



PLAY DOUGH

Activity Guide

Play dough is a great activity to promote development. It inspires creativity and problem solving, in addition to practicing many fine motor skills & building hand strength, both of which are important for handwriting & activities of daily living.

Tips for Mental Health

- Create faces that represent different emotions (e.g., happy face, sad face, angry face).
- Take the opportunity to talk to your students about how they're doing. Many times, children are more likely to open up if their hands are busy.
- Create a shared experience with your students by building something together. Work toward a common goal.

Tips for Sensory Exploration

- Make homemade scented or multisensory play dough (recipes below)
- Put sand or small pebbles in the play dough
- Spritz the play dough with water to make it slimy. Be careful not to add too much.
- Put the play dough on the floor and allow your students to make footprints in it with their bare feet.

Tips for Communication

- Talk to your students about the things you are doing, what you are making, how the play dough feels, etc. Narrate your actions and theirs.
- Count the number of syllables in a word. As you do it, remove a piece of play dough for each syllable.
- Create items to show describing words and opposites. Example: big vs. small, short vs. long, thin vs. thick, smooth vs. bumpy.

Tips for Fine Motor

- Form 3-4 balls and then flatten them into pancakes. Roll the pancakes into snakes and alternate pinching the snake with each finger & thumb.
- Hide beads or coins in the play dough and have your students find all of them. This strengthens the pincer grasp.
- Practice opening the containers of play dough.

HOMEMADE DOUGH

Recipes

CHOCOLATE PLAYDOUGH

- 1-1/4 cup flour
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1/2 cup salt
- 1/2 tablespoon cream of tartar
- 1-1/2 tablespoons cooking oil
- 1 cup boiling water.
- Mix the dry ingredients, then add the oil and boiling water. Stir quickly, mixing well. When cooled, knead with your hands until mixed. Store in airtight container.

MULTISENSORY PLAYDOUGH RECIPE

- 3 cups flour
- 1.5-oz cream of tartar (use the whole small container)
- 3/4 cup salt
- 3 tablespoons cooking oil
- 3 cups water
- 2 packets Kool-Aid
- Combine first five ingredients in a large pot. Whisk together until free of lumps. Stir in the Kool-Aid. Continue to stir the mixture constantly over medium heat until it pulls away from the sides of the pot and forms a large ball. Knead the ball lightly on a lightly floured board until the dough is silky smooth. When the mixture has cooled, store in an airtight container. Hide “critters” in it or form letters with it

PUMPKIN-SCENTED PLAYDOUGH

- 1 pack unsweetened orange Koolaid
- 1 and 1/4 cups flour
- 1/4 cup salt
- 2 T. veg. Oil
- 1 cup boiling water
- Cinammon and nutmeg (optional)
- Stir all together. When cool enough to work with your hands, you may need to knead in a little extra flour. Stir in some cinnamon and nutmeg with the other ingredients to give it more of a pumpkin scent. Keep it refrigerated in a ziplock bag between uses (the kids seem to like working with it when it is cold)

