



Wee Learn

Wee Beginners
(0-18 months):
Sensory Play For Infants



Why is Sensory Play Important?

Sensory play is any activity that stimulates a child's senses: touch, smell, taste, movement, balance, sight and hearing. Sensory activities encourage children to safely explore and learn while they play using a combination of their senses in creative and spontaneous ways. Sensory experiences can be creative and messy but always fun!

There are many benefits to Sensory Play:

It Stimulates Brain Growth and Cognitive Development

For young children, everything they encounter is a brand new experience and an opportunity for learning! Because of this, they rely on their senses to help them understand the world around them. Sensory exploration promotes critical thinking by giving them the opportunity to use their senses in new and meaningful ways. By offering them a variety of materials to see, touch, smell, hear, and even taste, children will use their natural curiosity to explore these items to see what they do.

It Increases Fine Motor and Gross Motor Skills

Children can increase their coordination, dexterity, and muscle strength through sensory play exploration. First of all, they increase fine motor skills when they have the opportunity to manipulate materials in a variety of ways. For example, squishing play dough improves hand strength, picking up smaller objects encourages the use of the pincer grasp (between the thumb and index finger), and finger painting promotes pre-literacy skills.

It Fosters Positive Social Interaction and Cooperation

When children explore sensory experiences together, they are given the opportunity to interact with one another and to develop a new social-emotional awareness about themselves in a positive and supportive environment. They will be naturally curious about what the other children are doing with the materials and will take time to observe their peers, which helps them learn about different perspectives and might even inspire them to use the materials in a new way.

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