

Messy Play

over 2's



Produced by Redbridge
Early Years Childcare
Improvement Team

Families at Play

Families at Play is a series of information leaflets that offer enjoyable and exciting activities for you and your child to do together.

Other leaflets available in the Families at Play series:

Physical Activity over 2's

Physical Activity under 2's

Messy Play over 2's

Messy Play under 2's

Water Play over 2's

Water Play under 2's

Sound and Music over 2's

Sound and Music under 2's

Mark Making over 2's

Mark Making under 2's

Playdough over 2's

Exploring under 2's

Small World over 2's

Pretend Play over 2's

London Borough of
Redbridge 

Even more ideas

Mix soap flakes with boiling water and leave in a bowl over night ready for your child to play with the following day, **when cool**. This makes lovely slime (you could add food colour or glitter)

Allow your child to explore messy activities while being creative such as painting, printing, collage and model making. The process of exploring and manipulating materials, gradually gaining control is as important as what they make.



Why is messy play so important?

Messy play is a natural part of learning. Children are compelled to explore their world by touching, smelling and tasting. It is therefore very important that they are able to do this in a relaxed and positive atmosphere.

Find a place that you don't mind getting messy, or use a cover such as old newspapers or plastic sheeting. You and your child should wear washable or old clothes so that you can both enjoy the activities and have fun.

Always check for allergies and choking hazards.



How will this help my child?

By exploring textures, tastes and smells, they will:

Build confidence to try new experiences and explore creatively.

Learn to control the muscles in their hands and fingers for future writing skills.

Learn new words and develop communication as you play together.

Learn about natural materials and how they change



What will we do?

Involve your child in cooking and preparing meals and snacks. Allow them to play with left over ingredients, such as pastry off cuts, cooked pasta, jelly, custard.

Mixing play dough (see play dough leaflet).

Icing and decorating biscuits.

Mix cornflour and water on a tray, add food colouring and use fingers to make patterns and notice how it changes.

Mix flour and water together to make a paste, adding paper and tissue to create a collage or sculptures.
