



A WALK IN THE FOREST

A walk to the park is an invitation to explore nature, breathe in the fresh crisp morning air, feel the texture of a tree trunk, compare the sounds of sticks snapping, and watch the curious squirrels as they jump from limb to limb. Branches and twigs of all sizes are gathered and piled high; "This one is bigger than me!"

"I found one that still has pinecones on it."

"The squirrel wants to climb the tree with us, I think."

Along with the obvious benefits of spending time outdoors in a natural environment, the children have the opportunity to stretch their muscles both physically and cognitively. Math and science are being used when treasured branches are measured, weighed, classified, and compared. Social and emotional experiences emerge as small groups form to explore a fern covered area. Expressive and receptive language skills are witnessed while the children share observations and theories with each other. And, maybe best of all, gross locomotor and movement concepts skills can be enjoyed while running through the forest on the uneven ground, hanging from low tree branches, and navigating up a curved tree trunk.

A walk in the forest is a wonderful thing.



A lesson of perseverance, determination, and ingenuity: A brisk morning walk to the park brings us to "the forest" where the wind and rain has provided a new batch of twigs and sticks to gather, compare, and use for experimentation. Mila discovers "this one is the letter Y...I'm going to make a bow and arrow." She takes the rubber tie from her hair, "Can you put a loop on the stick?" and after a few collaborative attempts with Teacher, Mila is satisfied. She searches the forest floor for another twig. "This will work", and sets the small stick in the "V" of her bow...she pulls back on the twig, stretching the rubber hair tie, and whoosh! The arrow soars through the air. Success! "I knew it would work. That's cool!"