

# Benefit Risk Assessment: Mud Kitchen and Digging Patch

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| Activity/Hazard       | Benefit   | Risks  | Children's voice  | Risk Assessment (use Matrix) |          |      | Elimination/ Control methods  | Who/When  | Progress |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|------------------------------|----------|------|---|---|----------|
|                       |   |  |   | L                            | C        | R    |   |   |          |
| Contact with soil     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exposure to beneficial bacteria to build healthy, functioning immune systems.</li> <li>Sensorial open ended material.</li> <li>Normal childhood experience.</li> </ul> | Ingesting soil   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>It is fun to get dirty</i></li> <li><i>You need to clean yourself by having a bath or a shower</i></li> </ul>   | unlikely                     | minor    | LOW  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide hand washing provisions for during and after play</li> <li>Establish hand washing routines</li> <li>Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area</li> </ul>   | Educators<br><br>Each time children use the digging patch and mud kitchen |          |
| Soil Contamination    | Children can be involved in checking the areas before play (visual), creates a sense of ownership and raises awareness of a possible hazard   | Ingesting /absorbing contaminated soil   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>You could just get a shovel and dig it out</i></li> <li><i>You could tell a teacher</i></li> </ul>  | unlikely                     | minor    | LOW  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Soil should be checked for contaminants daily, before play</li> <li>Checking for contaminants is part of the daily inspection checklist</li> <li>Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area</li> <li>Not using manure or fertilizers on garden beds surrounding the digging patch</li> <li>Raise awareness on the signs of contamination to look out for</li> </ul>         | Educators<br><br>Each day as part of daily inspection checklist           |          |
| Washing up - Children | Children learn good hygiene practices   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wet floors,</li> <li>Slips, trips, falls</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>You have to wash yourself</i></li> <li><i>Use a big bucket to wash your hands</i></li> <li><i>We should use soap and they should get a towel</i></li> </ul> | possible                     | moderate | HIGH | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educators to provide hand washing bucket with warm soapy water outside in first instance to remove bulk of dirt from messy play</li> <li>Children are made aware of slip hazard and provided with child sized mop to dry spills.</li> <li>Educators to monitor floor conditions – mop if necessary</li> <li>Educators, other adults and children to wear non-slip sole shoes in wet areas</li> </ul> | Educators<br><br>Each time children use the digging patch and mud kitchen |          |

|  |  |  |  |          |              |          |  |   |  |
|--|--|--|--|----------|--------------|----------|--|---|--|
| Washing up – utensils, pots, equipment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involving children in the clean-up creates a sense of ownership of the space and teaches valuable life skills.</li> <li>Development of muscle control</li> </ul>                  | Accidental bump or knock with resources<br>Injury from a sharp rusty resource                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>I like doing the washing</i></li> <li><i>I help mummy wash the dishes at home</i></li> <li><i>I like the bubbles</i></li> </ul>              | unlikely | minor        | LOW      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pots, utensils and equipment to be washed and dried or left to drain reasonably often to avoid rusting.</li> <li>Wiping out with a light coat of vegetable oil will help prevent rust and mould</li> <li>Discuss the process of rusting with children</li> <li>Store in sacks or baskets for drainage and aeration.</li> </ul>  | Educators<br><br>As needed, educators to monitor. |  |
| Storage of utensils, pots, equipment   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children learning to clean and pack away equipment</li> <li>Children take ownership of the play space</li> </ul>  | Manual handling, moving the baskets of pots, pans, utensils  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>They should get a little cubby house, not like the fort, a cubby house to put them in, up in the tree with a ladder.</i></li> </ul>          | unlikely | moderate     | MODERATE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness of manual handling with adults and children</li> <li>Ensure baskets are not overloaded</li> <li>Store on low shelves in shed or purpose built storage boxes near the mud kitchen</li> <li>Use a trolley to transport heavy items</li> <li>Training in safe lifting/ carrying procedures when appropriate</li> </ul>   | Educators to monitor                              |  |
| Water                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adds new dimension to play, changes the state of materials, tipping and pouring, creating potions and soups.</li> <li>Awareness of science, maths, capacity and volume</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drowning</li> <li>Flooding during heavy, prolonged rain events</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>I made "Wombat Stew"</i></li> <li><i>I make mud castles</i></li> <li><i>I sink in the mud</i></li> <li><i>I was swimming</i></li> </ul>      | rare     | catastrophic | HIGH     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Containers provided do not allow falling in.</li> <li>Educators to supervise closely should paddling pools or large containers of water be offered as per the Water Safety Policy</li> <li>Educators to monitor area during flooding/prolonged rain events and implement water safety policy.</li> </ul>  | Educators to monitor as required                  |  |
| Water                                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adds new dimension to play, changes the state of materials, tipping and pouring, creating potions and soups.</li> <li>Awareness of science, maths, capacity and volume</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stagnant water,</li> <li>Consumption/ absorption of contaminants</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>You can't drink it, it would make you die</i></li> <li><i>It would be yucky</i></li> <li><i>Don't you know it's just pretend?</i></li> </ul> | unlikely | moderate     | MODERATE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water containers are emptied at the end of each session/day and not left to go stagnant</li> <li>Water containers are cleaned regularly and checked for foreign bodies, mould, algae</li> <li>Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area</li> <li>Children are made aware of the potential hazard of stagnant water and how to avoid this</li> </ul> | Educators to monitor                              |  |

|  |  |                        |  |          |               |          |  |                               |  |
|--|--|------------------------|--|----------|---------------|----------|--|-------------------------------|--|
| Wet/Dirty clothes and shoes                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children become responsible for their own belongings,</li> <li>• Children practice skills of dressing and changing shoes</li> </ul>   | Children get cold      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I am really good at getting my gumboots on</i></li> <li>• <i>Wear old clothes or ones that can get dirty</i></li> <li>• <i>Well, my mum always packs spare clothes in my bag.</i></li> <li>• <i>You can wear the overalls</i></li> </ul> | possible | insignificant | LOW      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service provides class sets of puddle suits</li> <li>• Children encouraged to keep a pair of gumboots at kinder</li> <li>• Parents are aware children need to be provided with multiple changes of clothes through information books and newsletters</li> <li>• Service has a supply of spare clothing</li> </ul>   | Service, Educators, Families, |  |
| Slippery surfaces                              | Opportunity to jump in muddy puddles, slip and slide, investigate the science of friction  | Slips, trips and falls | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>When my feet got stuck in the mud my friend pulled me out</i></li> <li>• <i>My gumboot got stuck in the mud</i></li> </ul>   | possible | moderate      | HIGH     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable footwear to be worn by children and adults including educators and parent helpers (gumboots, shoes with non slip soles or bare feet)</li> <li>• Provide area for changing shoes and putting on puddle suits</li> <li>• Wet and muddy shoes to be removed before entering the building</li> <li>• If area around digging patch and mud kitchen become too slippery spread some mulch/soft fall – educators to monitor and decide when action is required</li> </ul> | Educators to monitor          |  |
| Gravel /pebbles<br>Pieces of natural materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fine and gross motor skills from lifting, pouring, gathering, patting, squeezing the soil, carrying, sorting patterns weighing, art</li> <li>• Connection to nature</li> <li>• Creative stimulus</li> </ul> | Choking                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We use grass and gum nuts and bark and sticks and mud</i></li> <li>• <i>I made gum nut stew, but you can't really eat it you know</i></li> </ul>   | unlikely | moderate      | MODERATE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any children likely to explore by putting things in their mouth are identified</li> <li>• Extra supervision for children with greater likelihood to put things in their mouth</li> <li>• Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area</li> <li>• All children made aware not to put small objects in their mouth</li> </ul>  | Educators to monitor          |  |

|   |   |   |   |          |          |          |  |                      |  |
|---|---|---|---|----------|----------|----------|--|----------------------|--|
| Use of plants and other foraged natural materials | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connection to nature</li> <li>• Creative stimulus</li> <li>• Sensorial</li> <li>• Open ended material</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ingesting or absorbing poisonous plants or fungi</li> <li>• Allergies</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I like collecting leaves</i></li> <li>• <i>I made a collection</i></li> </ul> | unlikely | moderate | MODERATE | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise awareness with children about possible risks in eating unknown plants or fungi</li> <li>• Children are informed of the dangers of fungi and warned not to use in play.</li> <li>• Plants within play space are chosen in consultation with landscape architect and include “bush tucker” plants like the Lilly Pilly</li> <li>• Adults are aware of and remove hazardous plants likely to cause serious illness</li> <li>• Children encouraged to follow a no consumption routine in this area</li> <li>• Children encouraged to wash hands before touching their face</li> </ul> | Educators to monitor |  |
|---|---|---|---|----------|----------|----------|--|----------------------|--|

| Risk Matrix |                |               |          |          |          |              |
|-------------|----------------|---------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------|
|             |                | Consequence   |          |          |          |              |
|             |                | Insignificant | Minor    | Moderate | Major    | Catastrophic |
| Likelihood  | Almost certain | Moderate      | High     | High     | Extreme  | Extreme      |
|             | Likely         | Moderate      | Moderate | High     | Extreme  | Extreme      |
|             | Possible       | Low           | Moderate | High     | High     | Extreme      |
|             | Unlikely       | Low           | Low      | Moderate | High     | High         |
|             | Rare           | Low           | Low      | Low      | Moderate | High         |

  

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| <b>Eliminate the Hazard</b>                           | E.g.: repair damaged equipment, dispose of unwanted chemicals.   |
| ↓<br><i>If this is not practicable, then</i>          |  |
| <b>Substitute the Hazard</b>                          | E.g.: lift smaller packages, use a less toxic chemical.  |
| ↓<br><i>If this is not practicable, then</i>          |  |
| <b>Isolate the Hazard</b>                             | E.g.: place barriers around a spill until cleaned up, locate the photocopier in a separate, well ventilated room, enclose machinery. |
| ↓<br><i>If this is not practicable, then</i>          |  |
| <b>Use engineering controls</b>                       | E.g.: provide a trolley to move heavy loads, place guards on moving machinery parts.   |
| ↓<br><i>If this is not practicable, then</i>          |  |
| <b>Use administrative controls</b>                    | E.g.: introduce job rotation, ensure equipment is regularly maintained.  |
| ↓<br><i>If this is not practicable, then</i>          |  |
| <b>Use personal protective clothing and equipment</b> | E.g.: provide hearing and eye protection, hard hats, gloves, masks.  |
| ↓<br>Until you have a better method of control.       |  |