Wailea & Makena Magazine

**Keiki Corner: Summer**

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**The Benefits of Learning Outdoors:**

Research has shown that learning outdoors increases academic performance. As a teacher, I couldn’t agree more. It’s very easy to take any lesson out of the classroom. For parents, it is simple for you to do the same. We live in a climate where we have optimum weather for teaching outside, and I highly recommend taking advantage of our beautiful surroundings.

**Learning outdoors:**

\*Nurtures creativity and imagination

\*Higher levels of good health & wellbeing

\*Promotes positive learning experiences

\*Decreases ADHD and other symptoms of learning disorders

\*Caters to all types of learners

\*Builds better focus

\*Higher GPA and test scores

\*Allows children to connect learning to real world experiences

\*Reduces anxiety and stress

\*Creates respect and appreciation for our environment

What I love most about taking children outside is their excitement. My main goal is for children to develop a love for education from an early age. Being outdoors is a large part of fulfilling this goal. Go on a scavenger/letter/color/any topic *hunt*. Find items that begin or end with a certain sound. Write them out, spell them, make a story or retell it by acting it out. Let the children’s sense of wonder guide the lesson.

Take a trip to the tide pools, botanical gardens, aquarium, farm or anywhere that your keiki is eager to explore. Write, research or discuss what you find. Go outside, close your eyes, what do you hear? Have an open dialogue about the sounds and where you have heard them before. The lessons and teaching opportunities are endless.

Step outside on your lani or take advantage of all the special places to visit on this island. The learning and growth will happen organically! You do not have to make big plans. Simply follow your child’s interest and go from there.

LOVE, LEARN, ALOHA