



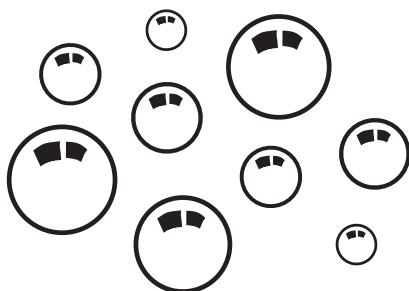
Messy Play

What is it?

Messy Play is a great way for children to explore the world around them with their senses—a natural and important way for young children to learn. It also helps them practice using their fine motor skills to manipulate and control tools and materials.

Tips and Activities

- A *Mud Kitchen* is a great place for children to get the sensory, fine motor and immune system health benefits of mud play! Use clean potting soil and water for your child to mix and make mud food “meals”. Empty boxes can be a table or stove, and household or toy kitchen utensils and dishes can be used to prepare and serve. Add rocks, sticks, or dried flowers for children to complete their creations.
- *Bubbles* are a super activity for all ages! Slowly mix a tablespoon of dish soap into a cup of warm water and use cookie cutters or colanders as bubble wands. Infants and toddlers who can’t blow bubbles yet can still have fun and practice their hand eye coordination by popping the bubbles as they fly by!
- *Combine water and sidewalk chalk!* Let your child pick out a few different colors. Together, fill small containers with water and stir with the chalk, then “paint” the sidewalk or paper. Fill spray bottles with water and spray onto the chalk drawings to see what happens. Encourage your child to experiment with the wet and dry chalk and talk about how it looks and feels different.



Read All About It

Birth – 3: *Little Quacks Bath Book* by Lauren Thompson

Birth – 3: *A Very First Picture Book: Messy*

by Nicola Tuxworth

3 – 5: *I’m a Dirty Dinosaur* by Janeen Brian & Ann James

3 – 5: *Beautiful Oops!* by Barney Saltzberg

5 – 7: *A Perfect Day for Digging* by Cari Best

5 – 7: *Eric & Julieta: Desastre en la cocina/A Mess in the Kitchen* by Isabel Muñoz

More Information

- <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/blog/toddlers-guide-sensory-activities-home>
- TRUCE Family Play Plans – Mud
http://www.truceteachers.org/uploads/1/5/5/7/15571834/mud_final_final.pdf
- <http://www.communityplaythings.com/resources/articles/2016/the-benefits-of-mud-play>
- Dirt Dough recipe
<http://www.growingajeweledrose.com/2013/02/recipe-for-play-clean-mud.html>
- Boston Children’s Museum website:
www.school-readiness.org

Community Connections

Visit your local libraries, museums, zoos, parks, and other community and cultural organizations for new things to see, learn, and discover!

- Many locations offer free or discounted admission. Visit their websites for more information.
- *Free Fun Fridays* offer free admission to cultural venues across Massachusetts. For more information, go to: <http://www.highlandstreet.org/programs/free-fun-Fridays>



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