

Sensory and messy play essay



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While we all process information through our five senses, babies and toddlers rely on their sense of touch – and often taste – to gain insight into the world around them. As their language skills aren't as developed young children learn about things by exploring not by asking. Benefits of sensory/messy play:

- Messy play offers children a chance for real self-expression because there is no “right” answer. Materials can be worked and reworked endlessly, meaning a child can create something and recreate it over and over.

Unlike painting a picture – which requires a new blank page if you change your mind- sensory play is ever changing and can be reinvented.

- Since messy play is not about a finished product, children who may not be as outgoing as others can build confidence in these activities.
- Messy play is loved by children; even if they can't talk with one another, or are just meeting for the first time. Playing with sensory materials in groups creates bonding as children discover aspects of the material together, no language required! Its completely inclusive – can be delivered to any child or young person and breaks down barriers.
- Children gain a greater understanding of cause and effect – why doesn't the bubble wrap pop when I stand on it? Why does the cornflour goop become solid when I roll it between my hands?
- Provides risk benefits – messy sensory play provides opportunities that the child may not have experienced before which challenges their ideas and comfort zones however the benefits outweigh the risk. Sensory play

encourages fine-motor skills and coordination whether they are working with the material alone (such as play dough) or adding objects to the material, such as spoons and cups to dried rice or running a car through shaving cream.

- It is an affordable and achievable play activity for families anything can become an opportunity.
- Sensory play responds to children's play needs to engage fully in the world around them. All the senses are stimulated including imagination.