Messy Play

Children love to get mucky, covered in paint and stuff when playing, we call this messy play. Messy play can help develop children's senses as they explore the different textures of materials. Messy play also helps develop creativity and imagination. Remember to dress for mess... old t-shirts, aprons and cover floors with newspapers. Some of these recipes have flour in them, but please don't use flour if you don't have plenty.

Water play

What you need:

- Water
- Toys
- Basin/deep baking tray
- Variety of plastic bottles, containers, funnels, sieves, jugs
- Food colouring – just a few drops can add interest
- Bubbles can add interest (but if skin is sensitive use a little bubble bath rather than washing up liquid)

What to do:

Experiment with volume and pouring and filling and emptying containers. Add things into the water and see if they sink or float. Make up stories with toys in the water.

Leaf printing

What you need:

- Leaves – try to get different shapes and sizes
- Paper
- Poster paint in various colours

What to do:

Paint the leaves then press the painted side down on paper and lift off gently.

Gloop

What you need:

- 2 cups cornflour
- Water
- Food colouring – try mixing the colours together

What to do:

Add water to the cornflour until it becomes semi firm. You will now be able to mould this in your hands but when you stop moulding this will become runny. Add more water to make it runnier and gooier. You may wish to do this over a basin!

Homemade play dough

What you need:

- 2 cups of plain flour
- 2 cups of water
- 1 cup of salt
- 2 tablespoons of cream of tartar
- Food colouring

What to do:

Mix together in a saucepan and bring to boil. Cook for a further two minutes until it forms a solid lump and allow to cool. Knead on a floured surface. Store in an airtight container or cling film. This should last for a few weeks. Why not try making fairy dough by adding some glitter.

Sponge painting

What you need:

- Sponges (cut into various sizes and shapes)
- Paint
- Paper

What to do:

Dip the sponges in the paint and print onto the paper to make your own colourful designs.

Bubble art

What you need:

- Bubble mixture:
  ½ cup washing up liquid
  ½ cup water
- Paint or powder paint
- Straw
- Thin paper

What to do:

Add paint to the bubble mixture, blow through a straw and once you have a bubble, gently cover with thin paper and you will have a bubble painting.

More ideas at: **www.playscotland.org/parents-families/messy-play**