



## Drive to boost outdoor learning [the value of outdoor education programs]

**A training centre has been opened in Perth shire to ensure nursery staff do more teaching outdoors.**

The facility, in Wester Fowlis, is part of a Scottish Government drive to introduce more adventure into education.

It is hoped that children will take part in activities such as shelter building, camp fire cooking and chick rearing as a result.

The centre will run courses for teachers and nursery nurses.

Ministers have also set up a working party from children's organizations and the police to debate how to balance risk and safety issues with the scheme.

The centre comes amid concerns that too many young people are leaving school risk-averse and lacking initiative.

### **'Natural world'**

Pioneers in education argue the answer is a return to outdoor learning where appropriate.

The new centre was opened by Scotland's children's minister Adam Ingram who indicated that schools could be too cautious about outdoor pursuits because of an exaggerated fear of litigation.

He said: "For most of us, our fond memories of childhood are filled with exciting days playing outside with friends and exploring the world around us.

"Not only is that great fun for children, it is crucial for development physically, mentally and socially, particularly during the early years.

"Children need to learn through trial and error and allowing them to stimulate their imaginations and learn about the natural world through touch and play will help equip them with skills that last a lifetime."

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