of their time indoors doing activities programmed and directed by adults. Their experiences with nature occur very often inside a car looking out the window or watching a DVD projected on the car screen headrest. Spending so much time in closed spaces favors greater use and possible dependence on technologies such as television, smartphones, computers or tablets, and this whole situation has a negative impact on children.

WHAT ABOUT NEW TECHNOLOGY?

It not only affects your physical health, but also your overall development. Of the child, since it reduces his ability to concentrate and promotes superficiality. Undoubtedly, new technologies are formidable learning tools, as long as they take their rightful place as means to expand knowledge, not to access what is essential. Being in contact with nature not only prevents the harmful effects caused by a sedentary life inundated by electromagnetic radiation.



THE PATH TO CHANGE :

Currently, in a context of continuous change due to new knowledge and technologies that are generated daily, the work that “experiential learning” can have in the training needs and the professional profile required of students. One of the most demanded is the ability to learn autonomously.

The ability to learn requires the ability to take advantage of all our senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste) and our interaction with the environment. In this way, experiential learning must be promoted to improve it. Ability to learn, based on the so-called “Outdoor Education” (EAL). EAL can be defined as learning through the body and the senses, in interaction with others, with experiences and reflections lived in specific places, in the specific place of study.

It is a learning methodology that can be applied not only to all those disciplines whose object of study is found and developed in geographical space, the medium, the territory, but also at different educational levels, from primary education and secondary school to university, through the continuous training of senior students.



Furthermore, the regular practice of physical exercise in children and adolescents can prevent and treat multiple health problems, from overweight to those related to emotional relationships. However, the habit of young people that has changed the most in recent years is the lack of physical exercise, which has been replaced by an excess of sedentary leisure, linked to screens and new technologies.

The World Health Organization (WHO) identifies a sedentary lifestyle as a serious health problem in children and young people aged 5 to 17 years. The WHO recommendations are clear in this regard. Children and adolescents should do at least 60 minutes a day of physical activity of moderate or high intensity, in sessions of at least 10 minutes long. In addition, vigorous exercises should be performed three times a week, aimed at strengthening the skeletal and muscular system.

HISTORY OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION:

- ◆ In the Prehistoric Age. □ Man´s relationship with nature was to subsist, carrying out activities such as hunting and fishing.

- ◆ Ancient Age □ The survival relationship was overcome, men became sedentary and cities were created (Polis in Greece), and man became a “political animal,” according to Aristotle. Man's relationships with nature are those derived from socioeconomic status: Utilitarian: exploitation of the land through slaves. Recreational: contemplation, idealization of nature by men, which was carried out by nobles and aristocrats.

 - ◆ With the arrival of the Middle Ages ✱ A theocentric vision of the universe stands out, characterized by a rejection of the corporeal and the natural, life is rural and new needs arise that will be more sedentary. The relationship with nature is based on agriculture – livestock and fights – wars.

 - ◆ The Modern Age 🏡 Brings with it a differentiation between the rural and urban world, due to the growing expansion of cities. There is a humanitarian vision in which the body is an object of study and J.J. Rousseau denounces the sedentary habits of the cities and praises the “healthy air” of the countryside. In this way, outdoor physical activities are developed through recreational-educational relationships.

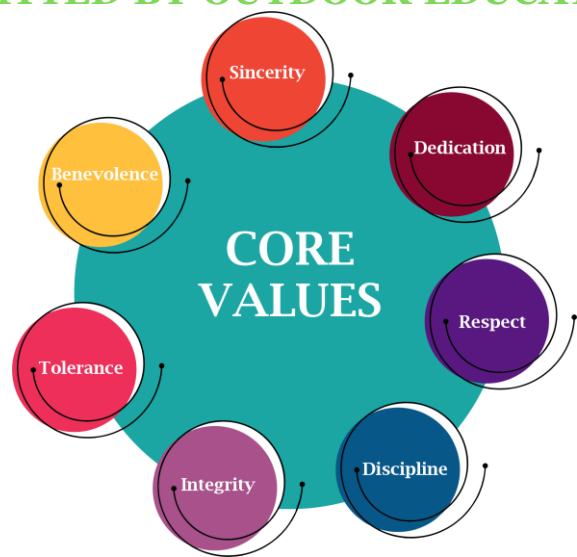
 - ◆ The Contemporary Age 🏙️ Between the end of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century, as a consequence of the industrial revolution, the natural and rural environment became depopulated and cities grew disproportionately, generating overcrowding, overcrowding and pollution. The culture of work appears and sport means obtaining measurable achievements. There is a sportification of activities in nature that are primarily mountain walking, climbing and skiing.

 - ◆ Current era Outdoor education refers to the educational processes that take place mainly outside the classrooms, in the open air, with nature being the reference space.
1. Outdoor education programs, in addition to the regulated subjects, include environmental education and excursions to nature, stimulating students to carry out physical activities such as group games, climbing, canoeing, hiking, etc.,
 2. Favoring the increase in self-esteem and attitudes of group cooperation; creating a positive awareness of nature and improving physical condition and coordination.
 3. If we talk about outdoor learning, we must begin by remembering the New School movement, a series of pedagogical principles that emerged at the end of the 19th century and that proposed a break with traditional teaching, giving greater importance to play, experimentation and motion. These principles probably also influenced the decision to create open-air schools to improve children's health.

The first began in Germany, where classes were taught in the forests, moving throughout Europe and North America. These schools that saw their end with the Civil War and Franco's regime have resurfaced in the 21st century, inheriting the pedagogical model of Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Germany. However, it is not necessary to resort to this school model to develop outdoor learning; more and more centers and teachers go on outings with their students, aware of everything that nature can contribute to teaching.



VALUES TRANSMITTED BY OUTDOOR EDUCATION:



- > *Builds community.*
 - > *Raises expectations and standards.*
 - > *Increase connection.*
 - > *Develops positive feelings and memories around school and the outdoors.*
 - > *Builds culture.*
 - > *Improves self-regulation.*
- The opposite of health*

Sedentary lifestyle and physical inactivity are highly prevalent globally and are associated with a wide range of chronic diseases and premature death. The interest in sedentary behavior is justified by the growing evidence that points to a relationship between this behavior and the increase in the prevalence of obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Throughout history it is well known that being inactive is unhealthy, but today almost a third of the world's population is inactive, which represents a serious public health problem.

Apart from being a public health problem whose prognosis will be worse in the coming years, sedentary lifestyle is advancing intensively in most countries. An analysis of the time spent on PA in 5 large countries (China, USA, United Kingdom, Brazil and India) showed a significant decrease compared to previous years, estimating a greater reduction in the coming years⁴⁵. Thus, for example, the average sedentary time went from 26 h/week in 1965 to 38

Benefits of outdoor education

Exercising outdoors has multiple benefits that go beyond what the muscle conditioning room or classes taught in Fitness centers can provide. And research has shown greater benefits on well-being, self-esteem and motivation.

Training approximately 30 minutes a day outdoors, with the help of the sun and contact with nature, will increase your energy levels, revitalize you and reduce your levels of anxiety and bad mood in your daily life. Let's see below a series of benefits that are key in outdoor training.

The vitamin D that we synthesize from sun exposure during our outdoor workouts has great benefits on the health of bones, muscles and metabolic function, as well as the prevention of cardiovascular diseases. In addition, it is a common treatment for depression and other mood problems. In spring and summer, it would only be necessary to expose yourself to the sun for about 10 minutes a day to meet the minimum requirements for vitamin D.

Likewise, exposure during the day can help you sleep better at night, improve immune function and increase the production of the “happiness hormones”. However, we must take certain precautions when exercising during certain periods of high heat such as summer, as it can have the opposite and detrimental effect on our health.



Fresh air

It refreshes and increases vitality and strength. When you train outdoors you take in pure oxygen to feed your cells and help fight disease.



Less feeling of anxiety

Outdoor training manages to instantly eliminate most of this type of anxiety by doing the exercise in large spaces, with fewer people, with exercises that are easy to perform and possibly in an environment that you already know, is pleasant and that can transmit more tranquility and security.



Train the brain

Outdoor training offers a mental boost that other types of exercise can't provide. It doesn't matter if you are training at home or in the gym, the point is that you will always be surrounded by the same walls and mental/visual stimuli, while training outdoors you will be constantly changing scenery, which will help stimulate your brain to a greater extent.



Psychological benefits

When you are at the gym, you may sometimes feel a lot of eyes on you. When you exercise outdoors, that attention dissipates and everyone is more focused on their training than other issues. Exercising is beneficial for your self-confidence, but exercising outdoors can be even better. Training outdoors can increase your vitality, improve well-being and self-esteem, as well as reduce anxiety. Furthermore, it is not necessary to perform training at very high or maximum intensities, since the greatest positive effects are found with exercise at moderate intensity.



Greater adhesion

Creating a training habit is difficult, but if you find a sport that you like, it can be decisive in making you always want to return. The enjoyment that can be felt with outdoor training can increase the participant's adherence to physical exercise. Several studies show that people tend to exercise outdoors for longer or in greater quantities than within four walls.



Benefits at the cellular level

It has been shown that people have lower levels of cortisol (a hormone related to stress) after training outdoors than training within four walls, higher levels of dopamine, serotonin and endorphins (the “happiness hormone”) thanks to the combined action of exercise and sun exposure, as well as possibly an improvement in immune function.



More calorie expenditure

Research has shown that exercising outdoors in cold weather would increase energy expenditure more than exercising indoors at more pleasant temperatures. In addition, performing various cardiovascular exercises outdoors, such as running, could cost more calories than doing them in the gym. In this sense, uneven terrain, air resistance and wind increase the energy expended during exercise. Additionally, the energy expended moving forward during running is usually greater than when running on a treadmill.

Innovative, varied and fun training



The workouts are usually full of creativity and variety, unlike many of those done in the gym. Novelty has been postulated as a fundamental pillar in motivation, and the daily variety in exercises and training undoubtedly helps to increase the motivation of the participants. Plus, when workouts are fun and exciting, you're more likely to be consistent with your workouts and your healthy lifestyle.



Teaching for the little ones

Since this type of training is carried out in places where tranquility and nature reign, they are also usually recommended places for children, since they are very safe for them. This could help parents so that they do not have to stop frequently attending the sessions due to not being able to organize themselves with the children and, in addition, they will be helping their children live and learn healthy habits directly through their parents.



Better for health

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and studies estimate that indoor pollution can be more than twice as high compared to outdoor environments. Aspects within the gym as frequent as the users and their arrangement in the room, the machines, outside ventilation or even the use of air conditioning can increase pollution within this type of spaces to really high levels compared to the outside, being aerobic activities are the most problematic for their participants. By training outdoors in a natural space and away from traffic and city congestion, you can breathe cleaner air with less pollution. In addition, prolonged exposure to green spaces can also improve mental health and brain function as well as increase longevity by improving cardiovascular health.

Connect and create new friends



Attending classes is a good way to meet new people and this will help you continue attending, even when your body tells you otherwise. Social relationships in any activity make the motivation of any participant more important to continue doing said activity.



You don't need to be in shape

The participant should not be discouraged by having poor form, as training sessions can be performed adequately regardless of fitness level. Even if you have to make a great effort, you should always keep your head up, continue attending classes and you will soon notice how your physical condition improves in aspects as simple as lasting longer running without stopping or running faster with less. fatigue.



Take advantage of the biophilia effect

It is believed that human beings have a deep and innate affinity for nature as well as an intrinsic and emotional connection with other organisms and animals. This condition may be written in the genes, which would explain that, when contact with nature is minimal, certain diseases and pathological conditions often begin to occur. This is what Dr. Wilson of Harvard University calls the biophilia effect. Since outdoor exercise exposes the body's sensory systems to the multitude of stimuli from nature, it is very likely that those innate biophilic needs of the human being will be satisfied more easily than by doing this training within four walls.

Therefore, we can highlight a series of objectives related to environmental education.

Potential materials for Outdoor Education:

Outdoor education remains a valuable method of learning that can be exploited in an inexhaustive number of manners. Some of the materials that can be explored in the frame of it are listed below. Each material can be used but also adapted and modified on the basis of the objectives of the program within which it is utilized. The materials also need to be chosen and/or modified based on the criteria of the target audience it used with (Age, capacities, background, etc.)

For instance, tools such as:

1. Creation

Participants draw and paint on a wall for instance or any other type of media to express emotions, experiences, desires or simply to leave an impactful memory of the community.

Participants are encouraged to make homogenous creations in order to favor inclusion, capacity of expression, and collaborative work. Participants can take great pride in contributing a work of art to their community.

2. Planting:

Opting for community gardens or even planting individual plants ideally that are fast to grow. This would enhance their community work, but also initiate them to gardening or simple agriculture. Results would as well be encouraging if seen before the end of the given program. Therefore, activities around such a tool are perfectly adequate but also in perfect alignment with outdoor activities and their objectives.

3. Orienteering:

Though orienteering can be perceived and often utilized as a competitive too, it can be adapted to collaborative standards where participants would have the chance to be useful to one another by for instance using not only different maps that would be complementary but also by putting in use different senses (sight, audition, touch, etc.) spread differently and sought in a puzzle-like manner in order for them to work in teams and explore their senses. This can as well allow them to explore the different ways they can have to reconnect with nature and use the objects and beings around them to solve their problems.

4. Cleaning:

Cleaning based actions whether of soil, water, parks, beaches or any other outdoor public spaces can be very beneficial to participants, their communities, and the environment. It would benefit their sense of responsibility and their community engagement. It would also sensitize them in terms of environment's protection and the individual and collective impact their actions would have on that question.

The impact can be on them as well as on the actual place where the activity takes place.

It englobes at the same time physical activity, civic education, and environmental consciousness raising with impactful actions that can have short, medium or long term results.

Many tools can be developed within this method with an eventual adaptation to the participants' capacities, their age, the place where the activity is held, the weather, the duration, etc.

Problems and challenges that can be faced:

- ◆ One of the many challenges one can confront within activities in general and outdoor ones in particular, is the inclusive participation and collaborative manner of proceeding. Eventual solutions shall be thought of beforehand. Tools adapted to ensure everyone's active participation, studied and tested beforehand, need to be prepared.
- ◆ Another problem that can be faced is the physical capacity and conditions. It could be very challenging to be in a situation where one participant can no longer carry on the activity, is victim of an injury, an allergic reaction, etc. it is important to study the risks, provide the information for the applicants and gather all necessary information regarding them. A first aid kit and eventual drugs (medicine) shall be prepared and taken as well.
- ◆ Weather and changing temperatures can represent another issue when it comes to outdoor learning. Extreme temperatures and other weather related issues can most of the time be anticipated but not always. Water, sunscreen and other materials shall be prepared in case of extreme heat for example. Rain jackets, extra gloves/hats shall be considered in case of fall/winter conditions.
- ◆ One might fear outdoor activities would be associated with fun and rest by students or participants. It is very important to put a frame to the exercise beforehand, put clear guidelines and follow-up with participants to reach the desired results. Fun shall always be associated but shall not be the main objective of the activity.

Where to practice outdoor activities in Europe?

Europe is diverse, for this reason as a representation of our different nationalities, we have made a compilation of some of the places where you can practice outdoor activities. Apart from that, we could find other interesting places worldwide.

Climbing in Fontainebleau – France

“Bleu” has been a favorite place for alpine climbers since the late 19th century. It doesn't matter if you are a novice or if you have a lot of experience, here you will find challenges that adapt to any type of climber. There are mountains of all shapes, sizes and levels of difficulty in the 50 kilometers that the forest occupies. Choose yours and start sweating.



Cycle along the banks of the Vltava, a tributary of the Elbe – Czech Republic

This river is a tributary of the impressive Elbe and runs from Prague to Berlin... Will your legs last so many kilometers

Another famous route is from Prague to Melnik or from Prague to the picturesque town of Karlstejn. Depending on the route you choose, you will pass through the Giant Mountains, medieval villages and amazing natural rock formations. You simply have to get on your bike and follow the riverbed to the destination of your choice. All the itineraries are part of the EuroVelo cycle route network, meaning everything is very well signposted and you won't be able to get lost.



Kayaking in Fermanagh Lakelands – Ireland



Fermanagh Lakelands landscapes are spectacular

n hour and a half drive from Belfast, Fermanagh Lakelands is a spectacular green area filled with lakes. The upper and lower reaches of Loch Erne are our favorite places for kayaking and canoeing. In this area you will find canals with about 50 kilometers in length to paddle and row without stopping.

If you want to test your endurance, take the route from Woodford River to Limerick city. In Enniskillen there are companies where you can rent a bike or directly book an excursion with them. Furthermore, there are also marinas nearby where you can purchase the necessary equipment to enjoy the day. Keep an eye out for the "local history" signs, they'll give you a crash course on the area while you continue to paddle.

Caving in the Thrihnukagigur volcanic cave – Iceland

Just 25 minutes from Reykjavík, Thrihnukagigur Volcanic Cave is an amazing place to go caving inside a dormant volcano. The name means "three-peaked crater" and one of those peaks will be your home for 5 or 6 hours. To get to the volcano you will have to walk for about 50 minutes, then you will have to descend about 120 meters with a forklift. Once inside the cave, you are amazed by the colors of the stone, the frozen lava and the black cracks that the magma has left behind.

Bring warm clothes because it is cold inside the cave. The cave is open from May to October.



Hiking in Grindelwald – Switzerland

A mountainous region with peaks and amazing views that has 11 incomparable hiking routes. With the Schynige Platte route you can enjoy the views of the Bernese Alps, while if you do the route from Mannlichen to Wengen you will have some enormous mountains in the background. Another shorter option is the itinerary that goes from Grosse Scheidegg to Bussalp. The attraction of this route is the views of the glaciers. If you don't have much time, you can take the tourist train that runs through the main points of interest. Grindelwald is located about three hours from Zurich.



Rafting the rapids of the Sjoa River – Norway

Three and a half hours from Oslo or Trondheim, you will find one of the best places for rafting: the rapids of the Sjoa River. It also has a quieter area where you can canoe and kayak, if you don't feel like getting wet. There are several companies in the area, so if you are traveling with family or with people who do not have much experience, you can reduce the difficulty and choose a less busy route.

If you feel like living a different adventure, take a canyoning excursion. You will climb mountains, pass waterfalls and natural reserves, so adrenaline is guaranteed. Remember to bring warm clothing and go in the warmer months.



Climbing in Montserrat – Spai

Just an hour's drive from Barcelona, Monserrat is one of the largest areas for climbing in Spain. Themountains that crown the gentle hills of vineyards offer a thousand and one climbing routes. The eastern end of the park is one of the most popular climbing destinations, and there is also the Benedictine monastery that is well worth a photo or two to post on Instagram. If a day of climbing falls short, you can book a night in one of the park's "refuges."



The best time to go is spring and autumn. In summer it can be too hot due to the lack of shade.

Hiking the West Highland Way – Scotland.

Forget everything and start walking. Just a stone's throw from Glasgow (just 30 minutes), the West Highland Way is Scotland's first long-distance walking route. It is 151 kilometers long and will take you about 8 days to complete, but don't worry, every blister you get will be worth it. The route takes you from Milngavie to Fort William, and if you want to extend it by a day, you can detour by taking the Kelvin Walkway route. You will cross fields and pastures, the rugged highlands and the famous moors. The route consists of eight stages and all are well signposted. Along the way you can stay in small towns where you can eat and sleep. But you also have the option of camping under the stars if you want to be closer to nature.



North Sea Cycle Route – Netherlands

With almost 6,000 kilometers, the North Sea Cycle Route requires good endurance and leg power. But the good thing about it is that you choose where you can stop and rest or return to the route again. In the Netherlands, take route LF1 or LF10 (which runs along the Dutch coast), it doesn't matter which direction you choose. This route follows the coast and passes through The Hague. Here you can connect with route L4 (a route that runs through the center of the country), which crosses the Rhine Valley or route LF11, which goes to Rotterdam and Breda. The landscape is beautiful, dotted with sand dunes, national parks and picturesque villages.



Enter a cave in Postojna – Slovenia

Half an hour from Ljubljana, Postojna Cave is a unique underground universe. Formed by the erosion of the Pivka River, the network of limestone tunnels is 24 kilometers long. Furthermore, an underground train has been running here for 140 years. The train will leave you in the area where the enormous stalagmites and the underground post office are located where the strange "olm" abounds, a type of salamander with gills. There is also the possibility of going fully into the cave, if that is what you feel like. Crowning the cave you will find the Predjama castle, built on one of the cliffs and where they hold a medieval knight tournament in the summer.



Kitesurfing in Amager – Denmark



Just 15 minutes from Copenhagen, Amager Strandpark is the place to go if you want to windsurf and kite. At 3 kilometers, it is the largest beach in Copenhagen. With soft white sand and not much depth, it is the ideal beach to take advantage of the gusts of wind. There is also a surf school for beginners if you want to try your hand at surfing. If you want to take advantage of the wind, we recommend that you go in spring and autumn. On the

other hand, if you prefer to swim, go in the summer months. What have you been left wanting more? Visit the nearby towns of Allerød and Ishøj.

Horse riding in Lohja – Finland



Ride one of the famous Finnish horses and take a tour. You have plenty of options, from a two-hour ride to a multi-day excursion, if you're an experienced rider. In summer the weather is delightful, but you can also do it in winter, with everything snowy. In Finland they are very fond of horse riding and you can practice it even in Lapland. But if you don't have that much time, try riding in Lohja, a city located 50 kilometers from Helsinki.

Outdoor education at the school

Now we will talk from a formal aspect, about the outdoor activities that can be carried out in our schools.

Once outdoor activities are known in some countries in Europe and surrounding areas, it will be essential to focus on our students and specific activities that we can carry out outside the classroom, due to the benefits that this entails, as we have discussed previously.

Activities outside the classroom can be classified according to the purpose or objective that is intended to be achieved, among which are sports, artistic, academic, intellectual and leisure and free time activities.

Sport activities



One of the most chosen, both by parents and young people, whose objective is the development and improvement of the child's motor skills. In this same order of ideas, any sport whether or not practiced within school can be identified as an extracurricular activity, such as tennis, baseball, basketball, swimming, athletics, etc.

Artistic activities



These tend to develop the most important talents and skills of the young person in the artistic field, such as creativity and the ability to express themselves. And although there are subjects within the classroom that teach knowledge about art, these can become too general, in some cases preventing the student from developing or perfecting any artistic skill or technique. Among the main activities that count for this classification, we find theater, dance, painting, sculpture, crafts and music.

Leisure activities and free time.



Of course, not all activities outside the classroom have an educational purpose, since one of the favorite activities of the vast majority of children is games, especially if they are carried out outdoors and in the company of other children. . . These types of activities could be classified as one of the most important in a person's childhood, since they allow them to develop skills and abilities such as perseverance, learning to lose, teamwork, coexistence, just to name a few.



Intellectual activities

These are the kinds that stimulate the student's mind in such a way that they learn and master concepts, capabilities and skills such as strategy, planning, adaptation, data analysis, etc. Among the activities outside the classroom that appear within this classification we find chess, philosophy classes, music, etc.



Helpful Tips on Activities Outside the Classroom.

1. **Motivate** them at all times, through praise and compliments on their achievements, this encourages the child to want to continue and achieve new goals.
2. **Avoid demanding too much**, try to know your child's limits to avoid frustrating him and causing him to abandon the activity later.
3. **Try to know your student's tastes**, since it is common for parents to project their expectations onto them, imposing goals that they cannot achieve and/or promoting contempt for that activity.
4. **Don't be afraid to give up**, if the child has been practicing an activity for a long time, but doesn't like it, he may not want to give it up for fear of disappointing his parents.
5. So you must tell him at all times that if he doesn't like said activity, he is free to abandon it and start another one.

Games for learning outdoors



1. The handkerchief game

Two teams of at least 4 players each must be formed. Each member of a team must identify themselves with a number: 1,2,3... In this way, when the person carrying the handkerchief on the middle line says the number, the child from each team must run out to get the handkerchief and return. to the exit point. Eye! If a team chases and catches their opponent by touching them, they have won.

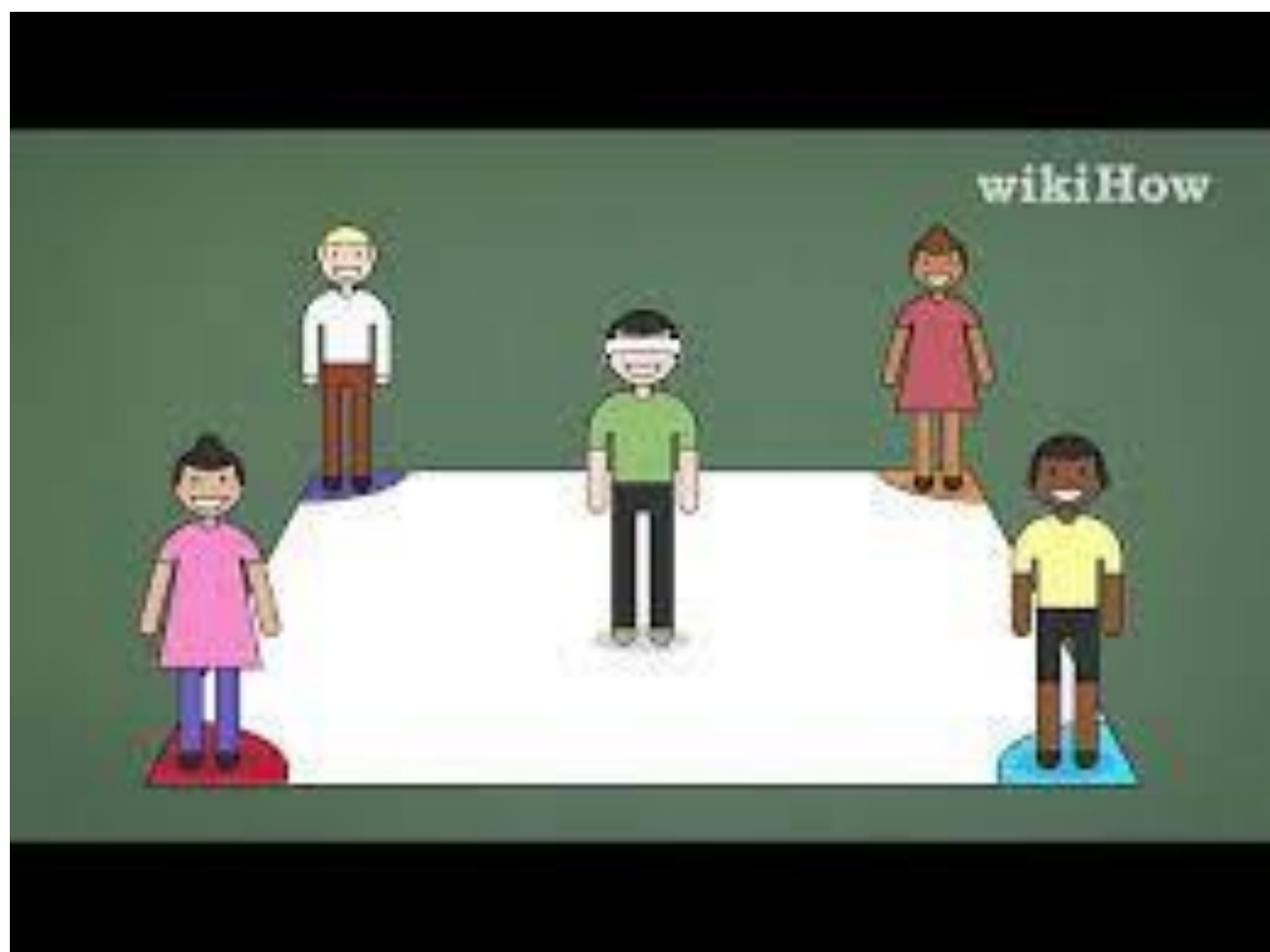


2. Brilé or dodgebal

Basically, you have to form two teams and divide a playing field (you can use backpacks or school jackets to mark the boundaries of the field). The key is for one team to throw a ball and it touches an opponent on the opposite team without touching the ground. If the ball touches an opponent, he or she will be a prisoner of the opposing team. If a teammate intercepts and blocks the ball, he is released. Of this game, one of the most fun and popular outdoor games for children, there are many variations, including circle dodgeball or dodgeball goal. In the United States there is even a competitive variant, called dodgeball.

3. Four corners

For this game we need 5 players: the 4 who occupy the "corners" and one who is in the middle. The objective is to move from one corner to another without your place being taken by the player in the middle. Whoever is left without a corner goes to the center.



4. The caterpillar race



Ideal when you have to organize many children, for example, during a birthday party in the park. Form two teams, whose components must be placed one behind the other without touching, to form the caterpillar. Put a ball or balloon between them that they won't be able to catch with their hands. The caterpillars will have to start moving towards the goal, they will have to prevent the balls or balloons from falling along the way. The team that arrives first without any ball falling wins.

5. Sack race

Raise your hand if you have never played this game! Not difficult? This is one of the most popular outdoor games for children. Prepare as many bags as there are players. A start and finish line will do the rest. Fun is guaranteed, you can even use pillowcases.



6. Three-legged race

It is a game in which children's coordination is more important than speed. Divide participants into pairs or trios. They have to be placed next to each other. Then tie one leg of each member with a scarf or jacket. Each pair or trio has to reach the finish line, walking or running. Team cooperation is essential to avoid losing balance. The first couple to reach the finish line is the winner.



7. Jump rope

Jump rope can be done by one child alone or by more than three. It is an outdoor game for children that can go from the easiest to the most complicated. The combinations and movements that can be performed during the jump are endless.



8. The hideout



One of the children is in charge of turning around and saying out loud "One, two, three, to the English hideout." When he finishes the sentence, he will turn to look and the rest of his companions will have to remain motionless. The others have to move forward as quickly as possible, but if they don't freeze when the driver turns around, they will have to go back to the starting point.

9. Gymkhana



Any element of nature can be used for this traditional game. Logs to move, a wall to jump from, a bush to cross, a rolling descent down a grass slope... The key is to have physical tests that children must overcome. The difficulty of the tests can be adapted to the age of the child. Whoever arrives first in the race wins.

10. Rope game

Those who have never played this game don't know how immensely fun it can be. Suddenly, the team becomes one man, all out to compete for victory. That sometimes it comes and other times it doesn't. You have to form two teams and distribute them to each side of the rope. In the center a handkerchief is placed that must match a line. Coordination and team strength are the keys to winning the game.



11. Limbo



With limbo you will not only get the children in shape but also have a great time. You only need a wooden bar, a mop or broom stick can work. Each of the children will have to go under the bar, which in each round will be lower and lower. The two holding the wooden stick can take turns to avoid boredom. If you play music it will be even more fun.

Reflection activities after outdoor activities.



Once located, during these moments, children begin to acquire a series of values that are internalized thanks to daily repetition. This is why, as babies, children begin to create this routine, which is, without a doubt, one of the most popular among students.

During these minutes, teachers try to promote, among other aspects, social relationships and the ability to express themselves among peers (through conversation), increased attention and concentration (thanks to reading stories or explaining the objectives of the day) but, above all, the aim is to create a channel that makes it easier for students to acquire content.

In this way, the moment of “the assembly” becomes something very important in the day-to-day life of Early Childhood Education. For the fundamental fact of helping to achieve the proposed objectives through a methodology that involves, at all times, the student and his or her needs to learn about a specific topic.

1. The orchestra.

The whole class forms a large circle. A child comes out of the place. The teacher appoints an orchestra director. At the signal of

teacher, the detective enters the gym and tries to locate the director of that

orchestra. Everyone in the circle is repeating the noises and rhythms marked by the director (claps, kicks, mouth noises, rhythmic gestures, hits on the floor, etc.) which makes it turn into a crazy orchestra. The detective will have two attempts to locate the director. Material: none.

1. Hot Ball.

All the students sit and form a large circle. The student who has the ball starts the game by saying the name of the partner to the one that is going to happen. Moments later, he rolls away. The one who receives it, he quickly talks about her feelings to pass her on again. Material: a ball.

3. THOUGHT AND ACTION

In groups there are usually people who prefer to launch into activities as soon as possible, others prefer to reflect and reflect before deciding to act.

This dynamic consists of providing discussion about the members' attitudes towards thought and action.

The group is divided into two. One subgroup defends the need to quickly take the path of action and the other argues the need to reflect before acting. From each subgroup, an expositor of their point of view is selected who, for one minute, presents their observations. Five to ten interventions are enough for the group to clarify their ideas.

4. DIALOGUE TO THE EAR

One of the techniques to demonstrate the difficulty of receiving and transmitting messages and that motivates us to seriously study this process is that of dialogue in the ear.

The group is organized in a circle or in rows. Each person transmits to his neighbor, secretly, in the ear, in a low voice, the message received also in a low voice.

The message must be short and at the end of the round, the final receiver will say out loud the message received and the initial sender of the message will say how he transmitted it. This comparison will allow the group to reflect on the communication mechanisms inside and outside the groups.

Misrepresentation is discovered and conclusions are drawn about gossip or inconveniences in delegation in the transmission of orders and information from people with limited abilities.

5. VIEW A CARD OR CHART

The purpose is almost the same as that of the rumor clinic, although perhaps the imaginative elements are more involved here.

Two people see the same card or box in front of the entire group. There are six people outside. Each of the people who saw the drawing, separately, calls one of the three that corresponds to them and explains what they saw. She is on the other. And the second to the third. Everything is done before the group.

6. MORE OR LESS PROJECTIVE TABLE

The painting is presented to the entire group. Each one makes their own description in a story that indicates what happened before, what happens now, and what will happen next.

The group's stories are read and the reasons for the differences are discussed.

The purpose is to see the diversity of perceptions and imaginative ghosts, due to diverse motivations and projections.

Note: In all of these exercises, feedback and analysis of why things happened is essential.

7. DICTATING A DRAWING

The purpose is to show experientially the difficulty of transmitting ideas that seem very clear to one, and the series of formant factors that can act on both the transmitter and the receiver.

This exercise, very simple and even fun in appearance, aims to graphically demonstrate the difficulty of communication. This difficulty is based on the fact that each one, based on their psychology, has a way of seeing things, and furthermore, when the other hears them, they have a way of understanding them. It also shows how difficult it is to express something, even if it is simple, to be understood as it is.

One sees clearly that when he speaks everyone is understanding him, and that is not the case.

The exercise has three sentences:

One dictates and the other copies on the board. Everyone in turn can draw what they notice. The one who draws cannot ask questions.

The one who dictates sees the drawing and, although the one who copies cannot ask, the one who dictates can correct, trying to ensure that the drawing represents as accurately as possible the image that is to be transmitted.

The exercise identical to the previous one is repeated again, ensuring that the other person is of a different sex, if the group is mixed, to understand the difference in perception. And it can even be done a third time. In all three cases it is dictated from the same drawing.

The final analysis will help draw conclusions, which is what is actually intended.

A simple model could be the following an oblique line

Perpendicular at the upper end, of the same length as the previous one.

Join the two ends.

Perpendicular near the first angle.

Perpendicular near the second angle, etc...

It would be the dictate of a simple house. But any type of drawing can be inverted, trying not to make it too complicated.

8. Group dialogue

Once the previous diagnosis has been made, the young people will form small groups to exchange the description of their own car, to show each other the car they have painted...

If it is considered appropriate, a change of groups may be suggested for a new exchange with different colleagues.

Plenary Session: in it the coordinator will direct a public comment on the previous dynamic. He will be able to help you with these questions:

What use have you found in this exercise?

What judgments do they deserve: convenient, necessary, beneficial?

What do you think of the different speeds at which some colleagues march?

What was the obstacle that appeared most often in the exchange? Why the frequency of that obstacle? What solutions do you suggest?

What does the question about the state of traffic make you think? Is it a difficulty, a stumbling block to move forward? Because?

Among the human values, or elements of the travel equipment, which element was most taken into account? Because?

Other possible questions that the coordinator wants to ask, or that the participants themselves ask...

Preparation of billboards: the same previous groups or new ones, will now be dedicated according to homogeneous interests, that is, those whose ideal is a certain professional career in their life, will form a group to prepare a billboard about the career they desire, with help From magazines or newspapers they will build a billboard to present in a plenary session later; In it they will be able to present the information they have about the desired career...

Plenary Session: with the coordination of a plenary moderator, they will present the posters made, and make a comment on each of them... Anyone in the audience who has something to enrich the information with is invited to do so.

Round table: it is something very timely; They will have previously invited some professors from various branches of science to have a round table with them in which they correspond to the questions that the participants want to ask. It is advisable that these questions be prepared in advance and selected.

AUTHORS THEORIES OUTDOOR EDUCATION

To substantiate and justify the importance of outdoor education we can refer to the perspectives of different authors.

Acuña (1991) points out some criteria pedagogical tools that contribute to education from physical activities in the nature:



- ◆ Of all the free time activities for children and youth, the activities

In nature they constitute the main course.

- ◆ Young people need to be part of another group outside the family.
- ◆ Furthermore, young people need to be part of another group outside the family, which meets particular constructive conditions.
- ◆ Coeducation is another important factor to develop.
- ◆ With physical activities in nature you have the opportunity to carry out tasks full of experiences and adventures, allowing greater knowledge and understanding of the environment, ultimately achieving a better quality of life for the person.
- ◆ Get closer to nature by constructively using all the possibilities it offers: development of the imagination, coexistence with others and the environment, etc.
- ◆ Boys and girls need fresh air. The current pace of life, work, school, extracurricular activities, revision... For families, on many occasions, it is difficult for us to find moments to go out and play outside, to enjoy the sun, movement and fresh air, even if it's just for a while in the park. But, of course, we must look for this space, because boys and girls need this connection to develop in a healthy way. They already spend many hours at school, sitting, indoors. Even some experts already talk about Nature Deficit Syndrome.

According to **Robertson (2017)**, learning outside the classroom is an umbrella term that encompasses any learning experience that takes place outside the classroom, whether it is adventure activities, environmental education, team activities, an international field trip, or a playground game. from college. Ultimately, this

Learning seeks to make the most of any place or space outside the four walls of the traditional classroom.

Wass (1992) states that “there are few things we do in the classroom that cannot be done better outside.” Despite this statement, outdoor experiences continue to be anecdotal and punctual in most schools, which is why we are facing what **Freire (2011)** calls the first generation that has grown up mainly sitting. This has generated an agoraphobic culture that delimits and cordons off large, open spaces out of fear.



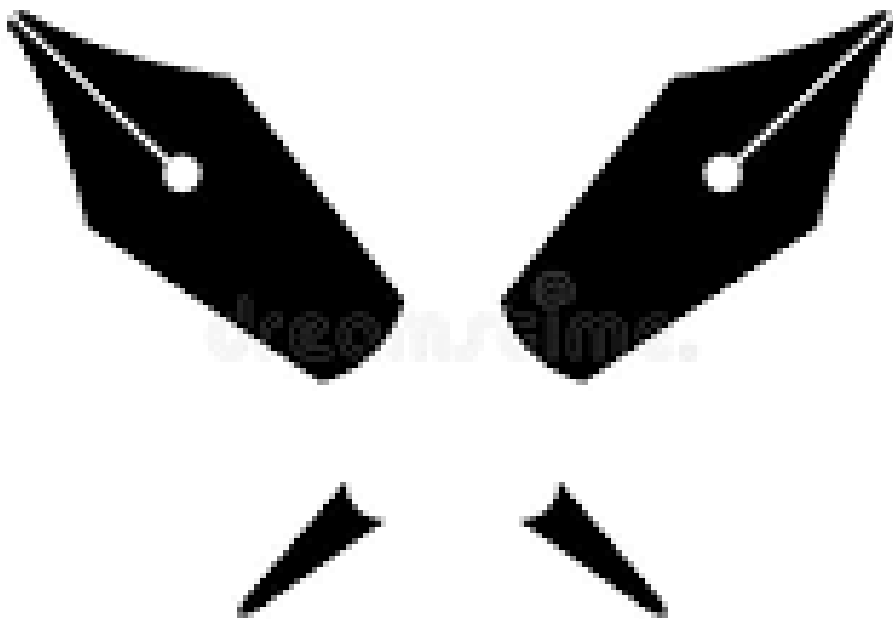
Lladós (2018) conceives the outdoors as a quality environment where boys and girls come into contact with nature and the social world. Furthermore, he considers that the environment is a space where shared experiences come together and where curiosity

It stimulates questions and generates a research process that entails learning. Therefore, we must be aware that by taking students out of the classroom we put them in contact with enriching and authentic experiences. They are likely to respond in a creative way, increase their specific skills and encourage their personal development (**Alario and Delgado, 1994**).

Teachers must be aware that the more they exercise, in your early years, movement and senses, the better your intellectual abilities will be later. Therefore, rushing to teach logical and abstract concepts breaks your vital unity with the world, and is like starting to build a house from the roof. Furthermore, going out of the classroom in search of adventures stimulates the students' imagination and creativity (**Freire, 2011**).

According to Heath and **Heath (2007)**, six principles that make up the formula for success so that events or experiences last in our memory are the following: simple, unexpected, concrete, credible, emotional and stories (**Heath and Heath, 2007**). Coincidentally, these are easy to extrapolate to learning that takes place outside the classroom, so teachers should take them into account when organizing outdoor activities.

- ◆ Simple. The resources necessary to carry out an activity outside the classroom are minimal, since they are on site.
- ◆ Unexpected. During activities outside the classroom, interruptions are common, for example: a bird lands next to the class group and captures all their attention. We should not see this as an obstacle but as endless opportunities.
- ◆ Concrete. Outside the classroom there are a large number of examples that allow learning to be linked to reality. This makes the process easier for students, since it requires a minimum degree of abstraction.
- ◆ Credible. Students explore, know and enjoy through their senses when they are outside the classroom.
- ◆ Emotional. Emotions condition the learning process and outdoor activities allow us to easily generate the capacity for wonder in students.
- ◆ Stories. Wrapping learning under a common thread helps it last over time. Items found outside the classroom are susceptible to this, and many of them even have stories of their own. There are numerous narrative discourses that flood our memory since childhood.



Conceiving the study and discovery of the environment as the central axis of teaching-learning entails a series of benefits for students, which are presented by **García (1993)**.

- Studying the environment gives students the possibility of relating the elements that make it up, since they actively learn about it.

- Its study awakens in boys and girls a powerful interest capable of contributing to the acquisition of significant learning.

- The discovery of the environment leans toward active methods and

participatory that give the students all the protagonism and stimulate in them an interest in their own learning.

- Students conceive of the environment as a motivating agent, since it is where they live their own experiences.

- The environment facilitates true interdisciplinary learning, since all areas of knowledge can be worked on from it.

- The environment encourages the investigation of this and, consequently, allows

familiarize boys and girls with the scientific method in a natural way.

- Exploring the environment provides an inexhaustible source of sensations and information that favors intellectual development and the formation of one's personality.

- Observation allows children to generate critical positions towards the relationships that are forged between the environment and man. Likewise, it allows them to develop a personal commitment.

- The discovery and exploration of the environment significantly favors the curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, investigative attitude, solidarity and cooperation of the students.