

Early Childhood Curriculum Ideas

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Mathematics

Water Play

Volcanos & More

Music Ideas

Tried & True Recipes

More On Bubbles

Christmas

Christmas Recipes

Water Play

Water play is an enjoyable and soothing activity where children can learn alone or alongside others.

Water can be used in many different ways to enhance your child's learning.

WHERE CAN YOU HAVE WATER?

Water play works well both inside and outside.

Inside, you could have it in a water trough with plastic sheet down to prevent slipping over. In the family area you could have a bowel for washing dishes, a baby's bath for washing the dolls.

Outside, you could have it in the sandpit, in a trough, or some bowels on a table.

Here we are at Gore Playcentre in the sandpit having fun!



Wherever you have the water: make sure that there is enough equipment and space for all the children and, of course, supervise the children.

WHAT CAN YOU ADD TO THE WATER?

- Plastic 'water' animals like frogs, fish etc(Great to encourage children's imagination)
- Stones, shells and natural resources(Great for floating/sinking)
- Plastic, wood or metal items e.g. jugs, sieves, bottles, beaters, sponges, funnels, cups, jugs, bowels and spoons.
- Bubbles are always fun, so is food colouring.

EXTENDING WATER PLAY

- Freeze some water and watch the ice melt, or put them in cups of water and watch them float. You could add different colours to the ice blocks.
- Fill some cut-off milk containers with water and freeze them. Use them to make ice castles. Spray the castle with water and watch as it melts.
- Mix water and dirt/sand in a shallow tray to make mud. Provide children with tools to make patterns and drawings in the mud i.e. spoons, sticks etc.
- Provide a variety of objects for floating and sinking.
- Your children will enjoy using water to clean things like: bathing dolls, washing dolls clothes, washing dishes.
- Painting with water. Put water in a bucket and provide a paint brush and the children can paint concrete, fences etc. On a hot day watch as the water dries up.
- You could have a tea party with cups and teapots etc. Great for pouring skills and mathematical concepts like full and empty.

ADULTS ROLE

- Talk to the children about what is happening:
 - "What has happened to the water?"
 - "What does it feel like?"
 - "I wonder what would happen if you ...".
 Also use words like: full/empty, sink/float, heavy/light, and wet/dry. (Literacy and numeracy)
- Provide enough space and equipment for all children.
- Encourage children to investigate and explore water and other materials.
- Listen to the children and extend on their interests.
- Supervision is important for safety.

WHAT ARE CHILDREN LEARNING?

Water play helps children to develop the following skills:

- Hand-eye coordination.
- Exploring early mathematical concepts.
- Social skills turn taking, and working in a group.
- Language skills.
- Experimenting with a variety of materials and making links to their world.

**Water play relates to all 5 Strands in [Te Whariki \(Early Childhood Curriculum\)](#):
Well-being, Belonging, Contribution, Communication, and Exploration.**