

Where's the fun gone?

How can playdough, goop and messy play enhance the quality of your programs but also assist you in maximising your centre's occupancy?



Succeed Consultancy - Specialising in Children's Services

Childcare Sales Australia is proud to publish yet another article of marketing from Succeed Consultancy. Succeed continues their journey of articles on occupancy growth and marketing. This article "how can playdough, goop and messy play enhance the quality of your programs but also assist you in maximising your Centre's occupancy" is a good reminder to have fun and continue the fun in the program.

As usual it is sound practical information for owner operators, investors and new buyers alike. You can contact Succeed Consultancy on the numbers provided below or visit the Succeed Consultancy website for more information at:

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The importance of art and messy play in a child care centre has many benefits. Young children learn so much through these activities but where have they gone???

Play is essential to all children's development as it contributes to their physical, cognitive, social, and emotional well being. It provides children with the opportunities to explore, become confident and independent learners. It is also a great way for children to express their feelings and become familiar and comfortable within their learning environments.

Walking into many childcare centres today, we have seen the once wonderful tradition of messy play being a part of childcare programs daily, to barley seeing this occur.

The question is how does this link to building your centre's occupancy?

Easy! Parents are primarily the ones that will make the final decision to which childcare centre their child will attend. They want a childcare centre that offers "everything", where children have fun and can explore in play.

If you talk to any family member that has their child in care what they want from the service, you can guarantee that they will say for their children to be:

- Safe
- Happy
- Having Fun
- And enjoy going to school

If children come home telling families about the great fun day that they have had and the families see it at arrival and departure times. What a great reassurance for the family that you are meeting families wants and their child is both happy and having fun!

What do parents love talking about and what do families with young children have in common? Child Care and don't they love talking about it...

A happy family will refer others to your Centre and the word of mouth and reputation of the centre will be high. Research shows that 90% of enquires are those that have been from word of mouth.

It is important that not only are the children happy but also the families. Seeing children engaging in fun, happy and playful experiences is a priceless moment for all families. Happy families, Happy customers and 100% occupancy. So it is important to see that programs particularly in this sense the fun parts of the program "messy play" can assist in building your centre's occupancy but most importantly also ensuring that children's experiences at childcare are one that they will always remember.

Walking into a child care centre and seeing children engaged in play dough or goop is a comforting sign for a new parent as they can see the children are having fun and learning something new. Children are more settled when involved in such activities as they are stimulating their minds learning and are having fun, leaving potential families with a picture of happiness and reassurance that their child is going to be ok.

The importance of "messy play" is that children are getting involved with their environment, engaging their minds and installing creativity and thought, the process of rolling the play dough and shaping it is inquisitive to all children.

Young children use the five senses sight, smell, touch, hearing and taste during messy play. We don't have to wait until they can walk and talk, babies too can be involved in messy play – a tub of soapy water, finger painting, wet chalk drawing, sand and water (making mud), coloured ice cubes and shaving cream are just a few activities we can involve younger children in.

After all they are children and children love to explore and get dirty.....

There are many ideas and many different experiences that childcare workers can offer children. Try some of these suggestions as they are guaranteed to be very enjoyed by all children...

- Cornflour goop
- Microwave puff painting
- Slime
- Jelly play
- Bubble blowing
- Plasticine
- Clay
- Paper Mache
- Wax resist painting
- Butterfly painting
- Hand and feet prints

Even better is that these are inexpensive and can be made right at your centre. Have families come along and help you make it, share recipes in your newsletters, have children cook this themselves...many great ideas to explore the mess and fun.



Here are some to get you started....

Cornflour goop

Slowly add 1 cup of cold water to 2 cups of cornflour in a bowl.
Stir until the water is absorbed by the cornflour.
Add food colouring if desired.

Play with goop in large containers with spoons, cups, hands, sticks, etc.

Tip: To remove goop from carpets, allow it to dry, then brush or vacuum. Goop may be re-used after it has dried out. Crumble it to a powder then restore it to the original consistency by adding water, a spoonful at a time.

Wax resist painting - scribble or draw a pattern on some card or strong paper with wax crayons, then paint over with thin black paint. After the card is dry scratch off a pretty pattern with a pen (lid on!) or another pointed - but not sharp - object!

Messy play is a great selling point for your childcare centre as well, as children can make many different things and these can be used for arts shows and auctions to get parents involvement. Children can use different materials to paint on such as canvas, calico and face washers and these can be display for parents and taken home for the whole family to enjoy and remember the good times had at child care. Clay models will be talked about for many months as the children are excited about how they made them and kept forever.

Imagine walking into your child's childcare and see them running towards you with there very first painting, or explaining that they painted a picture of the family at the beach on the weekend. This is what we should be seeing each and everyday in childcare. This is what builds you occupancy, sells your centre, makes your centre stand out from the rest.....children and there learning and fun is what parents will take pride in when choosing your centre.

It is endless and the lists can go on and on. Here is another great industry tip to not only ensure that messy and fun play is being incorporated into the program but another way to sell your centre, have families and the community talking about it because as we have emphasises 90% of enquires come from word of mouth....

Centre's can email families photo's of their children during messy play activities and this can increase your occupancy as families will discuss this with work colleagues and family members and by spreading the word about how great your centre is will increase the number of enquiries the centre has to assist in growth.

What will this bring.....

More enquires, more conversions, higher occupancy. Owners can also get in and enjoy messy play with the children because with a full centre, more time for fun and play!!!!

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We hope you enjoyed a few simple tips to maximise your occupancy in 2010. For more information on Succeed Consultancy and our 100% money back guarantee on all of our services please contact us on:

P: 1300 077 248

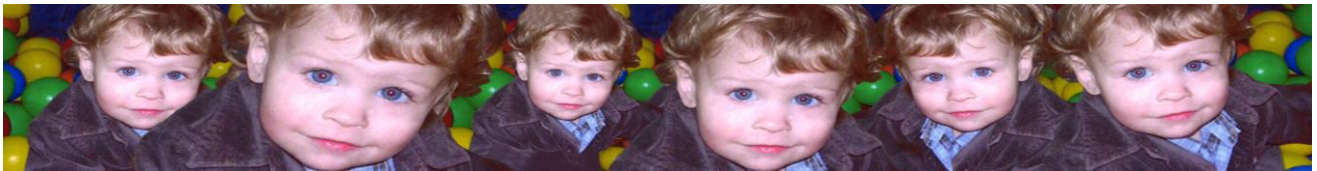
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