

J is for Jelly

Jelly is a fantastic sensory resource, it's cheap and easy to make.

Sensory activities are fun and interesting to Preschool age children but it also encourages them to explore and investigate. It's very useful for children who are fussy eaters, for example, a child who will not eat spaghetti, cook some for play purposes, let them investigate it by touching, smelling and playing with the texture to build a positive brain connection, so it becomes a safe food.

Other reasons sensory play is beneficial for Preschool children include:

- It helps to build nerve connections in the brain
- It encourages the development of motor skills
- It supports language development
- It encourages 'scientific thinking' and problem solving
- It can involve mindful activities which are beneficial for all children

The desire to engage with sensory play comes naturally for children and should be encouraged and supported both at home and in early learning environments.

Word of advice before starting any jelly sensory play – It's very messy! And Jelly and carpets do not mix well.

Below are some examples of Jelly play and ideas you can recreate at home –



Hiding toys in Jelly is a favourite at Preschool, it opens so many language opportunities and children will stay engaged for longer.

Asking questions, such as "now can you find the sheep" "can you scoop out the smallest animal?" "How many dinosaurs can you see in the green jelly?" "what do you think is hiding in the orange jelly?" "what does the red jelly smell of?"

"How does it feel?"

Give your child their feeding spoons, knife and forks and play and let them use the tools to dig and scoop.



Give your child extra cutting tools to make shapes.



It's also a great resource for number and letter recognition.

Ask them to find you the letter M for example, remembering to use the phonic sound not the letter name.

For older children, see if they can blend letter sounds to make words such as cat, dog, mat etc

Can they make a rainbow out of all the colours?



The Reality of Jelly Play

Jelly play is not the time for a quick zoom meeting or a conference call whilst at home. I would highly recommend full undivided attention until it's safely packed away.

Have fun!

