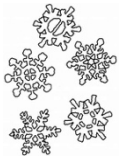

Daily tips for Playful Learning at Home

Ice, Ice baby!

Children are fascinated by ice and love to explore it. This time of year is perfect for this! You don't even have to spend that long outside to do this if it is really cold. Exploring ice helps to develop a sense of curiosity, problem solving and the senses -touch, attention and noticing skills.

There is an indoor version for other times of the year, or if you don't have ice outside

What do I need?

- Just go outside on a cold and frosty morning and see if you can find an icy puddle/patch.
- Have in mind where you have noticed ice before – during a cold snap there is a fair chance it will still be there!
- For the indoor version, you need a freezer and ice cube maker or a bag

What will your child learn from this play?

- About seasons and what makes them different
- About ice and how it forms
- How to notice things and talk about them
- Understanding "same" and "different" and noticing contrasts
- Exploring different textures, along with hot and cold

What do we do?

Outdoor version:

- Can you find any ice?
- I wonder where it came from?
- I wonder what it will feel like? Cold? Wet? Dry? Hard? Slippery?
- I wonder if we can crack it? How could we do that? What else could we try?
- I wonder what would happen if we take it inside?

If your child goes off on a different topic, or is not interested, that's fine – just follow their lead.

Indoor version:

- Make some ice together in the freezer and/or
- Take an ice cube and play with it; chat about how it feels, what happens as it melts
- Wash and freeze some grapes – try them, what are they like? How does that change as they melt?

How can you take it further?

Talk about how we make ice inside. Where would we need to put it and why? Try making ice inside and outside, if it doesn't freeze overnight I wonder why not?

Use different containers to make the ice in the freezer to create interesting shapes for example a rubber glove, balloon, yoghurt pot, ice cream tub. This could lead to talking about size & shapes but could also involve talking about which will melt first and why? What about if we put it in the fridge or in the cupboard or next to the radiator, which will melt first then?