

This Parenting Magazine is an internal magazine for parents with children enrolled at International Child Care Centres SmartKids and is part of our childcare service.

With this magazine we will provide suitable guidance on general issues regarding early childhood challenges from around the world but using the individual child's social and emotional development as the main compass.

Parents around the world want what they believe is best for their children. However, parents in different cultures have different ideas of what is best. Italian parents value social and emotional abilities and having an even temperament. Spanish parents want their children to be sociable. Swedish parents value security and happiness. Dutch parents value independence, long attention spans, and predictable schedules. Vietnamese parents want to step away from the state schooling.

Differences in values cause parents to interpret actions in different ways. Asking questions is seen by American parents as a sign that the child is smart. Italian parents, who value social and emotional competence, believe that asking questions is a sign that the child has good interpersonal skills. In Asia parents and teachers are authorities, not to be argued with, or questioned.

For questions, contributions or advertising contact:
parenting@smartkids.edu.vn

Electronic copies of all previous articles can be found at:
<http://www.smartkidsinfo.com/parentingMagazine/parentingMagazine.html>

Sandpit Play

There is no 'right way' to play with sand, you can play with it any way you like. When children play with sand they can dig, pour, scoop, carry, draw, make tracks, guess, count, discover things, figure things out, be creative and learn about how things happen. You will find that children can play in the sandpit on their own, next to each other or with each other.



What do children learn while playing in the sandpit?

- Playing in the sand provides opportunities for the children to develop their muscles when they dig, shovel, lift, carry, tunnel, and rake. These kinds of activities help develop the large muscles – gross motor. Pouring, sifting, moulding, drawing, patting, and decorating all help exercise the smaller muscles – fine motor.
- Sand play also helps develop mathematical and scientific concepts such as exploring, classifying, estimating, experimenting, comparing, counting, measuring and constructing.
- While playing in the sand children use communication skills as they talk about what they are doing, how to do things. They share equipment and learn to get on with each other. They role play and work together. It also provides an opportunity for story telling in the sand.

2 MAIN Rules for the sandpit

DON'T eat the sand. ('Keep the sand away from your mouth - it's not for eating')

DON'T throw the sand. ('Keep the sand low or it may get in your friend's eyes')

Although children can play for hours in the sandpit it is still important to supervise them when they are playing, especially if they are using water as well.

Play Enhancing Things to add to the sandpit

- Buckets, spades, rakes, cylinders or pipes to help make tunnels
- Old Kitchen utensils such as potato mashers, spoons, sifters, strainers, funnels etc.
- Toys such as cars, animals, add plastic tea set and kitchen toys
- Different sized containers like drink bottles, yoghurt containers, ice cream tubs
- Natural materials like rocks, large shells, bits of wood, leafy branches, water
- Flower pots, Straws, Planks of wood
- Egg cartons, Cars and trucks, Plastic animal figures

How can you use your sandpit?

- make castles by molding with your hands, or create a beach scene
- make a birthday cake and put sticks in as candles, sing happy birthday
- do pretend cooking -add old tin pots and pans
- make moulds, make a quarry (adding water)
- Dig tunnels and then fill them with water to create rivers, creeks or dams
- Pitch a small tent in the sandpit and read the children books inside.

Care of the sandpit

The following are some ideas on how to keep your sand pit clean and safe:

- Rake the sandpit every morning and in the afternoon.
- Keep the sandpit covered when it is not being used (shade cloth is good).
- Sunlight is the best way to sanitise a sandpit. If your sandpit is in the shade all day you could use a mild detergent or household disinfectant. Follow the instructions for washing floors and surfaces that are on the container. A watering can is a good tool to help spread the solution over the sandpit. Do not add bleach to the sand as this may cause allergic reactions in children.

It is more important to keep the sandpit clean and dry than to regularly disinfect it.