

LOOSE PARTS IN THE MONTESSORI ENVIRONMENT

INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

“LOOSE PARTS ARE OPEN-ENDED MATERIALS SUCH AS CLAY, BLOCKS, ROCKS THAT CHILDREN CAN ADAPT, MOVE, DESIGN AND TRANSFORM IN MANY WAYS. THE MORE FLEXIBILITY A MATERIAL OR SPACE HAS, THE MORE OPPORTUNITIES THESE VARIABLES HAVE FOR CHILDREN’S CREATIVE EXPERIMENTATION”

SIMON NICHOLSON

What are
Loose Parts?

Loose parts are important to children's play because they encourage imagination, creativity, and play in children in ways that traditional toys do not.

Synthetic Loose Parts

- Tires
- Rope
- Fabric
- Buckets
- Pallets
- Crates
- Baskets
- Plastic Tubing
- Cardboard Boxes
- Tarps
- Flower Pots
- Ice Cube Trays
- Kitchen Items & Utensils
- Spools
- Plastic Bottles

Natural Loose Parts

- Logs
- Leaves
- Stones
- Pinecones
- Sand
- Sticks
- Rocks
- Shells
- Flowers
- Stumps
- Wooden Pieces or Blocks
- Hay/Straw Bales
- Water
- Seeds/Nuts
- Grass

Reflect:

- In which areas of the classroom have you added loose parts?
- What take-out loose parts are available outdoors?
- How are the children using the materials? Based on your observations, what materials can you add to expand their interests?

Think about:

- How can you introduce more loose parts into outdoor play and free expression?
- How can you incorporate more loose parts into each area of Montessori?
- How can the children be involved in the process of bringing in material?

Consider:

- Adding loose parts that support all seven senses, including vestibular (sense of balance) and proprioceptive (awareness of body's position)
- Adding loose parts to promote active, adventurous play
- Adding loose parts that represent cultural diversity





The Halton Resource Connection

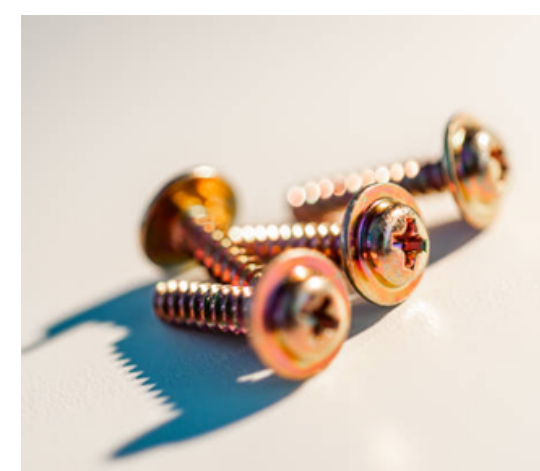
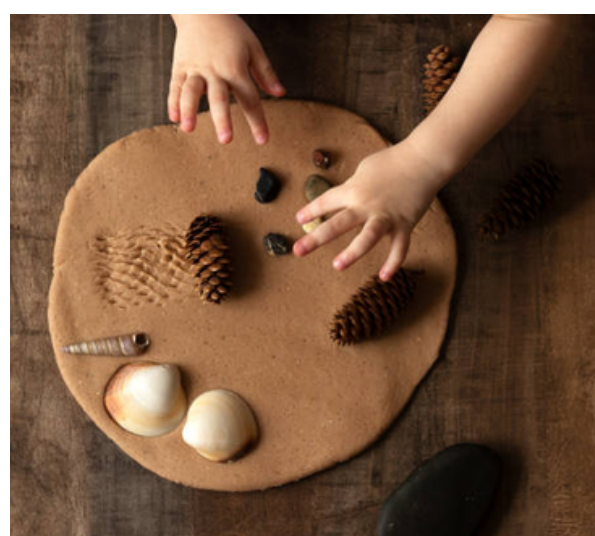
LEARNING OUTDOORS WITH LOOSE PARTS

INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

Some Examples of Montessori Activities with loose parts

- Rubber Bands with Different Shapes: Bin# 12504
- Transferring activities: Bins# 12500, #12501, #11520
- Metal ring connectors: Bin# 11806
- Painting Rocks: Bin# 12564
- Free Expression with Granite: Bin# 11875
- Cutting String: Bin# 11822
- Mystery Bag: Bin# 12557
- Sensory sorting: Bin# 969
- Tracing Sea Shells: Bin# 11505
- Rubber Bands with Different Shapes: Bin# 12504

Check the Montessori section for Activities with loose parts



Loose parts foster all four foundations of **How Does Learning Happen Pedagogy**

"A foundation principle of How Does Learning Happen is that children thrive in indoor and outdoor spaces that invite them to investigate, imagine, think, create, solve problems and make meaning from their experiences - especially when the spaces contain interesting and complex open-ended materials that children can use in many ways."
(HDLH 2014 Page.20)

Additional Resources



Click on the image or visit thrc.ca to explore THRC Podcast:
Episode 4: Resources, Loose Parts and Blocks, Oh My!
Episode 6: Exploring the Outdoors with Rusty Keeler

THRC'S RESOURCE LIBRARY HAS A WIDE VARIETY OF RESOURCES AND LOOSE PARTS TO BORROW AND/OR PURCHASE. **MAKE AN APPOINTMENT** TO BOOK AN ON SITE VISIT OR CURBSIDE SUPPORT.

Health and Safety Recommendations for Natural Materials and Loose Parts in Childcare Settings

Loose Parts Outside for Adventurous Play



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