

# STATION 2

## Exploring Nature



### GOAL

Encourage children to learn about science, math and other skills by exploring the growth and development from a seed to a plant. Motivate families to explore the outdoors and to use it as a teachable moment.



### FLORIDA EARLY LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENTAL STANDARDS BY THE AGE OF 5

- Demonstrates use of large muscles for movement, position, strength and coordination
- Connects words, phrases and sentences to build ideas
- Speaks and is understood when speaking
- Demonstrates comprehension of books read aloud
- Demonstrates knowledge related to living things and their environments
- Demonstrates awareness of relationship to people, objects (living/non-living) in their environment
- Continues to engage in individual and group movement activities to express and represent thoughts, observations, imagination, feelings, experiences and knowledge

### 1. INTRODUCTIONS (5 minutes)

Introduce yourself and the MDGLR Campaign. Share about the **READY, Set, Go Miami!** initiative and what this particular workshop is about. Invite people to introduce themselves, saying who they are and the ages of kids at home.

### 2. KEY MESSAGES (5 minutes)

Ask parents how they think this connects to early literacy development. Guide them through points such as:

- Engaging children to explore nature helps them explore with their senses: touch, sight, smell, and sound.
- When we let our children help us with plants, they are learning about the concepts of life cycles and how everything has a season and a stage.
- We can reinforce math concepts outside by counting objects such as rocks, leaves, and pebbles, and also by using spatial words such as big, small, round, rectangular, etc.

### 3. ICE BREAKER (5 minutes)

Use this time to have parents and caregivers warm up to the group by sharing.

- Does your child like to play outside?
- What kind of activities do you do together outside?
- Does your child show an interest in plants or other materials such as rocks or leaves?



## 4. MATERIALS & ACTIVITIES (30 minutes)

Use the guide on the following pages to facilitate the “Exploring Nature” activities.

### Optional Materials

- Actual seeds, leaves, flowers, from garden or nearby outside area, or toys that represent activity
- Flowers
- Leaves
- Sticks
- Use a hard copy of a book or the YouTube video: [The Tiny Seed by Eric Carle](#)

Other suggested videos:

- YouTube video: [Life Cycle of Plants | Science Game and Lesson Plan](#)
- YouTube video: [Farmer Plants the Seeds | Kids Song | Song Lyrics | Nursery Rhymes | Farming](#)



Use [ecard.mdpls.org](http://ecard.mdpls.org) to get your library ecard to access ebooks, CD's, DVD's and audiobooks. There are no fees or charges.



Access the following resources for ebooks:

- Miami Dade Public Library System online books
- HOOPLA and Access 360 apps for ebooks
- NABU Press app for many books in Haitian Creole



Use YouTube video: [AAC Strategies at Home - How to use communication devices at home](#) to talk about the story, “The Tiny Seed,” to sound whenever the image of the tiny seed appears in the book.



Assistive technology and communication devices can be borrowed for free from the Step Up AT Lending Library at [faast.org/stepup](http://faast.org/stepup)



A flower shaped object can be used so your child can hold it while the story is being read (use playdough, bendable materials - Wikki Stix or pipe cleaners, a cookie cutter, or a red flower or plant on a white or black paper for contrast, etc). *This is a way to engage the sense of touch for any child and for children with visual impairments.*



For children who are not yet verbal or who are learning the English language, you can focus on hand gestures and encourage your child to express themselves through body movement such as imitating the movements that the seed goes through in the different parts of the story.



# ACTIVITIES BY AGE

## 0-12 MONTHS

Have your child explore different kinds of plants.

- Allow them to touch and feel different leaves, flowers, plants, and other outdoor elements.
- Make sure young children don't put things in their mouth, e.g. leaves which can be poisonous or seeds, which can lead to choking.

Play the rhyme from YouTube titled: ["Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?" | David Glenn](#)

## 1-3 YEARS OLD



Sing songs related to the outdoors, seeds and planting.

- YouTube video titled: [Papiyon volé](#) (Haitian Creole song)
- YouTube video titled: [Music video for kids! THE SEED Song by La Totuga](#) (English song)
- YouTube video titled: La semilla - [Biología y ciencias para niños 123 Andrés Ganador Latin Grammy - Canción de primavera](#) or [La Totuga Music \(Canciones con el nombre de tu hij@\) - "Semillas en tu corazón"](#) (Spanish songs)

### Indoors:

- Show the book and name the items on each page to help build children's vocabulary and learn about the characters.
- After hearing the story, invite your child to twirl around like the song in the YouTube video. Use your body to create the movements at different stages of the plant life cycle.

### Outdoors:

- Use a shovel or an old spoon and some dirt to let the child play in the dirt outside.
- Go on a nature walk and collect different kinds of plants outside. Narrate what you see and ask your child questions, such as:
  - Do you feel the wind on your skin?
  - What do you hear? (listen to the breeze in the trees, leaves, lawn mower, cars, etc.)
  - Pick up leaves and discuss the difference in how they feel.
  - Talk about the weather.
- Plant a seedling and watch it grow with your child by putting a cotton ball or paper towel in a clear bottle, planting beans, adding water and watching them grow. (Find an example on the YouTube video titled: [Fun Science Experiments For Kids - Growing a Bean Plant.](#))



Ask about and show examples of different colors, shapes, textures and sizes. This can also be discussed in the context of the humans in the workshop.

- Introduce the concept that plants are living things. Show your child a rock vs. a flower, a tree vs. a stone, etc. together with your child, describe the objects as best as you can.

## 3-5 YEARS OLD

Read or talk about the images in the story with your child.

- Talking about the images increases a child's comprehension and helps to build their vocabulary.
- These are the building blocks necessary for learning how to read later on.

Ask questions about the story such as:

- Tell me what you see on the page?
- What is the seed doing?
- What do you think will happen next?
- How many \_\_\_ can you count?
- Can you show me the plant?
- What do you like about this page?

Asking and answering questions is an important skill for increasing comprehension when reading.

Discuss ways that plants help us in our daily lives. For example, you can ask:

- How do plants keep us cool on a hot day?
- What are some ways to show plants that you love them?
- What are ways you take care of a plant?
- How do plants help us?
- Who has ever taken care of a plant?
- Why are plants important?
- Plants give us food like fruits and vegetables.

Discuss sequence of events in this story, such as:

- What did the tiny seed do first?
- What comes after the seed is planted?
- What happens after you water a plant?

Talk about everything that is needed to help plants grow.

- What are some things that plants need to grow?
- Why is soil and water important?
- Why is the sun important?
- Why is water important?
- How can we help plants grow?
- How does the sun help plants grow?
- How do plants change as they grow?



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## 5. DEBRIEF / GOAL SETTING (5 minutes)

Give caregivers an opportunity to reflect on what they learned and what they would like to try at home based on the workshop. Give participants the opportunity to sign up for The Children's Trust Book Club and learn about other resources in Miami-Dade County. The powerpoint for the station will have reflection questions and resources listed.

## 6. SURVEY (5 minutes)

Give caregivers the survey link (in the chat or comments of the online platform or write it on a board or paper if in person). Participants can use their phones to complete it.