

"The giving of love is an education in itself" -Eleanor Roosevelt

# Explore the Outdoors Together!

## A Story of Children Exploring Nature

by Ann Pelo, teacher  
at the Hilltop Children's Center

"That's a fuzzy plant!" Natalie exclaimed, discovering a vase of pussywillow branches in the studio.

"It's called pussywillow," I replied.

Molly, Natalie, Raven, Olivia and Melina gathered around the pussywillow branches lying on the table next to the vase. They stroked the soft buds, and caressed the sturdy branches.

"It tickles me!" Natalie laughed as she held the pussywillow up to her cheek.

"They are very soft and furry," Raven murmured.

"The branch feels kind of smooth, too," Olivia commented.

Molly, looking closely at a branch, exclaimed, "I see little tiny buds!"

Melina looked at the buds Molly pointed out. "They're fuzzy, too."

After their close-up study of the pussy willow branches, I offered the children watercolor paper and black drawing pens, inviting them to sketch the pussywillow. Eventually, the children added color to their sketches—rich browns and deep greens, silvery white and grey and black.

## Fun for Families

- Take time to notice the world together - rocks, rainbows, clouds, spider webs, etc.
- Listen to books on tape - these can be checked out from the library too!
- Read favorite books over and over again.
- Look at maps or globes together and talk about different places in the world.
- Take nature walks and collect natural items - seedpods, pinecones, rocks, feathers, etc.



- Visit an aquarium and talk with your child about all the things you see there. Many aquariums have opportunities to touch marine life.
- Visit the park - run, count the ducks, play catch, have a picnic and read a book.
- Look at a frog - up close! What do you see? Can you hop like a frog?

# October

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# Resources For Families

Book: Naturewatch: Exploring Nature with Your Children,  
by Adrienne Katz

Website: NC Department of Public Instruction  
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org>

## Tips for Families

Start a list of questions that you or your child may have about kindergarten and post these on the refrigerator. When you or your child thinks of another question, add it to the list. Take some time each week to find out the answers and talk about the questions together. Here are some sample questions that you might find on your list:

- Will I know anybody at kindergarten?
- Will my friends be there?
- May I take my blanket to kindergarten? Will I get to nap during the day?
- What will I be doing all day in kindergarten?
- Who will give me my medicine?
- What kind of toys will they have?
- Where will I go to the bathroom?
- What kind of food will they have?
- Is it okay to cry in kindergarten?
- Will I get to go outside and play?
- How will I get to school and then back home again?
- Who will be my teacher? What if I can't remember the teacher's name?

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## Cuddle Up and Read with Your Child

Tiptoe into Kindergarten  
by Jacqueline Rogers

The Listening Walk by Paul Showers

Swimmy by Leo Lionni

Anna Shares by Barbara Baker

Hop Jump by Ellen Stoll Walsh

