Why Should I Play Inside Today? Activity Sheet Guide for Caregivers

"Why should I play inside today?" is an activity sheet designed for elementary school-aged children who may be experiencing air pollution from wildfire smoke but are not directly experiencing a nearby wildfire.

Changes in climate like record high temperatures and dry conditions are increasing the severity and frequency of wildfires. With longer fire seasons and larger fires, more communities are impacted by wildfires and wildfire smoke. This includes communities far from actively burning fires, as wind patterns can carry the smoke long distances.

How to use this activity sheet

Parents, educators, healthcare providers, and other caregivers can use this activity sheet alongside conversations including:

- What a wildfire is and where it is happening.
- That wildfire smoke can travel a long way through the air and can be harmful.
- What you can do to stay healthy.
- Fun things you can do indoors.
- How you and the child are feeling.

What can I do?

Check the air quality

Scan the QR code on the activity sheet or visit airnow.gov together to check your air quality. Color the flag on the sheet with what you find. Follow the guidance for outdoor activity.

Read or listen to a picture book

"Why is Coco Red?" Available from the EPA in multiple languages

Wildfire smoke and health

Wildfire smoke can impact air quality far from the source fire. Smoke exposure is particularly dangerous for children and babies as their bodies are still developing.

Learn how to protect yourself and kids if wildfire smoke is affecting your area from the NYS Children's Environmental Health Centers.

Find tips for talking to children about natural disasters from the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

Create a clean room for safer breathing

Learn how at EPA.gov

Buy or make your own air purifier

Scan the code for instructions in English or Spanish from the USC Environmental Health Centers.

en Español   in English