

The title is surrounded by several white snowflake illustrations of varying sizes and orientations, scattered across the top and sides of the page.

LITTLE GREEN EXPLORERS

BOMBECK FAMILY LEARNING CENTER

Save the date for our Recycled Art Show on **January 29 3:30-5pm**, a celebration of creativity and sustainability at the Bombeck Family Learning Center! This exciting event will feature stunning artwork created by children, classrooms, and families, all using recycled and natural materials. Guests can enjoy interactive activities, contributions from community partners like the Hanley Sustainability Institute and the Waste Free Dayton, and light hors d'oeuvres and refreshments. Mark your calendars and join us for an evening of inspiration and eco-friendly fun!

A NORDIC TRADITION

In Nordic countries like Sweden, Finland, and Denmark, a unique practice has been embraced for generations—letting babies nap outside, even in cold weather. This tradition highlights a deep belief in the benefits of fresh air, outdoor exposure, and the natural world for children's health and development. Parents in these countries dress their babies warmly and place them in prams or sleeping bags, ensuring they are safe and comfortable as they sleep outdoors. The idea is simple: outdoor play and fresh air are essential for growing children, no matter the season.

This practice is rooted in the idea that fresh air strengthens the immune system, promotes better sleep, and supports overall well-being. Even in winter months, children benefit from being outside—whether it's through a peaceful nap or engaging in active play. Nordic families understand that outdoor time encourages physical health, resilience, and a connection to nature.

Outdoor play isn't just about staying active—it's about fostering independence, building confidence, and teaching children how to interact with their environment in meaningful ways. For babies, it encourages healthy sleep patterns; for older children, it offers opportunities to explore, discover, and learn in the natural world.

The Nordic tradition teaches us that outdoor time—no matter the weather—has lasting benefits for children's physical, emotional, and cognitive development. With the right clothing and supervision, outdoor play in any season is a powerful tool for promoting a healthy lifestyle and building a lasting connection with nature. So, whether it's napping in the cold or playing in the snow, there are countless reasons to embrace the outdoors as part of your child's routine.

SNOW ART WITH NATURAL COLORS

Young children can create art on the snow using natural materials. Mix water with natural food coloring or berry juices to make eco-friendly "paint." Provide brushes or spray bottles, and let the children decorate the snow outside. This activity uses natural materials, avoids waste, and encourages outdoor play in the winter.

UPCYCLED WINTER DECORATIONS

Children can create winter-themed decorations like snowflakes or penguins using recyclables such as cardboard, bottle caps, and fabric scraps. This activity fosters creativity while reusing materials that might otherwise be thrown away.

ICE SCULPTURES WITH FOUND OBJECTS

After a nature walk, children can collect twigs, leaves, and acorns to use in ice sculptures. Layer the items in containers with water and freeze them to create colorful, nature-inspired sculptures. Children can then observe how the ice melts, combining art, science, and sustainable practices.

NATURE SOUND SHAKERS

Using small recycled containers like jars or sturdy cups, children can create sensory shakers filled with natural items such as dried beans, small pebbles, or seeds. Seal the containers securely and let children explore the different sounds the materials make, promoting sensory learning and reuse.

WINTER SCENT JARS

Create winter-themed scent jars using natural items that evoke the season. Fill small jars or recycled containers with materials like cinnamon sticks, pine needles, orange peels, cloves, vanilla beans, or peppermint leaves. Seal the jars and let children explore the different winter scents by opening them one at a time. This activity not only promotes sensory exploration but also encourages appreciation for the natural scents of winter, all while using eco-friendly, sustainable materials.



SUSTAINABLE SWAP

TIP: When hosting a party or gathering, opt for reusable plates, glasses, silverware, and cloth napkins. This not only helps the environment but also makes guests feel valued. Single-use items like paper plates and plasticware often end up in landfills or the ocean.

If you don't have enough, ask friends to bring some of theirs. Cleaning up can also be a fun group activity, giving you a chance to chat while tidying up.

**CHILDREN WHO LOVE NATURE WILL
ULTIMATELY GROW UP TO DEFEND IT**