

Key skills children strengthen through connections with nature at Natural Beginnings:

Visual/Spatial:

- ◇ Observing closely
- ◇ Noticing patterns, details, textures, colors, shapes, sizes
- ◇ Discriminating between objects/types/sizes
- ◇ Seeing, storing, retrieving visual images
- ◇ Making visual analogies (X looks like Y)
- ◇ Identifying similarities and differences
- ◇ Understanding concepts such as inside, outside, over, under, around, through...
- ◇ Reading and following maps and recognizing landmarks
- ◇ Creating maps (spatial orientation)

Construction/Engineering:

- ◇ Stacking
- ◇ Balancing
- ◇ Bridging
- ◇ Ramping
- ◇ Making tunnels
- ◇ Making lines (straight, curvy, zig-zag,...)
- ◇ Making walls
- ◇ Emptying and filling
- ◇ Supporting
- ◇ Making symmetrical
- ◇ Making enclosures

Music:

- ◇ Keeping a beat
- ◇ Matching pitch
- ◇ Creating music

Social/Interpersonal:

- ◇ Learning cooperation and teamwork
- ◇ Resolving conflicts
- ◇ Communicating desires, needs, ideas to others
- ◇ Learning to share, negotiate
- ◇ Interacting/collaborating with adults
- ◇ Sharing knowledge and expertise with others (children/teachers/parents)

Intrapersonal:

- ◇ Developing critical thinking, questioning skills, abstract thinking
- ◇ Developing a sense of ownership and responsibility to become good stewards of the environment
- ◇ Developing self confidence, pride, self-efficacy
- ◇ Taking initiative
- ◇ Solving problems
- ◇ Taking appropriate risks
- ◇ Conquering fears
- ◇ Making decisions

Science:

- ◇ Understanding seasons/life cycles
- ◇ Learning about plant life, water cycle, birds, animals, habitats, hibernation, migration, metamorphosis ...
- ◇ Formulating hypotheses
- ◇ Conducting experiments
- ◇ Learning about cause-and-effect relationships

Creative Representation:

- ◇ Making representational models (3D)
- ◇ Making representational drawings, sketches, paintings (2D)
- ◇ Pretending/role playing
- ◇ Using natural objects to represent other things (transference)

Mathematics:

- ◇ Counting
- ◇ Matching
- ◇ Recognizing shapes
- ◇ Experiencing area/volume
- ◇ Classifying
- ◇ Sequencing
- ◇ Estimating distance
- ◇ Measuring
- ◇ Recognizing symmetry

Kinesthetic/Body Awareness:

- ◇ Learning to use tools
- ◇ Developing fine motor skills
- ◇ Developing gross motor skills
- ◇ Developing balance and knowledge of stability

Language/Literacy:

- ◇ Recognizing /using letters
- ◇ Telling stories
- ◇ Reading
- ◇ Practicing letters, forming words, formatting them on a page