



# Learning through Sand Play

Have you ever picked up your child from their early learning centre and also felt like you are picking up half of the sandpit in their shoes and clothing as well?

Well great news! While engaging in sand play your child is learning many amazing skills, most of which will help them in their pathway to school and beyond!

So what are the learning benefits of sand play, and how do our kaiako (teachers) support your child in this fantastic learning area?

## Knowledge around the properties of sand and water

Through experiences such as pouring, sifting, and molding, children gain an understanding of concepts like volume, texture, and moisture. They can observe how sand behaves differently when dry or wet, how it can be molded into shapes, and how it flows through their fingers or containers. This tactile exploration helps develop their sensory awareness and introduces basic scientific concepts.

Our kaiako support children's learning by intentionally setting up sand play areas with resources such as measuring cups, funnels, and molds, to encourage children to explore and experiment. By ask open-ended questions kaiako also encourage children to think critically, such as "What happens if we add more water?" or "How can you make the sand taller?"

## Gross Motor Skills

Sand play involves movements that engage children's large muscle groups. Activities such as digging, scooping, lifting, and pouring sand require coordination and strength, helping children improve their balance, spatial awareness, and hand-eye coordination, actions which all help support children's physical development!

Our kaiako support children's physical development through sand play by again intentionally setting up play experiences with a variety of resources such as shovels, buckets, and molds to encourage different types of movement and creativity.





### Maths Skills

Exploring with sand encourages children to explore concepts such as volume, measurement, and spatial awareness in a hands on way. When children fill and empty buckets or pots with sand, they are beginning to understand measurements and comparisons, such as more or less, full or empty. They can also practice counting as they scoop or pour sand, learning about quantity.

Our kaiako support children's maths learning through sand play by weaving in opportunities to count together, explore measurement components and by using language intentionally including using open ended questions to encourage critical thinking skills.

### Literacy Skills

Sand is also a fantastic medium for literacy skills as well! Drawing pictures in the sand or even just talking about their creations with kaiako or other children, is a great way to support their literacy skills. Sand play is a natural way for your child's imagination to thrive! With sand, if they can imagine it, they can create it!

And of course, sand play helps strengthens all

those muscles that are responsible for helping a child hold a pencil!

Our kaiako provide children with a rich language environment especially during sand play! By role modelling descriptive language, and engaging in conversations that encourage children to express their thoughts they are able to support children in deepening their literacy skills through a super fun, hands on learning experience.

These are just a few of the very many benefits that sand play offers children! The learning and development for your child is well worth the little piles of sand that like to journey home at the end of the day!

### The Evolve Promise

At Evolve Education we offer a curriculum that fosters your child's ability to be creative, generate new and innovative ideas, and problem-solve to find solutions to challenges. We foster the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and dispositions that support lifelong learning.

Sand Play is just one of the ways that we bring this promise to life within our early learning centres!