



# OUTGOING SOCIAL GROUP

**We all want our children to be outgoing, happy and healthy. So let's get them going outside to play and explore together! This small, semi-structured group will give children a place to explore nature, surround themselves in rich sensory experiences and have time to develop connections with peers. Each week will bring a new seasonal outdoor activity, a theme-related food experience\* and supervised free play in natural settings. Groups will be lead by a pediatric occupational therapist with years of clinical experience and assisted by qualified students and volunteers.**

\*Food experiences encourage children to explore food in a social and engaging environment to support food exploration and tolerance. NO child will be obligated to touch or eat food they do not want. Food allergies and cultural/dietary differences must be provided in writing for each child to ensure safety and respect.

## **What is it?**

- An inclusive facilitated play session to support children with differences engage in nature play and have weekly out-of-school socialization.
- Sessions are held outside at the Tendrils Therapy campus that hosts gardens, playscapes, a small creek and covered pavilion.
- All sessions occur outside in ambient temperatures with minimal protection from weather.
- Families will be provided with suggested tie-in activities for home play and exploration.
- Group size will be 6 participants to 2 adults.

## **Who is it for?**

We primarily focus on children who have challenges fitting into the “norm” of school, play, clubs or sports. Your child does NOT require any specific diagnosis or challenge to attend, but ALL children attending must be supported in understanding and tolerating differences. Some common diagnoses we work with include Autism Spectrum, ADD/ADHD, developmental delays (in learning, motor skills or both), Down's syndrome or other genetic differences, ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences), etc. We also recognize the importance of family systems and therefore welcome siblings of any child with differences.

*This group will require the following abilities:*

- ability to move independently on different surfaces (grass, gravel, sand, mulch, hills, etc). Mobility aids are welcome, but the terrain does not accommodate power chairs.

- ability to remain close to others without risking safety through running away or significant aggression.
- tolerance of a variety of sensory information (touch, smell, temperature, sounds and movement related to being outside.)
- AAC users are welcome, but we are restricted to English speaking instruction with minimal sign language.
- Medically stable without significant medical equipment or support needed for 2 hour duration
- Ability to toilet independently or willing to discuss personal care assistance accommodations on case by case basis.

**We strive to be able to support many different abilities in play. We hope to provide other opportunities for children who need more significant assistance in their environments. We are always open to suggestions!**