

LET THE WILD WIND BLOW!

Windy March Days Outside!



Play is a means of deep learning for young children. In Gaffield Children's Garden, we provide rich, open-ended Nature Play experiences. We are committed to it, knowing that these experiences will become an essential part of the child, will be transformed into intellectual pursuits, imaginative pursuits, support physical and emotional health, and promote positive regard for the Earth now and into adulthood. We encourage families to participate and replicate what we do here, in their own homes, apartments, and parks. Here is a recipe: **Let the Wild Wind Blow!**

SUPPLIES

- A windy day is essential.
- Foraged short sticks or wooden dowels. The length of the child's elbow to wrist is plenty long.
- Craft ribbon or 'silk' scarves, crepe paper streamers, tulle or spare lightweight fabrics cut into pennant or streamer shapes.
- Some kiddos may want to decorate their flags or streamers with markers.



WAYS TO PLAY

- While kites are challenging for younger children to play independently, wind wands offer a way to 'see' and play with the wind with little-to-no help from adults.
- Forage sticks.
- Tie, weave, or tape ribbons to sticks.
- Invite kiddos to catch the wild wind with their flags and wands.

EXTEND THE PLAY

- Essential joy in movement -- how about a family outdoor dance party?
- Great for make believe play. A wand can be many things.
- Offer a challenge: "Let's find the windiest spot here!"
- Open spaces and hills are really great spaces to catch the wild wind, as are beaches and city streets!

CONSIDER

- Stick play is great, adventurous play. Reasonably, many adults are cautious about stick play. Here are some helpful phrases for stick play:
 - "Sticks need space."
 - "Look around you -- do you have enough room to swing that wand around?"
 - "What's your plan for that big stick?"
- These phrases respect the child's desire for risky play *and* help them gain independence in assessing risk and safety.

