A Box can be Many Things!
Winter version!

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: Nature Play at Home: A Box can be Many Wintery Things!

SUPPLIES
- Can be played in a yard, a park, balcony, or patio.
- A cardboard box -- a big one is great, and small ones work, too.
- The app Nextdoor may be a source for very large, appliance sized cardboard boxes.
- Inspired by a favorite book, A Box Can Be Many Things by Dana Meachen Rau.

WAYS TO PLAY
- When a box lands in the household, declare it's usefulness and it's gift of opportunity: "A box can be many things! I wonder what wintery things this one will become...?"
- Move the box outdoors along with the kiddos, dressed for the weather, of course. (Yes, this can be played indoors, too.)

EXTEND THE PLAY
- In a yard, on a patio or balcony, add elements foraged from the area: leaves, sticks, rocks.
- A box can be a fox's den, a snowy owl's nest, a sled, a shelter in a storm, a ski challenge for small world play....the kiddos will have plenty of ideas!
- Read A Box Can Be Many Things by Dana Meachen Rau or watch a video of a teacher reading it online.

CONSIDER
- There is no wrong way to play.
- After introducing the concept, let the children lead the play.
- A cardboard box is classic open-ended play, perhaps, the ultimate multi-use plaything.
- Incorporate the phrase into your family lexicon, extending to many under-appreciated items: “a jar can be many things, a stick can be many things...”
- A cardboard box can be composted or recycled when the play runs it's course.