



THE DOGWOOD DIGEST

A weekly highlight of what our forest schoolers explored, learned, played, created, & so much more!

Spring Term: Week 3 – Apr 1 – 7, 2024

What an interesting week we had! Just as we thought Spring had arrived, we got a dumping of snow that made it look like we were living in a snow globe. In the beginning of the week, we battled snow, rain and strong winds, but by the end, the sun was shining, it was beginning to warm up and we realized that all that moisture will help our forest grow.

Seeds (5-7 years)

- Built a snow tractor with some of the last packing snow this year
- Learned to 'read the wood' as we did our woodchuck job
- Explored mushroom valley and the gnome tree, and inevitably got soaked playing in the snow and water
- Swung around and explored rough play, creating safe and fair boundaries
- Collected and created bird nesting material caches to hang at home
- Told stories around the fire, digging into our imaginations
- Did our best to dry off, building resilience and helping each other to feel comfortable and safe

Sprouts (7-10 years)

- Explored birds, nests, and eggs
- Hiked to check out newly upgraded spaces in our forest at Keyhole and High Point
- Tackled the rain and very wet snow and discussed ways of keeping ourselves dryer for longer - for example, keeping our gloves in our pockets or "gloven" if we are not wearing them, staying out of puddles unless wearing rainboots and sitting on sitting pads whenever possible.
- Discussed what we already knew about birds, where they live, what they look like, where they lay their eggs and our favourite - birds that can't fly
- Painted eggs to resemble some of our favourite birds and their eggs
- Played Hawk and Bluejay out by the tipi
- Noticed a male and female Mallard duck in the pond and brainstormed names

Roots & Shoots (0-6 years)

- Adventured through the snow to High Point
- Enjoyed snack on the new sitting logs - thanks Mosquito and Otter for the addition!
- Played hide and seek
- Created faces on trees with snow
- Explored the fox den and practiced our balance as we slid down and traversed the slope
- Built a tarp fort in the hemlock forest

More Dogwood Happenings

- Welcomed staff members from Kawartha BGC to enjoy team building challenges and gain further understanding, strategies and best practices for incorporating outdoor play into programs for healthy child development
- Welcomed Kindergarteners from YRDSB and DCDSB to our forest to learn about Spring, listen to a story about Blue Jay and all her friends, and explore mud and seeds
- Mosquito and Otter upgraded our Keyhole and High Point spaces to include a meeting point for our programs
- Collected firewood from downed trees after the windstorm and brought it to our woodshed to dry

Although we had a shortened week due to Easter Monday and extreme weather concerns, there was not a lack of things to do. We explored, learned, created, and played and we appreciate every day spent outside. The variability of the weather at this time of year keeps us on our toes, but reminds us to embrace change, be flexible, develop resiliency, and remember that every day is full of wonder if we just take the time to look. We hope you had the opportunity to get outside this weekend and enjoy the sunshine!



Friendly trees reminding us to play in the snow and enjoy the last of it this season



Hiking through the snowy forest and rolling down hills



Painting eggs



Unique egg designs by everyone



Scooter playing her flute at the (inactive) fox den to say hello



The slope that gave us opportunity to slide, climb, balance, slip, slide, climb, and do it all again!



"Mancala" is a favourite forest schooler game



Enjoying snack time and a story with Mosquito in the cozy Den



We created bird nest material holders – a combination of grass, twigs, yarn, and other items birds may like for a nest



Playing hide and seek with Scooter



Enjoying snack at the new sitting area at High Point



Little “teenager” raccoons hanging out in the tree – we saw them as babies last spring



A wet, snowy forest with pops of green – a reminder that Spring is upon us



The Kawartha BGC team hiking through the cedar forest – we had stunning weather on Monday!



Working together to build the tallest tower, complete with electrical and plumbing



Our Spring field trips have started! It's always exciting welcoming new faces to the forest



The mud kitchen was a hit!



The music station was also fun to explore different sounds of wood when tapped with a branch



It was interesting to learn about how to make mud paint and then use it to create pictures



Seed exploration – sorting, patterning, counting, fine motor skills, observation skills, endless opportunities