

Play is **healing**. Play is **learning**. Play makes us **happy**.

Let's have a summer of play.



playYQR.ca/summerofplay

Play Sparks, Vol. 4

Water and mud



Water and mud are natural materials that are free and readily available, but be prepared to get messy!

- Mix up some mud with dirt and water. You can paint with the mud using a brush or your hands ---putting handprints on the sidewalk or “painting” a fence. You can also use a stick to draw designs in the mud.
- Use a stick or your finger, dip it into mud and write words on a sidewalk, fence, or piece of paper.
- Mud can be mixed and shaped into cookies, balls, bricks, pies, cupcakes, worms, and so on depending on where your imagination takes you. Sticks, rocks, weeds, and leaves can be used to decorate. Add cake pans, muffin tins, spoons, bowls, rocks, and sticks for more possibilities. If you add more water, you can make mud stew with weeds. You can make a mud kitchen if you have space.

- Mud sculptures or bricks are possible when the mud is a similar consistency to clay. Use the bricks to build structures.
- Dig a “river” in the dirt. Add water and watch how it flows. You might put objects in the path of the river to create a dam.
- Water can be used to paint designs on sidewalks, decks, or other surfaces. You can use a regular paintbrush, or try using materials like pinecones or a stick as a paint brush.
- Use containers such as milk cartons to make large blocks of ice. Add food colouring to each carton before you freeze them. When you peel away the milk carton, you’ll have beautifully coloured blocks you can use for building ice sculptures or structures.
- When you make your blocks of ice, try adding objects like toy animals before putting them in the freezer. The children can try and free them by smashing the ice or can just watch them melt out.
- A plastic bin or dishpan can be filled with water or ice cubes and used for play. You can add materials like rocks, toy sea life, and other objects.
- Find a variety of materials (sticks, toys, corks, coins, keys, ricks, etc.) and fill a bin with water. Test them one by one to see if they sink or float. Make predictions before placing each object in the water.
- Young children also enjoy filling containers with water and then dumping it out. You can add kitchen implements like funnels, different sizes of measuring cups, colanders, and whisks to your homemade water table. Add bubbles if you like.
- If you have two bins or dishpans, try filling one with water and one with ice cubes. Young children can use a spoon or scoop to move the ice cubes into the water. They can watch what happens to the ice when placed in water.
- Use materials you have around your home to make paths for water (or muddy water) to travel through--eaves troughs, pool noodles, or pipes.
- Using a straw, blow water around on a piece of colored construction paper.
- You could have a mud spa. Cover areas of skin with wet mud and watch it dry, then rinse it off.

Picture Books to Read Together

Muddle Puddle by Robert Munch

In the Rain by Elizabeth Spurr

Mud Tacos by Mario Lopez and Marissa Lopez

Puddles by Jonathan London

In the Small, Small Pond by Denise Fleming

Agua, Agua/Water, Little Water by Jorge Tetl Argueta