

MUD PLAY

INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION SHEET

In 2009 at the World Forum for Early Childhood Care and Education in Belfast the idea of International Mud Day had its beginnings. Two members of the Nature Action Collaborative for Children, Gillian McAuliffe from Western Australia and Bishnu Bhatta from Nepal, discussed the challenges children faced when playing in mud in each other's context.

- [World Forum Foundation](#)

HOW TO SUPPORT MUD PLAY IN YOUR PROGRAM



Why is Mud Important?

- Supports learning, it is a great way to relax and express creativity.
- It is good for physical and emotional health.
- It build's the immune system by introducing friendly bacteria in the body- gut health.
- It allows children to connect and interact with the natural world.
- It develops tactile skills.
- It gets children away from screens and into the fresh air and sunlight and encourages exercise.

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Activities in outdoor spaces that are designed to inspire investigation with bodies, senses and minds improve children's physical health and emotional well-being and enhance their capabilities for self-regulation, creative problem solving and communication...

HDLH Pg. 36

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International
Mud Day is
Celebrated on
June 29th
every year



Steps for Successful Mud Play

1) Have conversations with the children **and families** about Mud Day, this will support everyone to feel more comfortable and will help them to understand the benefit's of supporting children's exploration of soil/mud.



2) **Have a change of clothes** (even for the educators) or develop a plan to support children to freely explore mud and messy materials.

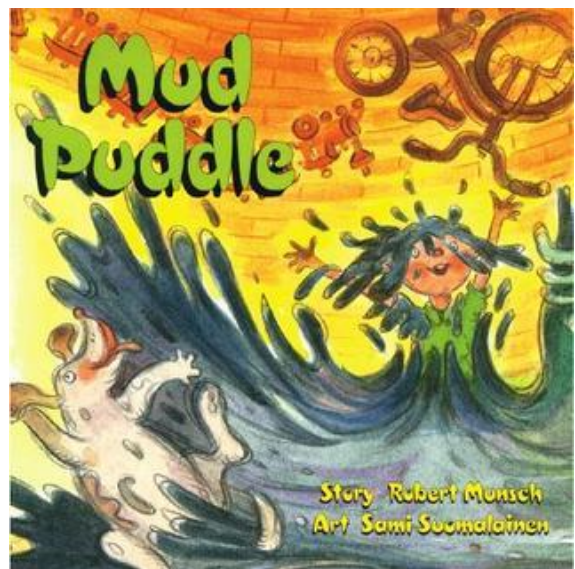


3) **Have a space to wash off outside.** Set up a hose/ cloth and bucket area so you can get the majority of the mud off before going back inside.



4) Have **tools and other materials** to use and explore the mud with.

5) **Give time.** Block out the whole morning so there is time for the children to explore and play.



6) **Have extra towels** to help with the clean up, and even extra clothes for the families who might forget.

7) **HAVE FUN!** Get in there with the children and get messy.

Reading a book like “Mud Puddle” by Robert Munsch is a great way to introduce the idea of mud play and that it's ok to get messy.



Take time to think about how to support the children who might be opposed to getting muddy, or avoid sensory experiences for various reasons. How can you support all children in experiencing Mud Day?





Mud Day Inspirations



Mud Painting: Bring out the easels, paint brushes and use cups of mud instead of paint. See if there are different colours/ shades of mud the children can create.

Field of Mud: Go big and go for it!



Mud Face Painting: Use cotton balls/ cotton swabs to apply mud. Have hand held mirrors available for the children to see the results and/or use to apply the mud themselves.



Barefoot Walk: Using a large roll of paper, lay a long sheet on the ground. Children, and educators, dip their feet in mud (made in a tub or another similar container), and walk over the paper.

Mud Splatter Painting: Throw small mud-balls at paper hung on a wall or fence, or throw mud-balls in the air to land on paper laying on the ground.

Mud Texture Table: Spread mud on a tabletop and make designs using your hands or other tools.

Dirt Shirts: Soil can be used as a natural dye. Use old white (or light coloured t-shirts) and follow traditions tie-dyeing directions.

Mud Bricks: Mix soil with water and straw, then pour it into recycled containers to use as molds. Let them dry in the sun. When the bricks are dry you can use them to build with.

Ideas from: Exchange Reflections, Kids & Soil: A Perfect Match





Resource Bins:

#2172- Cooking in a Mud Kitchen

#3027- Garden Centre

#2171- Mud Kitchen with Literacy Resources



THRC Resource Library has a variety of resources to support your Mud Play Journey.

Books:

#11377- Outdoor and Nature Play in Early Childhood Education

#633- Nature's Playground

#1300- Dirty Teaching: A Beginner's Guide to Learning Outdoors

#11422- Exploring Water with Young Children

Website:

[World Forum](#)

[Foundation](#)- Mud Day

Rusty Keeler Podcast:

Stream [Episode 6: Exploring the Outdoors with Rusty Keeler](#) by THRC Table Talks

Outside Play Website:

This will take you through a guided journey of 3 different scenarios that can support in thinking about your approach to risky play.

There are also other tools to help you decide and develop a personalized plan to support in making changes in the program.

[Outsideplay.org](#)

