

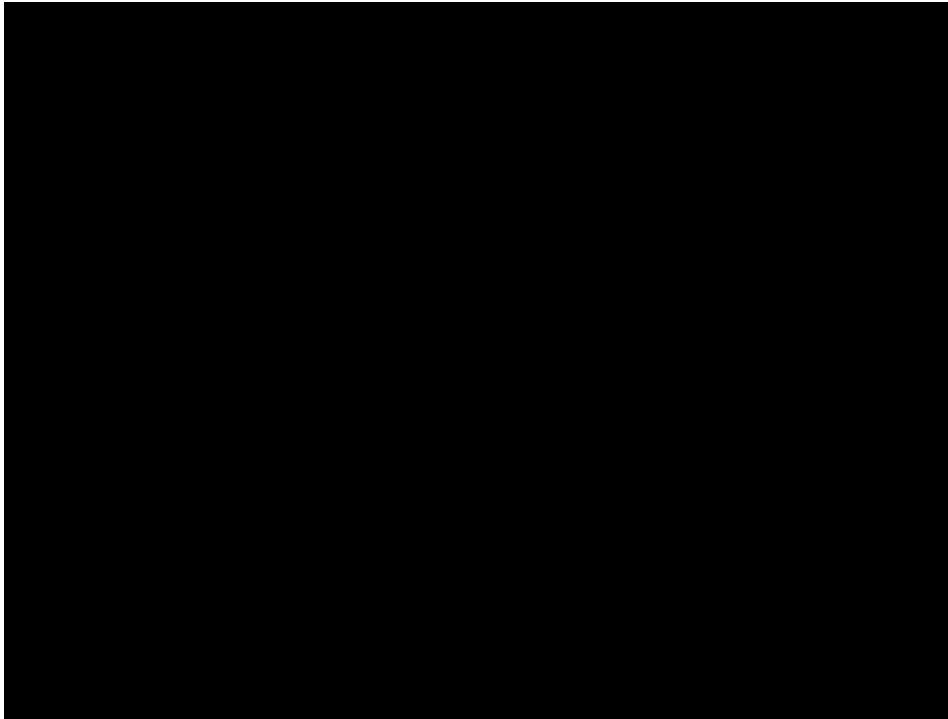


BOSTON
CHILDREN'S
MUSEUM

STEAM the Child's Way

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How does Boston Children's Museum approach play, exploration, and STEAM learning?



Find the child's strengths

- Work with what's present, not what's absent
 - Know that children demonstrate learning in different ways and develop through their strengths
- The “weakness” might be a “strength”. It's about how to look at it!
 - Talking a lot → Communicative, articulate
 - Fearful and shy → Careful and thoughtful
 - Attention seeking → Knowing needs and emotionally aware
- Not about ignoring problems or areas of concerns
 - Use the child's strengths to promote learning



How to observe the child's interests?

- **Be at their physical or eye level**
 - Sit together and see what the child is interested in
- **Be patient**
 - The child is thinking a lot. Wait for the child, before solving the problem or offering your ideas
- **Know your own wishes and wants**
 - What the adults want may not be what the child is interested in



How to identify a child's interests?

- Personal interests vs. Situational interests
- Questions to consider
 - What gets the child excited?
 - What holds the child's attention?
 - What does the child tend to choose most often?
 - What gets the child to try something new?
 - What are the patterns of things the child gets drawn to?
- Not sure of the interests, meeting the child for the first time, or working with multiple children
 - Plan for possibilities
 - Offer choices and a range of materials



Case 1: Bones!...or not!



Photo credit: Alissa Daniels

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Photo credit: Alissa Daniels

Case 1: Bones!...or not!



Case 2: Airplay



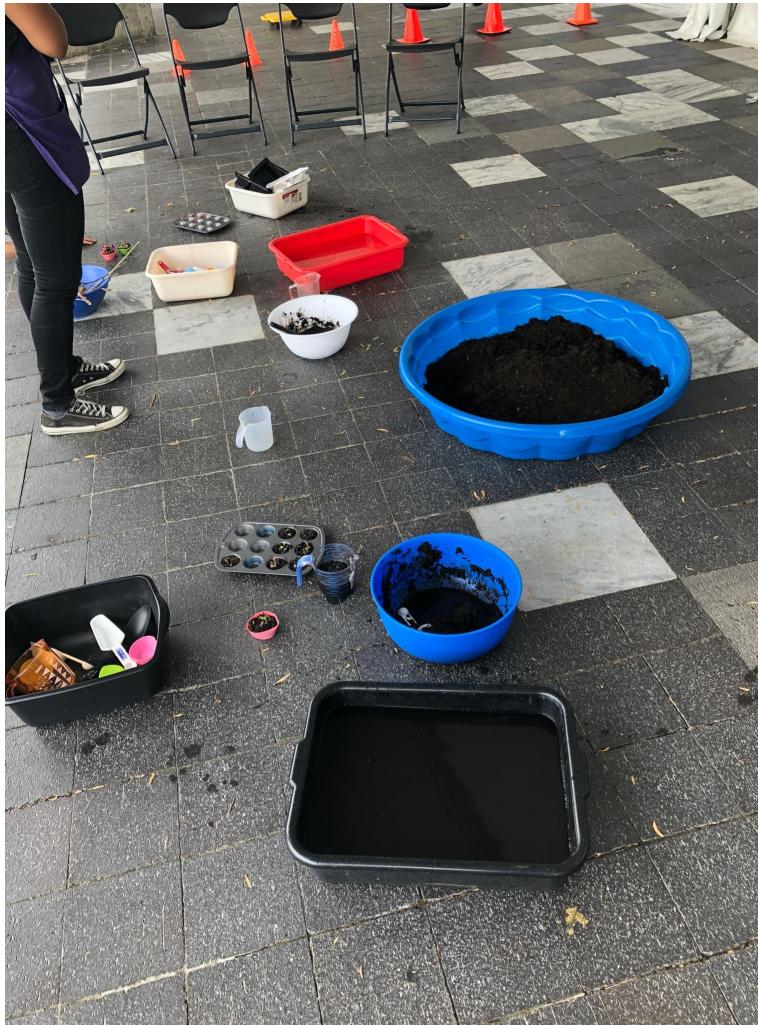
Photo credit: Alissa Daniels



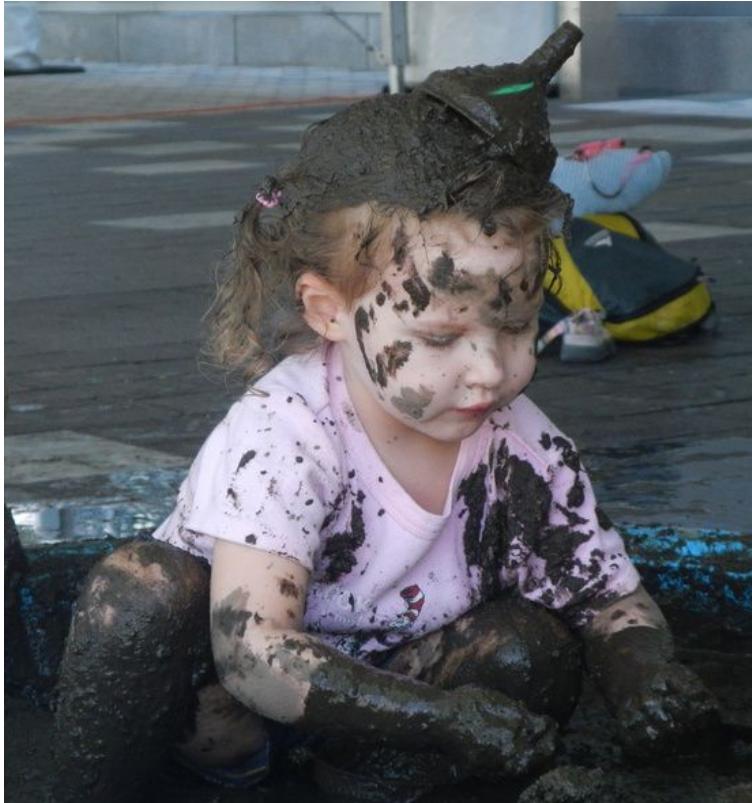
Case 2: Airplay



Case 3: Mud!



Case 3: Mud!...oh no!



Case 3: Mud!...oh no?



Case 3: Mud!...oh no?



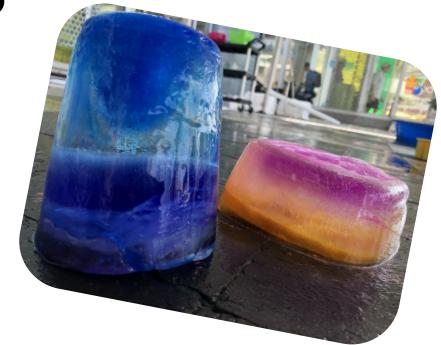
Case 3: Mud!...oh no?



Case 4: Bubbles!...and what's next?



Interested in movement,
change of colors and
shapes



Wrap up & Q&A

- Challenges - Adult engagement and communication about the value of play
- How does it apply to your practice?
- Any questions?

