Playing in Mud

SUPPLIES NEEDED:
- Sand or “clean” pile of dirt
- Variety of containers and items for children to use to add water and explore
- Children, dressed appropriately to enjoy playing in the mud

INSTRUCTIONS:
- Make sure children are dressed appropriately to enjoy playing in the mud.
- Allow children to add water to the dirt or sand.
- Be sure at least one staff member stays within arm’s length for close supervision of every child during mud play.

What the adult can do to support learning and development in these domains:
- Allow children freedom to explore and experiment with very limited direction or interruption.
- Follow the children’s lead. For example, let them add the water at their own pace.
- Allow plenty of time for children to be involved as long as they are interested.
- Be sensitive to infants and toddlers with special sensory needs. Provide optional activities for children who choose not to participate.
- Facilitate conversations to stimulate children’s thinking or ideas as they explore.
- Offer assistance when requested, but only enough to help them succeed on their own.

Examples of language that can be used between caregiver and child:
- “I wonder what will happen if we pour water into our sand/dirt.”
- “Does the dirt feel different when it’s wet? Is it slippery? What does it feel like to you?”
- “I like the sound it makes when I squeeze it in my hand. What do you like about mud?”

This activity highlights support for the following NCFELD domain:

Cognitive Development | Approaches to Play & Learning | Language Development & Communication | Emotional and Social Development | Health & Physical Development