

## When Your Child Comes Home Messy

Red paint in the hair? Blue paint on the jeans? Sand in the shoes? Peanut butter on the favorite shirt? White socks that look brown? Sleeves a little bit damp?

### **YOUR CHILD probably...**

worked with a friend  
solved a problem  
created a masterpiece  
negotiated a difference  
learned a new skill  
had a great time  
developed new language skills

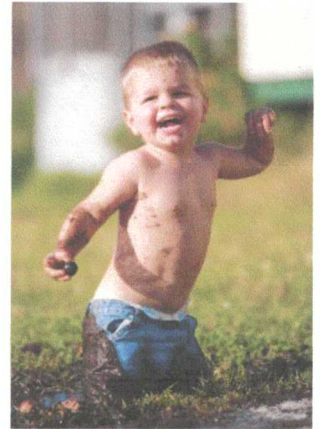


### **YOUR CHILD probably didn't...**

Feel lonely  
become bored  
do repetitive tasks that are too babyish  
do worksheet tasks that are too easy  
do sit down work that is discouraging

### **YOU probably...**

paid good money for those clothes,  
will have trouble getting the red paint out,  
are concerned that the caregiver is not paying enough attention to your child



### **THE CAREGIVER probably...**

was aware of your child's needs and interests,  
spent time planning a challenging activity for the children,  
encouraged the children to try new things,  
put smocks on the children,  
was worried that you might be concerned

**Try to remember your favorite activity when you were four years old.** Was it outdoor play with water, mud, and dress up clothes, with friends? Young children really learn when they are actively involved in play, not when someone is talking to them. There is a difference between "messy" and "lack of care." The caregiver made sure your child was fed, warm, took a nap, washed hands after toileting and before eating, and also planned messy fun things to do because that's how young children learn!

**Send your child in clothes that can get dirty!** Keep extra old clothes here at school for times when your child gets wet or really messy. If you need to take a child out, bring the dress up clothes and allow time to change. Keep calm. Remember in a few years teenagers will use your shampoo, mirrors and most of your towels to be clean. But young children need time to be kids. If you have concerns, talk to your child's caregiver about active play!