

The Pushback Against Preschool

With reports coming out that [typical preschool](#) programs can actually be a detriment to a child's academic and social success, perhaps it's not surprising that parents are looking for alternatives. One recent alternative is outdoor preschool.

According to [The New York Times](#), outdoor preschool pushes back against society's trend toward obesity, electronics, and standardized academics, while promoting exercise, fresh air, and creative exploration instead. *The Times* offers the following glimpse of a Washington outdoor preschool known as Fiddleheads Forest School:

A typical day at Fiddleheads starts at 9 a.m., with Desi, Stelyn, Joshua and fellow students zipping up waterproof suits so they can climb on, and sometimes slip off, sopping-wet logs; create secret forts under dripping boughs of bright green, and examine squirming earthworms in grubby hands.

Students go on "listening walks" with their teachers during which they stand in a circle with their eyes closed and name the things they can hear, like wind and rain, when they don't talk. The children also eat lunch, sing songs and occasionally squabble under the open sky and towering trees.

Desi's mother, Judy Lackey, 34, is pleased. "It's just a magical place," she said. "In indoor spaces, teachers have planned everything. Here, you never know what you're going to see."

While the children are carefully supervised by trained teachers, the school has a choose-your-own-adventure attitude toward learning. ...

"We kind of just think and find what we want to do in our

head, and we just do it," Stelyn said.

Though Fiddleheads might be a more ideal preschool environment, many parents are discovering that the [costs of childcare](#) are outweighing the benefits of having a two-parent income. Given the costs, and the fact that some forms of preschool can actually be detrimental to children, would more parents be better off simply conducting "preschool" at home?

Image Credit: Family and the Lake House