

Spring into play with Outdoor Play Week

13 – 21 March 2010

Outdoor play can really improve children's well-being, and it's fun!

Outdoor Play Week is all about celebrating the play opportunities on offer in the fantastic green spaces across the South East. Events will be organised all over the region to help children and young people to get out and play.

Outdoor Play Week is funded by the Department of Health South East and supported by ACTIVE START – ACTIVE FAMILIES, which includes **Play England**, the **Forestry Commission**, and **Natural England**.

Something as simple as playing outdoors is one of the best things children can do, it makes them happier, healthier and gives them the opportunity to meet other children and make friends.

Children are spending less time playing outdoors than ever before, as much as 90 per cent of their time is contained indoors. The attraction of TV and computer entertainment is too much for most families to resist with the average child spending nearly five and a half hours a day glued to a screen.

For children to maintain good health an hour of moderate to vigorous physical activity is recommended every day. This level of exercise is reached for just 20-30 minutes on an average school day, compared with 1.5 hours on a day spent in the forest according to research.

So, why not hold your own Outdoor Play Week event? Download [poster1](#) and [poster2](#), and Feedback [leaf1](#), [leaf2](#), [leaf3](#) advertise your event, enjoy yourselves and get the children and young people who take part to fill in a leaf and send it back to us to hang on our Happy Tree. Your feedback will form part of a consultation, which we hope will be used to influence how public space is used regionally by families. Let us know you are taking part in the consultation by visiting [Survey Monkey Link](#). For some ideas of how to organise an event, please download our [handy hints](#) sheet.

When you have held your event and collected all your leaves in, please fill in the [event details form](#) and send it back to us, together with your leaves to:

Tracy Woodward
Play England – South East
Antrobus House
18 College Street
Petersfield
Hampshire
GU31 4AD

Outdoor Play Week in the woods!

Our partners the Forestry Commission are holding events at three of their sites across the South East.

Alice Holt Forest is holding an Outdoor Play Week event on Saturday 13 March. Activities will include games, minibeast hunting, bushcraft skills, den building, special sessions for under 5's and family orienteering. Cycle hire will be free for children. New cyclists can get started on our new beginners' cycle track and the more confident can explore the forest on the Family Cycle Trail. For further details please visit the [Alice Holt](#) website.

Bedgebury Pinetum is holding an Outdoor Play Weekend on Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 March. Children of all ages can come and join the fun, which will include den building, guided nature trails and cycling. Families are welcome to come along between 10am and 4pm, meet at the Pineatery Cafe and sign up to one of the activities. Advance booking is not required. Please visit the [Bedgebury](#) website for more information.

Wendover Woods is also holding an Outdoor Play Weekend on Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 March. Activities on the day will include camouflage games, scavenger hunts, mask making, den building, and clay puppets. There will also be the possibility of trying out family orienteering.

You will be able to register for all the activities on the day. Just go to the café and there'll be a team to welcome you. All children aged under 8

will need to be accompanied, but for a number of activities children aged 8 and over will be able to take part on their own. For more details please visit the [Wendover Woods](#) website.

The Forestry Commission are very happy for you to hold your own event at one of their sites, but please let them know first.

If you have any queries about Outdoor Play Week, please contact:

playengland-se@ncb.org.uk