

# KEEPING SAFE OUTDOORS

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Safety should always be our first priority. It is only when we feel safe and secure that we can get the most out of our time together outdoors. Below are some safety tips we recommend. This list is not comprehensive—it is only a starting point. It is important that you familiarize yourself with the potentially dangerous plants and animals in your area. During all nature outings, use your good judgment and common sense.

## 1. PLAN AHEAD.

- Check the weather forecast and bring the appropriate clothing.
- Bring plenty of water, snacks and sunscreen.
- Carry a First-Aid kit.

## 2. CONTACT YOUR LOCAL NATURE CENTER.

Not only are they wonderful resources for the natural history of your area, but these centers can warn you of dangerous plants and animals (such as poison ivy and rattlesnakes).

## 3. CHOOSE A LOCATION WHERE YOUR CHILD FEELS SAFE.

Start your nature outing in a location that is familiar for your child. This might be your backyard, local park, or school playground.

## 4. LOOK OVER THE AREA FOR OBSTACLES.

Before playing nature activities, you should check for:

- Low hanging branches
- Holes
- Broken glass, sharp objects, and dangerous plants and animals
- Other hazards

## 5. BE ALERT!

Prevent accidents by being fully present with your child and minimizing unnecessary distractions (cell phone use, listening to music, etc.).

\* If you plan to go on a longer day trip, here is a list of **10 Essential Items** you might consider taking with you:

[mnn.com/earth-matters/wilderness-resources/stories/what-to-pack-for-a-hike-10-essential-items](http://mnn.com/earth-matters/wilderness-resources/stories/what-to-pack-for-a-hike-10-essential-items)