



Mud Pies – Provide the children with ingredients like dried pasta, lentils, oatmeal or rice (these can be reused from other sensory containers that have seen better days and are almost ready to be thrown out – as to not waste food). Also, old spices (in shaker containers) that are past their prime would make a great addition. Offer the children pie plates, cookie cutters, spatulas, spoons and bowls to hold their pies. If you are creating the mud a good ratio is 1-part potting soil and 1 part sand mixed with as much water as the children like to get a certain consistency. Once the pies have been played out suggest the children turn their creations into mud soup. Allowing the children to have their own water source from a camping water jug with an off and on spout really adds to the excitement and cuts down on wasted water and soaked clothes as opposed to using a hose.



Painting with Mud – You will need; soft mud, powdered tempura paint (food coloring, regular Tempura paint can also work), thick cardstock paper, containers for the paint, paint brushes, water and dish soap. Start by adding a large scoop of mud to each container and adding about 1 to 2 tablespoons of Tempura paint. Next, add a small amount of water and a squirt of dish soap (this is optional but, it will help the mud paint spread easier on paper and helps keep clothing stain free). Invite the children to create and explore the mud paint, in addition to the paintbrushes you could also provide potato mashers, whisks, spatulas or sponges.



Muddy Car Activity – Inspire some messy fun by providing the children with a container of mud (in the picture shown above they have used a wagon and filled it with mud but, any large elevated container will work), a Hot Wheels ramp (or any flat item that a car could roll down – a 2x4 piece of wood or recycled plastic pieces), cars and a shallow Rubbermaid style container with warm soapy water. Connect the ramp to the mud container and the soapy water. Next, invite the children to dunk their cars in the mud and let the messy fun begin!! This is a simple but, awesome sensory activity that changes every time a muddy car is rolled down the ramp.

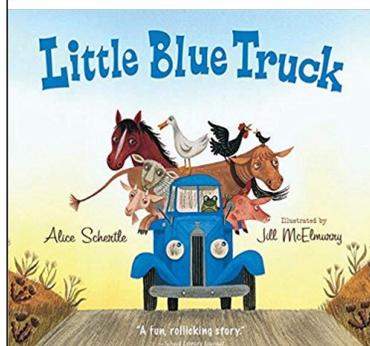
June 2019 – **International Mud Day** is celebrated every year on June 29th. This day began in 2009 when two leaders in Early Childhood Education – Gillian McAuliffe and Bishnu Bhatta met at a World Forum event (an on-going global exchange of ideas on ways to encourage quality services for young children in diverse settings) and started brainstorming ways to encourage feelings of community and appreciation for the world around us. Regardless of age, race and religion, covered in mud, we all look the same! The best way to celebrate Mud Day is to get dirty! Inform parents that their children will be getting dirty to allow for extra clothing and other arrangements to be made.

Oobleck “Mud” Play – You will need; Cornstarch, water, unsweetened cocoa powder, a large flat container, small figurines like dinosaurs, bugs, cars or farm animals. Oobleck is created by mixing 1 cup of cornstarch with ½ cup of water and you can add a few Tablespoons of cocoa powder to create the mud color. Oobleck is an awesome sensory item. When mixed in the right proportions, it’s solid when you scoop it up and squeeze it, but turns to liquid and “melts away” when you open your hands! To get the right consistency you may have to add a little extra water if it feels too solid or a little extra cornstarch if it is too runny. Once the muddy fun is done have the children help clean up by giving the toys a bath or car wash. (*Oobleck is taste safe but, not recommended for eating).



Benefits of Mud Play “Recent studies report that children who spend the better part of their day playing indoors (rather than outside in the dirt and sunshine), in the company of technology, have a increased risk of obesity, vitamin D deficiency, depression and also attention deficit hyper-activity disorder. In fact, in the last twenty years with the dramatic increase of media entertainment and electronic games, childhood obesity has more than doubled and prescriptions for anti-depressants and ADHD medications in pediatric patients has risen sharply. **Researchers now recommend playing in the dirt as a way to boost the body’s immune system, that digging in the dirt (and even ingesting a little bit of it) actually can help decrease a child’s risk of allergies and asthma.** The basis for this stems from the idea that limiting child’s play to primarily the indoors limits their exposure to natural organisms that build a healthy and strong immune system. That limitation causes a greater risk of autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis and type-1 diabetes in adulthood.” stayathomeeducator.com/the-dirt-on-dirt-how-getting-dirty-makes-for-healthy-kids/

Create a Mud Kitchen – A “mud kitchen” can be created using recycled items such as old sinks, wash basins or large bowls. They are often off the ground constructed on pallets; another option could be using a planter box. A large rectangular planter with drainage holes in the bottom (good idea to not have it too close to the house and to have access all the way around it- so there’s room for everyone) , clean soil (without chemicals or debris) and access to water is all that’s needed and when mud play is done, have the children help you plant some veggies. A Mud Kitchen is a great jumping off point for **Dramatic Play**, the children can imagine a restaurant, a bakery, a tea party and so much more.



Check out these exciting muddy books

“Little Blue Truck”

By Alice Schertle

“Harry the Dirty Dog”

By Gene Zion

“Dirt Boy”

By Erik Jon Slingerup

“Mud”

By Mary Lyn Ray

“Diary of a worm

By Doreen Cronin & Harry Bliss

“Pigs in the Mud, in the

By Lynn Plourde

Middle of the Rud”