

SMART WATERSHEDS

Weather Watch Program Activities



Children can be uncomfortable with stormy weather or significant snow events, but they love jumping in puddles of water, seeing rainbows after a storm ends, and playing in blankets of snow. Making observations about the weather and discussing Earth's climate are great ways to teach our children about science, especially since weather is something they can easily relate to and understand. Whether it's clear and sunny, or rainy and windy, weather and climate affect our lives every day.

Weather awareness is easy to achieve—weather is always changing and can be measured and observed by children of all ages. Providing them with weather information opens opportunities to discuss the importance of being on alert when there's a chance of bad weather and knowing what to do if a severe storm or natural disaster occurs.

Here are a few ways to help connect children to weather and climate:

1. Connect to Central Lake Ontario Conservation's Watershed Weather Stations

Providing a place for your kids to track each day's temperature, precipitation, humidity, and so much more is an important component of creating an awareness about the weather. Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority (CLOCA) has weather stations located throughout our watershed, some that might be near your home—at local libraries or community centres. While we use the data to support our Flood Forecasting and Warning programs and mitigate climate change, you can offer hands-on experiences to your children in collecting and recording weather data. Our weather stations collect data every 10 minutes on things like **wind direction, temperature, humidity, barometric pressure, wind chill, rain** and **snow**, as well as **solar radiation!** You can access all of our weather stations located across Durham Region from here:

<https://bit.ly/SMARTweather>



2. Share observations and fun facts about weather



Make sure you take time to discuss the data collected and their observations about the weather. Are they seeing seasonal changes in nature? Do they understand what's causing the temperature to increase or decrease? Do younger children understand the characteristics of each season? Discussing a variety of weather information provided through The Weather Channel can also spark interest in weather and science, and make learning about it more fun and hands-on.

3. Take time to watch or read the local weather forecast



Many news stations record their weather forecasts and post them online for viewers to watch. This presents the perfect opportunity to watch the local weather forecast as a family, on a regular basis, and talk about the forecast and new weather words the meteorologist uses. You can also choose to read the local weather forecast from a newspaper or weather-related website.

4. Track storms and learn about thunderstorms, tornadoes, and hurricanes



Depending on the age and learning level of your children, they can track hurricanes on a map or a piece of graph paper or you can track hurricanes as a family on a bulletin board, calendar, or computer program. There are also science experiments you can do at home that imitate a tornado's vortex on a much smaller scale, for example, like this experiment from STEAMsational, STEAM Activities for Kids: www.steamsational.com/tornado-in-a-jar/. Use this and other hands-on activities as opportunities to teach and learn about extreme weather conditions, and give them the tools and skills they'll need if a natural disaster occurs.

5. Keep a Weather Watch Journal over a 12-month period



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www.cloca.com/kidsconservation/WeatherWatchJournal

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Remember that observing and understanding weather should be fun and educational. Any activities you do should broaden children's understanding of weather and climate, and incorporate new weather words to expand their vocabulary.

Be sure to browse the websites below for online weather-related learning resources or check out your local library to provide a list of resources to consider as additional reading and learning opportunities.

- www.kaplanco.com/ii/educating-children-about-weather-climate
- www.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/universe/topic/weather-climate/
- www.teachervision.com/themes/all-kinds-weather
- www.teachengineering.org/curriculum/browse?q=weather



Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority, with funding from **RBC Tech For Nature**, is maintaining this and other weather stations around the Region of Durham, to collect data that supports our watershed-wide monitoring network, flood forecasting and warning responsibilities, and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.



Tech for Nature

