

The Science of Mucky Play

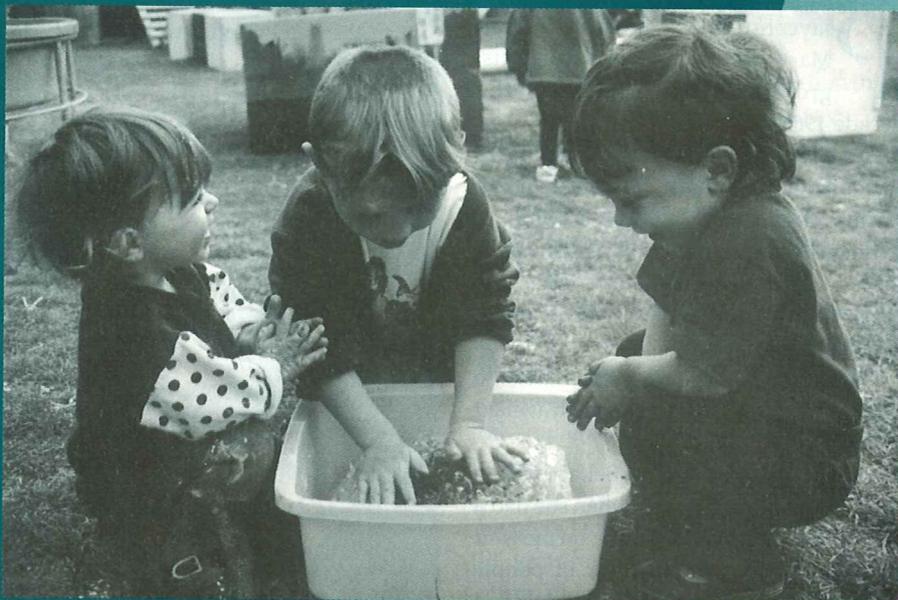
Using the Senses

Opportunities to explore science in mucky play is endless and fun.

Don't be afraid to experiment.

To See

- Add things to water e.g. drops of colouring, sand, oil, gravel, What happens? Does it dissolve? Does it sink? Try filtering the substances.
- Dissolve washing powder in hot water - leave in a warm place and watch the crystals grow.
- Using paint try colour mixing. Mix blue and yellow to get?(chemistry) Or coloured ice cubes for drawing for a marbling effect.
- Splatter paint onto different materials such as cloth, paper, plastic. What absorbs, what spreads - what drips?
- Erosion - Make a sand, clay, or dirt castle on a sloping tray. Simulate rain using a tin with holes in it. What happens when the castles are rained on. Do rivers run down the sides of the hills? Do they get deeper? Where does the sand, clay dirt go?



Frozen Ice with food colouring.

- When baking, talk about ingredients "Let's add baking powder and see what happens" A good example for reactions between substances is Hokey Pokey (Edmonds cook book).

To Feel

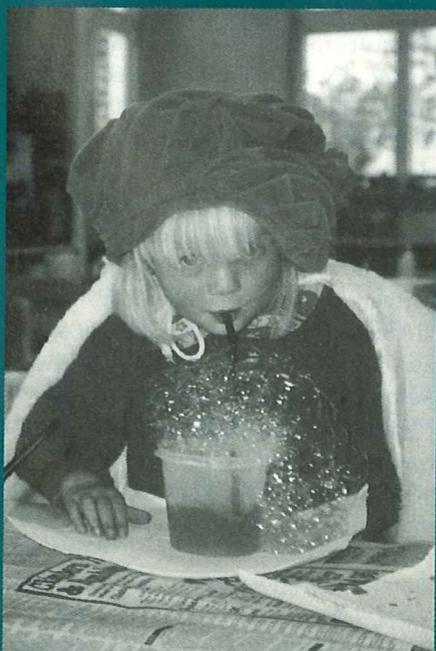
- Gloop or cornflour slime- Drip through hands into a bowl. Can you catch it? How does gravity work? Or stretch it with a partner. What happens when you apply force with your hands?
- Walk barefoot over sand, mud, slime, grass, sandpaper. What sensations are there - warmer, rougher, slimy?
- For scientific messy play without the muck, try hiding magnetic and non magnetic objects under grass clippings, straw, leaves, for the children to find with magnets. Which items attract to the magnet - which don't?
- Make your own puddle, jump in it, play with it and afterwards create a line around at water level - return later to see if it is still the same size - evaporation! How, why does it happen?
- Pressure - Siphon water from one container to another. Punch holes of

varying sizes in the connecting tube. Watch and feel the pressure on your hands, feet, face. What causes pressure? Has water, pressure because of its weight?

To smell, to taste, to hear

- Use essences in playdough.
- Develop a herb garden. You can cut up herbs and make herb bread. Or rub in your hands. What does it smell like - any familiar smells. Do the herbs smell stronger when rubbed? (Make sure the herbs are okay to eat)
- Ice cubes are great to feel and taste. Observe what happens to the shape, colour, of ice as it melts in your hands.
- Bang objects under water, above water - what is the difference in sound. Play pat-a-cake with fingerpaint. What are the sounds you hear? Can you hear bubbles pop? Bubbles need air to grow.
- Use the language of science with mucky play - siphon, saturated, moisture, pressure, soluble, freeze, dissolve, explore, liquid, mass, absorbent

*Chrissy Cooke
Far North Assn*



RICHMOND PLAYCENTRE SOUTHLAND ASSN

FRANKTON PLAYCENTRE QUEENSTOWN